

**Elk Rapids Township & Village Joint Meeting**  
**Planning & Zoning Suggestion Committee – R-3 Area Selection**

The Joint Committee Chair Julia Amos called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM, Monday, March 9, 2015. Township and Village Sub-Committee members in attendance were:

**Township PC:** Jean Derenzy, Renee’ Mischel, Shen Smith & Pug Sliger (alternate)  
**Township ZBA:** Vincent Cooper, Marshall Wright, Julia Amos & Pug Sliger (alternate)  
**Village PC:** Lauren Dake & Becky Lancaster  
**Village ZBA:** Matt Webb & Mike Szymanski

Bob Bassett, Chair of the Village ZBA addressed the Joint Committee Chair advising that he was in attendance strictly as a private citizen to observe and was not acting in any official capacity.

**AUDIENCE:** Bob Bassett, Mike Spence, Emile Sabty, Bill White, Patrick Brady, Steve Ravezzani & Len Harrett.

**AGENDA:** Discussion regarding changing the order of business resulted in a motion by **Marshall Wright**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Matt Webb** to approve the agenda as written. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2015:** **Chair Amos** thanked **Emile Sabty** for acting as sub-committee secretary for the last meeting. She asked for any additions or corrections to those minutes as presented. **Jean Derenzy** proposed a correction to paragraph 4, page 2 asking that this paragraph be revised to read as follows:

“Shen Smith advised that the study **will be considered as becoming** an Addendum to the Master Plan listing the potential R-3 areas to be used by a developer, then the selected parcels would **later** be rezoned to R-3. ~~The Addendum becomes an addition to the Master Plan until it is updated.~~”

A motion was made by **Renee’ Mischel**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Jean Derenzy** to approve the February 16<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**RECAP OF DETERMINING CRITERIA:** **Chair Amos** outlined the previously determined consensus of priorities being used during Sub-Committee discussions as the availability of water & sewers, the preservation of agriculture & farming, the location & walk-ability and the parcel size.

A recap of parcel selections from the preliminary straw poll indicated parcels of most initial favor were numbers 7, 8, 9 & 16 with parcel numbers 6 & 17 tied for 5<sup>th</sup> place. Also, that parcels number 19 & 21 had been deleted from further consideration. The Chair asked if anyone had changed their mind or had additional information to offer since the last meeting.

**Vince Cooper** asked a question regarding selling developmental rights and Farmland Preservation, specific to parcel #7, a 30 acre commercially zoned parcel on US31 for this parcel will resume some agricultural production in the near future. Vince was asking if developmental rights were sold would the underlying zoning need to be A-Agricultural or could it remain zoned C-Commercial? **Bill White** responded that he wasn’t clear on the exact rules and this should be checked, but likely the rights if sold stay with the land.

**WATER & SEWER EXTENSION AVAILABILITY:** The Chair asked **Steve Ravezzani** if any questions from the Sub-Committee regarding the sewer system were asked of him to direct to the Gosling Czubak Engineering firm? He responded that he had not received any questions.

In answer to previously asked questions regarding availability from the Village for new water and sewer extensions to areas outside of the Village limits for higher density development; **Bill White** provided copies of two Village of Elk Rapids resolutions which address this subject:

**Resolution 96-69 of August 9, 1996 - Water Extension / Improvement Policy**

Article II Proposed Policy Statement, Sub-Section A. New Service Areas, Paragraphs #2 & #6 which reads:

*" 2. Requests for water system extensions beyond the Village limits will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Village Council on a case by case basis.*

*#6. All project costs for water system extensions to previously unserved areas including road crossings and crossing of Village right-of-ways will be borne by the special assessment district formed for the project."*

**Resolution 96-70 of August 19, 1996 – Sewer Extension / Improvement Policy**

Article 1 Policy Statement, Sub-Section A New Service Areas, Paragraphs #2 & #5 which reads:

*" 2. Requests for sewer system extensions beyond the Village limits will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Village Council on a case-by-case basis.*

*#5. All project costs for sewer system extensions to previously unserved areas including road crossings and crossings of Village right-of-ways will be borne by the special assessment district formed for the project."*

**Bill White**, Township Supervisor also provided a copy of a letter to the Township dated February 27, 2015, from **Marcia Price, Village Manager/Clerk** on the subject of sewer & water extensions outside of the Village limits which reads:

