Held virtually via Zoom video conference

4:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Bobby Glasser, Erin Fuller, Ashley Cole-wick, Mitch Lettow, Kyle Martin, and Paul MacNellis

Board Members Absent: Allan Sylvester

Staff Present: Jamie McCarthy, Development Coordinator; Beth Cheeseman, Executive Administrative Assistant; Joe Ulery, Deputy Chief Information Officer; Neal Conway, Communications Coordinator

Ms. McCarthy announced how the public could call in to make comments.

A. Call to Order

Director Lettow called the meeting to order at 4:04pm.

B. Roll Call and Excuse Absent Members (Action: Motion to excuse absent members)

Director MacNellis moved to excuse absent members; seconded by Director Fuller. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously.

C. Adoption of Agenda (Action: Motion to adopt the agenda)

Director MacNellis moved to accept the agenda as presented; seconded by Director Cole-wick. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously.

D. New Business

None.

E. Old Business

1. Recommendation that the NFP Review Board approve amendments to the Natural Features Protection Overlay District and related zoning code. (Action: Motion to
approve the amendment to the Natural Feature Protection Overlay District and related zoning code and recommend adoption by the Planning Commission).

i. Staff Presentation

Ms. McCarthy gave the staff report. She said they received a significant number of public comments. She explained the overlay map/legend and reviewed specific areas of public concern.

1. E. Stockbridge and Lake Street. There is a small wetland in the area that is identified in the wetlands inventory. People want the area expanded to the west to cover some backyards. Many commenters thought this was an area of importance and the last natural green space in this part of town.

2. Lots in Kensington area. The school and wood lot were included. There is some slope and woodlands. One parcel that was not included is owned by the BRA with a permanent deed restriction for no development in the future. The area at W. Michigan and Drake is very sloped.

3. Comments and areas highlighted by Dr. Tyler Basset. He provided some parcel numbers. Overall, his areas of concern were covered.

ii. Board Questions

Director MacNellis said he read the comments from people about the corridors and movement of wildlife and the associated spread of flora. He thinks that will take more intuitive study to understand exactly what those corridors are.

Director Lettow shared that he is happy to see a lot of the parcels in proposed NFP II align in linear connected ways to help things move through the landscape. He was happy to see a good spread throughout the neighborhoods.

Ms. McCarthy stated that she would like to put corridors and wildlife movement on the agenda for November. She would love to know ways to protect and manage corridors, natural areas, the connections between them. It would be useful for the Sustainability Strategy Planning they are doing.

Director Lettow asked Jamie to have a staff member follow up with addresses Dr. Basset indicated and see if they are covered. Directors Fuller and Cole-wick believed there was good coverage in the areas he indicated.
Ms. McCarthy spoke about adding parcels 210-105 in the E. Stockbridge and Lake Street area. She asked the board about adding parcel 205. Director Lettow believed that adding the ones to the west was being consistent with the reasoning they've used. Director MacNellis said he was inclined to include them - at least pass it on to the Planning Commission. Director Cole-wick stated that she was also inclined to include them because of citizen comments. Ms. McCarthy said she will add them through 105 Lake Street and 205 on Stockbridge.

Director MacNellis asked about two other parcels on Stockbridge. Ms. McCarthy explained there are homes on those parcels, and it backs up to the City of Kalamazoo Stockbridge property. The City site contains a large parking lot and building and is almost all asphalt. She confirmed for board members that site is in the NFP Overlay.

Ms. McCarthy asked for feedback regarding the parcels at Arboretum Parkway. She reviewed the natural features and the area. After discussion, Director Cole-wick said she would like to see them thoughtfully include some parcels on the northside of Kendall, north of Weaver and the area just south of where Middlebury ends. Director Lettow agreed with Director Cole-wick. He shared that they never made minimum requirements for a parcel to be included in NFP. Director Lettow believed that because of that they have to include the little residential ones.

Ms. McCarthy summarized the boards’ comments. Include the parcels at Stockbridge and Lake. Capture parcels south along Middlebury Drive and add parcels that are the back yards of those residential parcels that tuck into the gap along Kendall.

Ms. McCarthy went on to talk about text amendments. She said there are three amendments to add clarity and make for better implementation and review of projects as they come through the board for the next year.

1. Section K – Site Development Standards. Inserted language giving the board ability to allow some non-native, non-invasive species determined not to cause adverse impacts. The board would have to approve as a majority that they would allow some certain non-native species on a case by case basis.

Director Lettow clarified that native plants should make up majority. Ms. McCarthy said that all of the minimum required landscaping must be native. If the developer adds landscaping above the minimum requirements, then the board would make the decision to allow only that amount to be a non-native, non-invasive species with permission.
2. Section L. NFP Review Bodies and Process. Removed the natural feature of wetland or water resource from the text. There was not a strong rationale to list that natural feature and not the others.

3. Section M. Bonding of Projects. Bonding gives the most assurance there will be financial backing if things are destroyed or not restored according to the site plan. It makes sense to give board more control on a case by case basis. They are developing a checklist and can add a section on bonding at the end. Analysis would be based on the ecological and economic value of natural features located on site or proposed to be restored. The board would weigh that against the likelihood that there is enough activity on the site that there could be adverse impacts. Then they could require a construction bond for three years.

Director Lettow asked for clarification. Ms. McCarthy said that a purchaser has a bond in place that has a dollar value. They pay a portion of that value to the bonding agency. It stays in place for the purchase period and is then released once that project is done.

Director MacNellis asked who or how they would determine the parameters of the bond. Ms. McCarthy said there is some language under this same section on how that gets calculated. It is left up to board or staff, but it is vague. They can work through that in the next year or put the burden on the applicant to calculate how much it would cost to replace parts of the project.

iii. Public Comment

Ms. Tina McClinton called and commented on the property on Lake and Stockbridge. She indicated they are trying to save the green space which helps keep their properties from flooding and provides a habitat to animals.

Ms. McCarthy commented that they've covered that area.

iv. Board Discussion

None at that time.

v. Motion

Director Lettow read the motion reminding board members that it was including the area at Lake and Stockbridge as well as the Arboretum Parkway areas and the text amendments.
Director MacNellis made a motion to approve the amendment to the Natural Feature Protection Overlay District, including the area at Lake and Stockbridge as well as the Arboretum Parkway areas and related zoning code text amendments and recommend adoption by the Planning Commission; seconded by Director Martin.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

F. Board Comments

Director Cole-wick would like to revisit the species list - prohibited and suggested species - the next time they address this. She feels that going through them intentionally would be a next step.

Ms. McCarthy recommended that the chair appoint a subcommittee to bring a recommendation to the board.

G. Staff Update

Ms. McCarthy informed the board of a virtual Townhall meeting on Wednesday, October 28 at 6:00pm to go over the changes to the NFP Overlay. Ms. McCarthy, Planner Anderson and Planner Durkee will be in attendance. She encouraged board members to be present at the November Planning Commission meeting.

Ms. McCarthy shared that at the next meeting, the board would have three cases to review. The cases are Bow in the Clouds, 500 Golden Drive, and the City’s water reclamation plant biofilter.

H. Citizen Comments

None.

L. Adjourn Meeting

Mitch Lettow adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm.

Jamie McCarthy, Recording Secretary

Mitch Lettow, Board Chair