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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

MEETING DATES: Tuesday, February 25, 2014
TIME OF MEETINGS: 5:00 P.M.
PLACE OF MEETINGS: Richardson Community Center
1485 Oakley Park Rd.
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390
PURPOSE OF MEETINGS: 1. Discussion on Non-Motorized Pathway Plan

SIGNATURE OF TOWNSHIP CLERK Vanessa Magner
Vanessa Magner, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce

DATE AND TIME OF POSTING: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 9:00 am

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**FINAL
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE ****SPECIAL**** MEETING**

Monday, February 25, 2014

2009 Township Drive

Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Wichert called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm at the Ralph C. Richardson Center.

ROLL CALL: Present: Tim Wichert, Chairperson
Michelle Holmes, Secretary
William Petsch
Bob Berkheiser
Jennifer Hansen

Absent: Peter Pace (excused)
Dave Schultz (excused)

Also Present: Emily England, Director of Senior Services/Parks and Recreation
Barb Garbutt, President of Library Advisory Board

ITEM 1: TRAIL WAYS PLAN

Ms. England began the discussion with a review of the packet which included maps of the Township showing the Lakes Community Trail, along with proposed, concrete, existing and gravel pathways. Also in the packet was the Oakland County Trail Path Planning Checklist, County maps, and proposals submitted for sidewalks and/or trails by Fred Dore and Friends of Byers. The County checklist encouraged review of the following items for information gathering and establishing priorities.

- Recreation Lands
- Trails/Paths/Routes - existing and proposed.
- Natural Features
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Wetlands
- Historic Sites
- Schools/Churches
- Surface Topography/Slopes
- Views and Vistas
- Utility Corridors
- Town Centers/Convenience Centers
- Road Network
- Land Uses

Ms. England stated that a potential priority on the list could be the connection between the Richardson Center to the Township Hall and DDA property, which would then extend up to the M5 Trail and to Long Park. Mr. Berkheiser stated that continuing the

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trail through Byers and out to Mill Race would also make some sense, going from Carroll Lake up to Cooley Lake Road. Ms. Holmes stated that on the west side, there is a need to consult with White Lake Township for their trail plans as there are no connectors between the two communities. There are plans and connections between Commerce Township and West Bloomfield, Wixom and Walled Lake. The County has a big dead zone that needs connections.

Ms. England explained that the goal of the meeting is to establish priorities for the trail gaps shown the maps. There have been a lot of requests from residents who would like to see small pathways put in; however, these projects may not have an impact on the whole community. She stressed that while making decisions, everyone should consider that each mile of pathway is a cost of about \$1 million and therefore the priorities need to impact the most people and make the most sense. The pathways should be continuations of the existing connections which are shown in the packet.

Mr. Berkheiser discussed the materials for the pathways, concrete, asphalt and other options. He inquired about the use of crushed shale or limestone as a hard base, the savings over concrete or asphalt, and issues that can arise such as weeds growing up through the base. Mr. Berkheiser added that he would lean toward use of gravel or crushed limestone if the Township could get five miles for a million instead of just one. Then later when the Township had the funds, the trail could be completed with asphalt and it would already have a base. His question was could the Township get more trails up front with the available funds through the use of gravel. Ms. England replied that she would have to look into the differences in the costs to see if the savings would be significant.

Ms. Holmes inquired about the process beyond this special meeting and suggested organizing a committee to set the priorities for the community to work on. Ms. England felt that a committee should not be set up at this point in the planning process as they would not yet have the funds work with. Next year when the budget has been decided, they could help with plan development. Ms. Holmes added that the process needs to be established. Ms. England stated that no decisions have to be made this evening, just a focus on setting priorities. There have been a lot of community requests for smaller projects and not all of them can be funded; however, the associations making the requests may be able to offer assistance with funding their projects.

