

Van Buren County Land Preservation Board
June 14th, 2007
Administration and Land Services Building
219 Paw Paw St., Paw Paw
6:30 pm

Minutes

Regular Meeting

Call to order 6:38 pm

Present: Jeff Radtke, Bill Lawson, Tom Erdmann, Don Mackellar, Dave Foerster, Ryan Miller

Absent: Bill Mihelich, Ted Major, Mike Thiel, Scott Cedarquist, Laura Strehlow

Public: Charles Lachman, Wayne Hammond, Nora Rooney, Francis Ryan

Agenda: Approved (**Motion by Jeff Radtke, Second by Bill Lawson**)

Minutes of May 10th – Lack of Quorum

Public Comment: none

Reports:

County Commissioner –

Tom Erdmann reported that he wanted to address the South Haven Township board about farmland preservation, but wanted to be better versed on the topic before he did. He asked for the support of Dave Foerster in this matter.

Township Representatives –

Bill Lawson noted that Hamilton Township is dragging their feet on including farmland preservation in their master plan.

Dave Foerster noted that Columbia Township was awarded a Black River Watershed Grant, along with other municipalities, from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and that some of the money will be used to update their master plan / zoning ordinance. He also noted that Arlington Township is working on their master plan and that Mike Pioch recently presented some information to them about farmland preservation.

Jeff Radtke reported that Decatur Township, the Village of Decatur, and Hamilton Township are all in the process of updating their joint master plan.

Planning Commission Representative – none

Other Local Visits – none

Old Business:

Update on Lachman Property – Ryan Miller reported that he has been taking the necessary steps towards closing the Lachman property. He has completed the draft conservation easement and baseline document and has submitted them to the state for their approval and is waiting to hear back from them. Miller also stated that he has ordered the title commitment from Chicago Title Company.

New Business:

Applications – Dave Foerster noted that Miller had received 1 completed application from Gary and Judith Jones. Miller claimed that Robert Koehn has almost completed his application as well. Francis Ryan stated that he was still interested in farmland preservation but wasn't sure when he would apply.

Fundraising – Francis Ryan noted that some local companies such as Welch's would possibly donate money if they knew they would be saving farmland. Nora Rooney added that she thought it would be a good idea to write letters to the editors of many local newspapers to get the word out. She also added that it may be possible to work with the local movie theater on a weeknight movie event where a portion of the proceeds would go towards funding the farmland preservation effort. Another idea from Rooney included setting up a booth at the Van Buren County Fair. Tom Erdmann also expressed that he thought it may be possible to work with 4-H in some way. Dave Foerster said that he will talk with Julie Pioch about working with 4-H. He also noted that Pioch had the idea of a possible fundraising event on the Lachman farm.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Thursday July 12th, 2007 at 6:30 pm on the 2nd Floor of the Administration and Land Services Building 219 Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 pm
Submitted by Ryan Miller