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Pam Pohl, PC Representative
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Tim Machowicz, Citizen Representatives
Phil Hanses, Drain Commissioner

CLINTON COUNTY GREEN SPACE COMMISSION

1st Floor Conference Room C
100 E. State Street, Suite 1300
St. Johns, Michigan 48879
Phone (989) 224-5292
Fax (989) 224-5102
www.clinton-county.org

Staff

Jerry Jaloszynski, Green Space
Commission Coordinator
Gayla Phillips, Recording Secretary
for the Green Space Commission



GSC COORDINATOR'S REPORT

NOVEMBER 2008

ACTIVITIES:

2008-09 Community Forestry Grant Program –

The county has been awarded the grant at the requested amount of \$3,000. At its October 28th regular meeting, the County Board acted to accept the grant. The money will enable the planting of 150 3' tall conifer and 40 10' to 12" tall deciduous trees. The total value of this tree planting project is \$17,400. Of the dollar amount not supported by the federal grant, \$3,000 is county cash match with the balance representing the value of "in-kind" and volunteer labor needed to plant and care for the trees. The project will be scheduled for next spring and will take approximately 3 to 4 weeks to complete from mobilization to finish. The park's tree planting plan, prepared by Clinton Conservation District Forester John Switzer, is on file in the office and available upon request.

Deputy Drain Commissioner Jon Morrison recently planted 6 crabapple saplings at the west end of the lake. Jon indicated that he has a few hardwood saplings which I asked him to plant mid-bank along the Hayworth Drain. The saplings will be marked with a stake so that next spring's newly planted trees will be spaced to give them room to grow.

Duplain Township River Access Site –

On October 21 the MDEQ issued a permit to the Clinton County Road Commission to create a gravel parking area along French Road at the county owned river access site. I have spoken with both Dan Armentrout at the Road Commission and Dave Schlegel at Carl Schlegel, Inc. and both are on-board to begin the project.

Duplain Township Elsie Dam Project –

Township officials have long held an interest in removing/modifying the existing Elsie Dam to allow free passage of fish and other aquatic species, to improve the recreational

opportunities at and around the dam, to improve public safety at the site and to remove the financial liability associated with the deteriorating structure. The Township Board recently took action to seek a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant for "Engineering and feasibility study for fish passage improvements at the Elsie Dam." The township is working with Spicer Group on this project. The grant application identifies a number of potential partners / stakeholders in the project, including the Green Space Commission. A copy of the grant application is filed electronically in the Commission office and is available to others on request.

Clinton County Park Rules Ordinance –

Due to rather full committee and regular meeting agendas, consideration of the proposed ordinance by the County Board has been postponed to a later month.

Motz County Park Development Project –

Good news – A Project Agreement from DNR Grants Management was received on Friday, October 31. I will work with County Administration to have it placed on the November County Board Finance and Personnel Committee meeting agenda. If all required approvals go smoothly, we should have a fully executable agreement back from the DNR by December. Unfortunately, there is no chance that construction will begin this year. By the time it takes to complete engineering and architectural design, acquire permits, seek and select contractor bids, and get all the intermediate approvals at the GSC, county and DNR levels of review, we are looking at a spring start of construction.

County Administrator Ryan Wood and I met with C2AE representatives to review preliminary engineering and design work for the swimming beach component of the project. The preliminary design proposes to pump down the level of the lake surface by approximately 6 feet to expose the bottom of the designated swimming area. This will enable a bulldozer to work the lake bottom and establish a gradual gradient increase in depth out to a distance of 85' from shore. Water at this distance would be about 5 feet deep. After further consideration and in the interest of swimmer safety, it was decided to increase the distance from shore to 110 feet (about 6 foot of water). The work will eliminate abrupt drop-offs, rocks and unexpected holes in the swimming area out to the 110 feet distance from shore at which time individuals are already swimming. The existing soils will be covered with a one-foot layer of washed sand, except for a 20-foot wide band at the shoreline. Knowing that children like to dig in the sand, the 20-foot band will contain sand to a depth of 2 feet. This feature will work to help keep the underlying clay soils from becoming mixed with the top sandy layer. Finally, the design calls for a sand covered beach above the shoreline to a distance of 75 feet. Width of the swimming beach will be 400 feet.

