



Groen Visioning Committee

Friday, March 9, 2012 – 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 —Lee Olsen, John Burt, Jim Hilgendorf, Mike Tarbutton, Don Sklarczyk, Butch Fleming, Matt Nowak, Kevin Kennedy, Pam Duczowski

Others Present —Roger Latusek, Patricia Osburn

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 30, 2012 were accepted without any changes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Review/Update of June 24 Tasks

1. Historic Photo/Artifact Collection

Duczowski reported that she spoke several times to her contact at the Henry Ford Museum, but they have been unable to find anything from the property in their archives.

2. Oral History Interviews

Burt reported that the video camera is supposed to arrive that day. Duczowski and Hilgendorf reported that they are going to be interviewing Mrs. Dee Dowker next week. They will be tape recording but not video recording the interview. The Committee discussed interviewing Bill Kujawa and Charlie Black, whose dad worked in the mill.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 12 Acre Planting Area

The Committee discussed the idea of planting trees and shrubs in the northern neck of the agricultural area. Osburn has been working on a plan to plant native trees in the area. Sklarczyk discussed the erosion issues in that area. The Committee discussed having Burt and Tarbutton confer with a wildlife habitat specialist to discuss what shrubs and grasses might be good to plant to attract/retain wildlife and to help control the erosion. The area will

have to have the sod prepped and we should do a controlled burn for 2 years to get rid of the hard seeds. Nowak recommended using GPS to mark the highly-erodible areas to incorporate into a plan. Burt will confer with experts and come back with a plan for the area. The Plan should be with the idea in mind of maintaining every species that frequents the property.

The Committee discussed planting pine trees along Hetheron Road and other open areas to make the area more scenic as well as to protect animals from poaching. This project can be done this year.

The Committee discussed planting trees and shrubs in the open field area southeast of the 12 acre area. This project can be done this year.

B. Groen Nature Preserve Welcome Sign

Burt presented the design for the Nature Preserve Welcome Sign. The committee recommended having the posts and trim done in white, and to place the sign at the corner of M-32 and Gingell Roads.

C. Groen Nature Preserve Ordinance

The Committee discussed the Groen Nature Preserve Ordinance that will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Commissioners. The Ordinance places penalties on violation of rules that derive from the Conservation Easement.

D. Phase 1 Budget

The Committee discussed the budget information presented by Burt.

The Committee recommended staffing the Preserve 8 hours per day, 7 days per week. Three part-time staff will be needed to operate the Preserve. The operating budget will be approximately \$33,000 2012. There will also need to be approximately \$60,000 in one-time expenses for various items needed to begin operations.

The Committee discussed the architect/engineer cost estimates for construction of the check-in building, storage building, bathroom, and Echo Valley Resort building repair work. The estimated cost is \$199,730. The Committee discussed various options to reduce the construction cost. Waiting for repair work on the resort building was discussed, but it was decided to be kept in since Mrs. Groen had an interest in seeing progress on the restoration of the building. The repairs would include to the foundation of the building, removing the maintenance room, putting in a new roof, and repairing the retaining wall at a cost of \$62,000. The inside of the building, as well as doors and windows, will have to be repaired in a later project. The Committee decided to look at a kit for the storage building rather than doing the planned construction. That will save approximately \$17,000 on the budget. The Committee proceeding with a request for construction with that change.

Local volunteers will be sought to help construct the storage building and the split-rail fence around the lumberjack camp.

E. Other Discussion

Nowak recommended placing 'No Parking' signs on the gate of each entrance.

The Committee discussed holding an Nature Preserve opening ceremony in June.

F. Assignments for Next Meeting

1. Burt: Order 'No Parking' signs.
2. Burt: Finalize and forward funding request to the Groen Trust Fund Board.
3. Burt: GPS erodible areas in the 12 acre neck of the agricultural area.
4. Bur, Tarbutton, and Osburn: Consult with experts on plantings for wildlife and erosion limitation.
5. Burt, Tarbutton, and Latusek: Look at placing evergreen trees along the open spaces on the border of the property.
6. Hilgendorf/Duczowski: Begin work on historic interviews.
7. Nowak: Continue soliciting historic photos of the property and researching historic building locations.

G. Next Meeting Date

The Committee will meet as we get closer to the opening of the Nature Preserve.

Mr. Olsen adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.