



Groen Visioning Committee

Friday, June 24, 2011 – 10:00 a.m.
Johannesburg-Lewiston Schools
Media Center – 10854 M-32
Johannesburg, MI 49751

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Olsen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present — Present: Lee Olsen, John Burt, Jim Hilgendorf, Matt Nowak, Pam Duczowski, Mike Tarbutton

Others Present — Patricia Osburn, Kevin Kennedy, Roger Latusek

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee accepted the minutes of March 24, 2010 as presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Equestrian Use on the Trails

The Committee discussed the need to obtain accurate map of the trails at the Groen property. A GPS unit will be used to attempt to map the trails. If that fails, it will be tried again in the fall when the leaf cover will allow better readings. Once the mapping is completed, Roger Latuszek and Patricia Osburn will mark which trails may be inappropriate for equestrian uses.

B. Historic Information Search

Nowak reported that he has obtained many pictures of the property from when the lumber mill was active. He is working with Al Oshner to put together a 3-D map of the property to use in the check-in/information center. Nowak will send copies of some of the better photos to the Committee members.

Nowak reported that the old Johannesburg Jail is now located on the Tomaski Farm. Steve Tomaski may be willing to donate the jail to the Groen Nature Preserve.

Kennedy reported that he has the student ideas from his field trip with the Advanced Biology Class to the property. He will distribute the notes to the Committee members.

The Committee discussed conducting interviews with residents that have knowledge of the property. Duczowski will contact Phil Alexander, who has been involved in conducting historical oral interviews, to see whether he can set up the interview process and train interviewers.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Groen Property Stage One Discussion

The Committee discussed the need to have a professional plan done for the property. The Parks and Recreation Commission may be able to help cost share the plan with the Groen Trust Fund Board.

The first phase of the project will not include the 25 acres containing the homes and barns. The Committee discussed what could be done to begin using the property in the near-term. The decision was made to mainly open up the trails for hiking, along with some equestrian uses, and mountain bike trails. Access for the first phase will be off of Hetherton along the old road right-of-way from town. The entrance would turn east and then north again lining up toward the caretaker house. A gravel parking lot would be created along the entranceway. A log cabin building, which fits in with the décor and could be moved, would be built at the end of the entranceway. Port-a-johns would be placed by the check-in and off of Waters Road. There was also discussion on running utilities to the check-in building and further to the barn/caretaker house areas.

There was discussion on potentially having old-style farming north of where Sklarczyk' leased land.

Latusek will work with Ron Koronko to arrive at an estimate for a gravel road and parking lot.

B. Next Steps

Committee members agreed to do the following prior to the next meeting.

Kennedy – Provide copies of the Biology Class student's ideas.

Latusek – Work with Ron Koronko to estimate the cost of the driveway and parking lot.

Duczkowski – Work with Phil Alexander on the oral history interview process/training.

Nowak – Provide copies of photos of the property. Work with Tomaski on the donation of the former Johannesburg Jail. Try using his personal GPS to map a small portion of the trails to gauge the accuracy of the mapping.

Burt – Work with Jim Smith, the Groen Trust Fund Board attorney, on the funding agreement.

C. Meeting Date

A Committee meeting will be called once there is more information for the Committee to review.

Mr. Olsen adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.