

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

April 18, 2007 - Meeting Minutes

4:30 p.m. - City Hall – 2nd Floor – Community Room

Members Present: James Jeakle, Colleen Prichard, Michele Richards, Bill Hughes, Bill Steinmann and Casey Gershon

Approved Absence: Ted Lupina and Tom Hohm

Staff: Marty Myers (Public Safety, Fire Marshal) and Carolyn Rutland (Staff Liaison, Environmental Services Division)

Others: Commissioner David Anderson, David Nesins, Amber Schiavone, Nova Schiavone, and Sharon McFarland

APPROVAL OF March 21, 2007 MEETING MINUTES: It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as changed; the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Add NEW BUSINESS – Arboretum Development. It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as changed; the motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Member address list update, MSU extension report on Agricultural Land Use in Kalamazoo County, Biodiesel.

COMMENTS BY OTHERS: Marty Myers presented information about the Public Safety Training Center planned for the east and west sides of Nazareth Road through the Schippers Crossing property. The east side of the road is currently being cleared and construction will start thereafter. The center will include an area for grassfire training, ice rescue, and a five-story training tower. A state-of-the-art indoor Pistol Range and two portable classrooms will be part of the project's second phase. There will be a police and fire agility course. Three driving ranges will be constructed on the west side of Nazareth. KRESA will conduct training of all the school bus drivers in southwest Michigan on these ranges. The FAA may decide to locate a training center here; the closest FAA training center is in northern Wisconsin.

David Nesius commented that the dramatically increased cost of nitrogen/fertilizer is an issue in agricultural land use.

OLD BUSINESS: There was discussion about the Kalamazoo River Superfund Site and the proposed transport of contaminated sediments from the Plainwell Impoundment to the Allied Paper site. Handouts and the ECC memo to the City Commission (attached to the March meeting minutes) were reviewed.

NEW BUSINESS: Arboretum Development – Colleen Prichard reported on plans presented to the Arcadia Neighborhood. The WMU Foundation hired an engineering firm which issued a traffic study report March 2, 2007. The report includes a road from Drake Road to Howard Street, passing through approximately 80 acres owned by the Foundation. The Foundation is selling 40 acres of property to Kalamazoo Public Schools for the new middle school.

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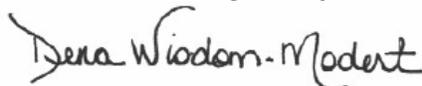
On April 2, 2007 the City Commission approved \$2M to KPS for access to and egress from the school. Any further costs will be the responsibility of any developer. The Arcadia Neighborhood and others object to construction of the proposed road due to increased traffic and loss of open spaces.

There is also concern about the potential for contamination of the nearby City Well Field #11. The property is currently zoned for about 600 single family housing units. Citizens want to preserve open land, including the Basswood Forest, trails, etc. Could the City be persuaded to purchase some of the property for preservation? Are there any endangered species protected under the Michigan Endangered Species Act on the property? Given that development will likely occur can any of the greenspace be preserved? The ECC suggested that the neighborhoods approach the Kalamazoo Foundation, look into grants for park-land purchases, consult with the Parks and Recreation Committee about an additional Westside park, and talk to the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. Colleen will draft a letter from the ECC.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: Planning Commission – Tom Hohm reported that at the April 11, 2007 meeting John Paquin presented the Wellhead Protection Overlay and Site Plan Review Performance Standards/Appendix A of the City's Code of Ordinances and there were questions and discussion about the Allied Paper Operable Unit of the Kalamazoo River Superfund Site

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted,



Environmental Services Accounts Coordinator/Secretary
Department of Public Services
Environmental Services Division
Harrison Street Facility