Mr. Berkheiser asked if this process and funding was included in the Five-Year Plan. Ms. England replied yes. Ms. Holmes added that the plan can be amended. Ms. England stated that the plan does not need to be amended as the wording was vague with regard to extending pathways and making connections to trail systems. Open discussions continued regarding pathway funding, DNR grants and the Coe Rail trails.

Ms. Hansen explained that the Parks Committee for the Village of Wolverine Lake wants to approach Commerce Township regarding a pathway on South Commerce and Glengary. This project and funding would also be discussed with Walled Lake as the path would extend all the way to the high school. Ms. Holmes explained that this would

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probably qualify for a grant as it includes communities working together and connections to schools. Ms. Hansen stated that there is still a need to meet with Mike Powell to review the maps and identify the potential connections. Mr. Wichert suggested a joint meeting between Walled Lake, Wixom, Commerce Township and Wolverine Lake in this regard to work together. Open discussions continued regarding grant funding opportunities.

Mr. Petsch inquired about the connection that Ms. England had suggested, from the Richardson Center to the Township Hall and DDA property, that would then extend to the M5 Trail and Long Park. Discussions took place regarding condos being built in the area of 14 Mile Road and Welch, crossing at roundabouts which is undesirable, and potential for pedestrian bridges to provide connections. Other items addressed were subdivision sidewalks, ponds in the areas, fishing sites, and potential connections around and through the DDA property. Roundabouts should be avoided when there are other alternatives.

Mr. Berkheiser discussed the road studies and traffic patterns in relation to the Haggerty Road construction. Ms. England stated that these will be taken into account and added that she thinks Kathleen Jackson will discuss the Committee's priorities with potential developers of the DDA property. Mr. Berkheiser added that there could be potential to put in pathways there without having to use Parks' funding. Mr. Petsch agreed as there is no doubt the trail will be connected from Wolverine Lake through Hickory Glen. If the connection can be made to that point, it is part of the bargaining tool to work with DDA properties in developing connections there to get people to the shopping centers and planned developments. This will then be made into a loop that goes from the south end, then north down to South Commerce.

Ms. Holmes stated that there are connection priorities, but they are not necessarily the same as the money priorities. Ms. England agreed. Mr. Berkheiser addressed tying into Byers and across to the bridge at Mill Race. This could be connected from a walking point-of-view. Ms. Holmes added that bikes could be carried across the bridge as there are stairs, and this would have to be posted.

Mr. Berkheiser asked if the goal was to connect all of the parks, or to run trailheads connecting the communities. Ms. England stated that both of these are priorities and Mr. Wichert agreed. Ms. Holmes stated that the Planning Commission has already been looking at the Historical Village Overlay to see what can be done with that area. They are unsure about Mill Race as it is a historical site, but the Commission would like to see that area conducive to walkability.

Open discussions continued regarding connections at Dodge Park, the high schools, the elementary schools, and at the Wise Road property. The Wise Road Park master plan was also addressed and connection there would then lead up to Union Lake. Existing pathways in the Wise Road area were reviewed, and use of the pathway through the old cemetery, north of Dodge Park on the north side of the road, was also discussed. The pathway through the cemetery then crosses the river and connects to a

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beautiful pond and Trillium Field; however, there have been issues with people parking at the cemetery to access the pathway. Mr. Berkheiser explained that in connecting the pathways, it would be nice to have trailheads with parking lots where people can park to access the trails.

Ms. Holmes addressed the issue on Benstein Road and the Bass Lake area where historically, there has never been a safe pathway to travel. A solution here would also be a connector to the Wolverine Lake area. The hospital also has internal walking paths and they have no problems with connecting to the Township trails. She expressed desire to get the homeowner associations involved and buying into these ideas. Mr. Petsch added that a loop could be made back into Wolverine that included the Glengary and Wixom Road area at the horse farm. Ms. Holmes added that connection could also be made to Walled Lake Schools.

