

Freedom Township Public Hearing
July 5, 2005
Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission
Concerning Property at Waters Rd/ Parker Rd. Freedom Twp
Sec 12T3S R4E 14-12-100-003, 14-12-100-006, 14-12-400-001

Peter DeLoof made a motion to open the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m. Motion was seconded by Larry Lindemann. A roll call vote was done and the motion passed.

Tom Freeman of Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission began by giving a presentation on the proposed Nature Preserve; which would be available for hiking and bird watching. The trails would not be hard surface trails. It would operate as a preserve only – not a park. The Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission has seven properties just over 750 acres. The entrance to the Preserve would be off Waters Road. A map was shown representing the property and proposed walking trails.

The hearing was then opened to questions from the public and members of the Planning Commission.

*Robert Gross – Will there be a fence around this? No.

*Jane Thornton – How do you patrol these areas- to prevent it from being a party area for kids? Tom said they would send a Patrolman out as soon as it was reported to them. They have one on staff for just these purposes.

*Mary Lewison – Will there be posts at the driveway parking lot to prevent vehicles going in? It will have a sign with instructions located at the start of the trail.

*Jim Thornton – What is done about evasive plants? Regarding adjacent properties are there any plans to expand the Preserve? Tom stated that there would be work bees to get rid of unwanted vegetation. There are plans for expansion at this time.

*Elvin Ernst – Which part of the map is marked for walking trails? The trails are designated by purple dots on the map.

*Jerry Clark – Is this the extent of the preserve or will there be more walks? Yes possibly more walks will be added. How many acres is the lake? The lake is 5 – 7 acres.

*Frank Carson – How many people will be visiting at a time? Not many at all. Average of 1-3 people a week.

*Stan Tschiltz – Can you share how much the County paid for this property? Doesn't it become a tax exempt property after the County purchases it? The County paid the appraisal price of \$900,000.00 and has owned it for two years.

*What are the permitted uses? Walking, Hiking, and bird watching. It would be Passive recreation only.

*Once a Nature Preserve, will it stay that way? We have never sold a piece of property that we have bought.

*Is there a way to monitor how many visits to the Preserve? Tom said they were not sure how to do this.

*Ken Lewison – This Preserve sounds like a new thing. Yes, it's a very new thing for Washtenaw County.

*Jim Thornton – With agricultural things happening at the preserve; will the trails be marked as to where to go and where not to go? Tom said they were very optimistic that people will be very respectful of the agricultural fields.

*Jerry Clark - Stated he wanted to thank the County for purchasing the property.

Stan Tschiltz made a motion to close the Public Hearing with a second by Susan Ochs. Motion passed. Public Hearing closed at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Huehl, Secretary