It is expected that construction of the swimming beach will begin in March with de-watering efforts. Once the desired lake surface level is reached, grading and sand

placement should be completed within a week. By summer, county residents will be greeted by a wonderful swimming facility.

Maintenance Facility Lease –

The lease agreement with Searles Construction Inc. was approved by the County Board on October 28 and signed by all parties on the following day. I telephoned RESA Construction Trades Instructor Ross Pope and discussed when improvements to the garage might begin. Mr. Pope's students are still working to complete one other project, but will likely begin work on the garage in early November. There are a number of tasks that I need to complete prior to the start of work and will do so during the week prior to the GSC meeting.



Motz County Park maintenance support facility awaiting improvements.

MMRMA RAP Grant Application –

With County Board approval, I submitted a grant application to the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) Risk Avoidance Program (RAP) for \$15,000 to help cover the additional expenses related to the park swimming beach development project. Terry Van Doren, Risk Manager for the Authority and liaison to the Authority's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, has invited the Commission to present the grant application to the RAP Grant Selection Committee at its November 6 meeting in Mt. Pleasant. Mr. Van Doren spoke very favorably about the grant application. I will attend. It would be nice if funding recommendations to the Authority Board were made at the meeting. An update will be provided at the November 7 GSC meeting.

NRC Trail Naming Request –

I've completed a 6-page essay-type naming request to the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC). The request asks the NRC to name the three-county rail-trail the "Fred Meijer C-I-S Rail-Trail". The request has undergone a couple of revisions and I expect additional editing. Once the Tri-County Intergovernmental Trail Committee agrees on a final draft, it will be sent to Fred Meijer Foundation officials for review and comment. The naming of the trail has been a matter of interest since the Foundation pledge was first made in 2004. A favorable decision on the naming and the continued availability of the Foundation's significant pledge of funding is the desired outcome. I hope to be able to submit the request to the NRC by December.

Non-Motorized Transportation Plan –

Work is progressing, albeit slowly, on the planning process and Trail Summit. An organizational meeting was held with a number of plan co-sponsors on October 8. A copy of the meeting Minutes will be placed in the GSC Nov 7 meeting packet. I am pleased to report that of the 20 communities/organizations invited to participate as co-

sponsors, not including GSC member representatives, 12 have accepted the invitation. Tim Machowicz, Terry Link and I are planning to meet with Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance Executive Director Nancy Krupiarz and Jessica Yorko of the Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council on November 5. Ms. Krupiarz and Ms Yorko have agreed to facilitate a route identification exercise at the Trail Summit. The Trail Summit agenda/program is starting to come together. The Trail Summit was postponed from its original date of October 30 due to a lack of readiness. It will be rescheduled for late November or early December. Input from the Commission and Ms. Krupiarz and Ms. Yorko is desired to set the new date.

2009 Operational Budget –

The 2009 budget has been adopted and funding is now available to hire seasonal labor for the park. Chair Nelson has suggested seeking an Intern from MSU or CMU on a non-paid basis, but providing a scholarship of \$2,500. Great idea. I will prepare a Student Intern Position Description and obtain the necessary university application materials. I believe that with the current state of Commission activity, an Intern would have a great opportunity to get some first hand experience.

Other Assignments/Activities in Progress –

Listed for general information purposes. Items will be removed once completed.

- Motz County Park Development Project (Phased construction thru 2009)
- Searles Property Acquisition Grant Application (#2) – Pending BOC approval
- Motz County Park improvements
 - Fish habitat improvements (winter project)
 - Tree planting grant project & maintenance program
- Parkland and Open Space Acquisition Plan (joint APB / GSC project)
- Agricultural Preservation Board – Staff liaison
- Intergovernmental CIS Trail Committee – support/advisory role
- DeWitt Township/City/DARA Community Recreation Plan Committee – GSC rep.
- Clinton Conservation District – 319 Grant (Maple River) – Advisory role
- Tri-County Regional Planning Commission – The Greening of Mid-Michigan Project