



**ACME TOWNSHIP
FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, October 31, 2005, 10:00 a.m.
Acme Township Hall
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690**

Meeting called to Order at 10:35 a.m.

Members present: B. Garvey (Chair), N. Veliquette, B. Carstens, K. Engle
Members excused: M. McDonough, W. Kladder, R. Saylor, P. Brink
Staff present: S. Corpe, Township Manager/Recording Secretary
Also present: B. Bourdages, Farmland Preservation

Ken Engle was voted in as a new member of committee.

Bourdages began by displaying the map proposed at October 24 Planning Commission. Including all land north of Brackett and east of US 31 except Challenger parcels in the proposed agricultural preservation zone and including descriptive wording with six points. He has discussed community concerns about potential misuse of the map for planning and zoning decisions with Gordon Hayward, Peninsula Township Planner. Mr. Hayward indicated the same concerns came up in his community and were resolved by specifically labeling their map as an “eligibility” map. They already had a future land use map, which Acme does not. The proposed language on the map is intended to clarify that the map is for grant funding eligibility only. Garvey noted that right now the language on the map conflicts somewhat with the last portion of the proposed addition to the Master Plan text. Bourdages believes this can be addressed by addition of one or more bullet points to the general text. At the last PC meeting Veliquette and Bourdages feel they heard the committee say that they like a generally broad approach to the map that is very inclusive but eliminates some parcels that clearly are not candidates for preservation even though they might be eligible for grant funding. Vermetten suggested that the committee be presented with two map alternatives from which to choose at the next meeting. The map can be amended later through the Master Plan amendment process. Engle noted that this can be a lengthy process and asked if a map amendment must truly follow this process. Corpe replied because it’s part of the Master Plan and not the PDR ordinance.

MAP 1

Veliquette and Bourdages have taken another look at the proposed map. The Hoxsie property has been added in, as have the Marnette Farm, Rewald Farm and the Moran Farms south of Brackett Road in the Bates area. The land around the RV park and the Hanna property recently

divided up were excluded, and the Garvey property added in because it lies between two working farms. The map does not show an exclusion of the Challenger parcels, but alternative map two does. The Planning Commission must make a decision as to whether to exclude parcels by request or not. In order to make the map match the text also added to the master plan, addition of a new bullet point at the end is suggested to read. "Other parcels which complement existing state ag resources but may not meet the current definition of active farmland are included."

Engle expressed concern about referencing the Tart Cherry Site Inventory Map, which like this map is not intended to be used for planning purposes. He feels that a reference to the Soils Map should also be included, Bourdages stated it is addressed by reference to the USDA Soil Classification Report and Map.

Map 2

Map 2 is less inclusive, not including any land west of US 31 or the Challenger parcels, or anything south of Brackett Road. Veliquette feels this is more realistic but less attractive to grant funding because it excludes parcels meeting the state definition. He feels the first map would be more effective in attracting monies. It would be critical if using map 1 to be clear that no property is being excluded by landowner but this should not be a concern because it's not a map for zoning purposes. Inclusion would benefit properties by adding another economic option to the landowner's arsenal.

There was consensus to present both maps to the Commission as discussed. Veliquette felt that the only potentially controversial aspect is the inclusion of all properties on map 1 despite specific landowners requests, but the decision to include or exclude rests with the PC; this group is advisory only.

The group feels that they have removed risk by noting the map is not to be a basis for zoning decisions, and that by including all parcels Map 1 offers the maximum potential benefit to landowners.

Ron Hardin, 4712 Westridge Dr., observed that there were initial fears that this map might limit landowners' options but this is not the case and additional public education plus completion of the township wide Future Land Use Map will take care of this over time. Re-titling the map as an "eligibility map rather than an ag preserve zone map" will also help.

All agreed that clearing up public misconceptions is crucial. Public open space needs to coordinate with the shoreline group. Corpe said "We will use the township newsletter to update the public on status of all committees.

Mr. Hardin noted that since the Master Plan is reviewed every five years ensures map will be revisited regularly. Things will change over time. He also suggested that the

advisories periodically present to the Planning Commission.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:11 p.m.