Mr. Petsch inquired about bike pathways striped onto the roadways. Ms. Garbutt stated that a proposal was made for this on the Benstein proposal 20-25 years ago. She is unsure why everyone backed off of that. Ms. Hansen discussed the boardwalk and explained that there was no other alternative there. Mr. Berkheiser stated that most roads are not wide enough to include a bike path. Ms. Holmes was uncertain if striped bike paths should even be promoted as they would not qualify for grant funding which is traditionally given for pathways that are detached from the roadways. Open discussion continued regarding internal sidewalks, SAD's for sub associations, road widening for striped bike paths, and potential solutions for troubleshooting difficult areas such as Benstein Road to develop connection to Wolverine. There is a striped bike path in Dodge Park, but these types of paths are safer when they're not connected to a main roadway.

The paved and dirt roads in the areas of Commerce Road, Bogie Lake Road and Carey Road were reviewed. Ms. Hansen wondered if a light would be put in at a difficult intersection in the area of Carroll Lake Road, an area perfect for tri-party funding as it leads into White Lake. Ms. Holmes stated that the Road Commission qualifies intersections for traffic lights based on the number of accidents. Mr. Wichert stated that a roundabout would be better there and Ms. Hansen agreed.

Ms. Hansen stated that she would bring a detailed map of Wolverine Lake's paths to the next meeting. Discussions continued regarding connection through the exercise park in Wolverine, existing pathways that residents may not be aware of, signage for identifying the trails, potential areas for trailheads and parking, the need to identify existing sidewalks that may provide connections, and numerous connections to schools in the area.

Mr. Berkheiser asked Ms. England to work on cleaning up the maps. She replied that she would work with Jay James and Kathleen Jackson to update the maps. Ms. Hansen stated that she would provide the Wolverine section. Ms. Holmes added that another SEMCOG meeting would be held with a public hearing in March or April. They are doing their regional plan which shows the community connectors.

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Ms. Holmes initiated discussion with regard to maintenance issues and funding. Mr. Berkheiser stated that the Township Board created a fund for additional monies for maintenance. Ms. Holmes stated that the fund was for M5 and asked if it included the rest of the trail ways. Mr. Berkheiser stated that the fund was \$25,000 and he believes it will be included in the budget process annually. Ms. England stated that she believes the funds were for the development at M5, but are not necessarily dedicated to only that area. Ms. Garbutt discussed issues with maintenance of Phragmites. Overgrowth needs to be address on the bike path at the bridge on South Commerce Road. Mr. Berkheiser stated that he believes the maintenance fund is for maintenance of the pathways themselves. Discussion continued regarding potential solutions for dealing with Phragmites. Ms. Holmes felt this topic needed to be put on the agenda. She added that Multi-Lakes had stated they would be happy to help with addressing these issues.

ITEM 2: AGENDA REQUESTS

- Community Gardens
- Eagle Scout Projects

ITEM 3: OTHER MATTERS

- Ms. England discussed delays with Township signage.
- Mr. Berkheiser discussed the need for trailhead signage so that residents are aware of the trail locations.
- Ms. Holmes discussed brochures and advertising of the Township trail ways.
- Mr. Wichert and Ms. England discussed the Byers gazebo.
- Ms. Holmes initiated discussion regarding potential for Eagle Scout pathway projects, including mapping GPS coordinates and assisting with maintenance such as tree removal and wood chips. Guidelines, budgets and fundraisers for Eagle Scout projects were also addressed.
- Ms. Hansen suggested a community walk which proved to be beneficial for increasing awareness of the trails in Wolverine Lake.
- Ms. Garbutt and Ms. Hansen also expressed their interest in establishing community gardens and potential locations were discussed.

The next Parks and Recreation Meeting will be Monday, March 24, 2014 at 6:00pm.

ITEM 4: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Holmes, supported by Berkheiser, to adjourn the meeting at 6:01pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Michelle Holmes, Secretary