



## Groen Visioning Committee

Wednesday, March 24, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.  
Johannesburg-Lewiston Schools  
Media Center – 10854 M-32  
Johannesburg, MI 49751

### MINUTES

#### CALL TO ORDER

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

Members Present — Present: Robert Harkness, John Burt, Jim Hilgendorf, Don Sklarczyk, Matt Nowak, Pam Duczkowski, Butch Fleming, Mike Tarbutton

Others Present — Patricia Osburn, Stacy Jo Schiller, Kevin Kennedy

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Duczkowski, seconded by Hilgendorf to “accept the minutes of November 13, 2009”.  
Motion Carried.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### A. Project Website

Burt reported that he set up a page for the Groen project on the County’s website. He requested Committee members review it and let him know if they had any other ideas for the website.

##### B. Equestrian Use on Trails

Burt reported that a rough map of trails had been given to Frank Latusek for review. Latusek will mark up the trails that he believes may not be suitable for equestrian use due to erosion concerns.

##### C. Invasive Plant Species

Burt reported that he relayed Osburn’s question on whether invasive plant species can be replaced with native plants. Jim Smith, Lou Groen’s attorney, will incorporate language in the Conservation Easement to allow the request.

##### D. Historic Information Search

Duczkowski spoke with representatives from Hartwick Pines and the Henry Ford Museum. Hartwick Pines has no way of knowing where their historic items came from. The Henry Ford Museum is willing to do more research, but we need to provide some information on what we

are looking for. Duczkowski will work with Phil Alexander to look through historic records for more information.

Nowak reported that someone brought historic pictures of Johannesburg to the Library. Nowak was able to scan the pictures. He plans on either bringing some of the photos to the next meeting, or will try to email pictures to people.

The Committee discussed whether historic recollections from people should be captured on videotape rather than just voice recorder.

Hilgendorf, Duczkowski, and Nowak will work together to gather historic information. They will also discuss procedures on how to capture historic recollections and report back to the Committee.

Schiller informed the Committee members that the Bentley Library at the University of Michigan had a collection of historic photos of Johannesburg. She will share scans of the photos with the Committee.

Sklarczyk asked whether there was potential for a Journalism class to be involved.

Kennedy reported that Wendal Hoover, a former historian for Hartwick Pines that lives in Grayling, has a lot of pictures and information on the lumberjack camp. His father had been a foreman at the lumberjack camp.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Old Kelly Building Restoration**

Stacy Jo Schiller updated the Committee on the restoration of the Old Kelly Building, which was the company store for the lumberjack camp. The building is on the national register of historic Places. Schiller will show a PowerPoint Presentation of historic photos at the next Committee meeting.

### **B. Future Process**

Burt discussed the process for how the County would take ownership of the properties and the role of the Committee in the process. Seven hundred and sixty-five acres would be transferred to the County, under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission, upon the passing of Mr. Groen. This would be the land without the buildings. Upon the passing of Mrs. Groen, the remaining property would be transferred. The Parks and Recreation Commission does not have access to funding for the property until it has ownership. The Groen Visioning Committee will help draft and recommend a plan for the property to the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Committee will also decide what could be done with the first seven hundred and sixty-five acres. Once the park is active, a set amount of money for routine maintenance will go to the Parks and Recreation Commission from the Mr. Groen's Trust. Requests for funding for any other projects will be made by the Parks and Recreation Commission to the Trust Board.

The Committee also discussed the Parks and Recreation Commission's plans to have a planner help do a Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan. The bulk of the work for the Groen Nature

Preserve would be completed by the Committee with the planner helping to make it look professional.

The Committee discussed the need to have professional mapping of the trails, along with elevations. The elevations are needed to help better identify erosion concerns. The Committee asked Burt to put together a request to Mr. Groen for funding to complete the mapping. Accurate mapping is the key to continuing planning for the Nature Center.

Tarbutton distributed his ideas on future uses of the Nature Center.

#### C. Student Tour

Kennedy is looking at having his Advanced Biology class tour the property to give ideas on programs for the Nature Center. They would also do some water tests while they were there. Kennedy discussed the importance of the class getting the background on the project. There are about fourteen juniors and seniors in the class. The Committee asked Burt to check with Frank Latusek how many people he could accommodate on a tour.

#### E. Miscellaneous

Stacy Jo Schiller asked whether someone could come on a historic tour of the area to update people on the Nature Center project. Tarbutton volunteered to go on the tour to give the update.

Nowak reported that the Fire Department is looking for someplace to store a 1949 fire truck that no longer works. The Committee discussed the idea of having the vehicle at the Nature Center in the future. In the meantime, Sklarczyk volunteered to store the vehicle, as long as it didn't need to be accessible to the public.

#### Next Meeting Date

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

Mr. Harkness adjourned the meeting at 11:17 a.m.