*"The Village of Elk Rapids would be willing to discuss the extension of sewer services outside of the village limits should a developer be interested in pursuing that option and willing to pay for the related costs. We currently service the Birch Lake area through an agreement with the Elk Rapids Township. In addition, several residents outside of the Village have entered into private "Contracts for Sanitary Sewer Services Extension" with the Village of Elk Rapids to tie into the Village sanitary sewer system. The upgrades to our WWPT, currently under construction, have built in capacity for future growth of this nature."*

**Renee Mischel** asked based on the parcels under consideration in the northeastern section of the Township how many parcels on our current list would qualify for sewer extensions based on distance from the nearest line – specifically in the Birch Lake Sewer District area? **Bill White** responded the original allocation was for 210 hookups with 150 currently being used leaving 60 hookups remaining on that line, but the line is currently running close to capacity and the Maple Harbor waterfront properties are in need of sewer system hookups.

**Marshall Wright** asked if Parcel #16 (26 acres West off Cairn, opposite Wandawood) could be connected to the Birch Lake Sewer District. **Bill White** went on to say that he has assurance from the Village that they are willing

to negotiate with a developer and there may currently be room on the existing system and definitely on the renovated system for new growth in the Township. By written agreements and past precedent new sewer and water extensions should not be an issue if all terms and conditions imposed by the Village are met by a developer.

When asked about “Off the Grid” stand alone sanitary systems Bill indicated that though not optimal, it is always an option if the soil conditions are right to support in-ground systems and there is sufficient land for the fields. Off the grid systems must meet all conditions of the Antrim County Health Department.

**TOPOGRAPHY AND SOIL TYPES:** **Bill White** discussed how soil conditions play a large part in which parcels in the Township are truly of agricultural value. Many parcels can be deemed unsuitable for agricultural production because of high water table and/or clay layers, and these parcels could be more suitable for residential uses. Bill stressed that no parcel should be precluded just because it may have an agricultural use today, for that use could change over time. **Renee’ Mischel** indicated based on the information she has received so far, all of the parcels under consideration could be deemed as suitable for R-3 which bring in her opinion the decision down to proximity to water & sewer and highway access. **Becky Lancaster** stated she was very pleased with Bill White’s comments and insight on current agricultural property and indicated there should be 4-5 or more parcels selected for higher density consideration. **Marshall Wright** feels 1 or 2 parcels is enough to put R-3 on the map. **Shen Smith** indicated that putting parcels on a map is not what this committee is charged with, for the goal is about actually putting thought into real planning for the future of the Township. **Julia Amos** indicated if we were just placing parcels “brown” on a map then we could rezone just about any parcel in the Township and that would suffice. She stated that real planning and thought by all have come out of this Committee and she is pleased with the progress so far.

**FURTHER DISCUSSIONS:** **Marshall Wright** read a paragraph from the Master Plan (Section 3.2) which indicates higher density should be located nearer to the Village for infrastructure. **Shen Smith** spoke regarding the clustering of several higher density parcels within the same area so development could be concentrated into specific areas of the Township and not to just single parcels scattered here-and-there in the township. She exemplified the higher density developments currently located along Cairn Highway as an identified higher density area where the clustering of R-3 would layer out gradually from the village progressing from R-1 to R-2 to R3. The other area for clustering is the large area of lands located between US31 and Elk Lake Road ideal for a southern clustering of higher density. **Jean Derenzy** concurred that clustering of R-3 makes more sense. Both the Kewadin area and south of the Village area could be screened nicely from the major roads for aesthetics and preservation of the rural character. She feels clustering of development is in keeping with the Master Plan and that we should also be considering parcel #8 as part of that south cluster. **Matt Webb** indicated he was also in agreement with the idea of defining clustered areas where the higher density already exists. He feels we should be look to define two separate areas one toward the Kewadin area and one to the south of the Village. **Becky Lancaster** indicated that she concurred with adding parcel #8 to a cluster and went on to state that the Committee is charged with the two fold assignment of creating mixing higher residential uses along with the aesthetics and infrastructure of any development. She indicated her original choices were for parcels 7-8-9 clustered for all of the reasons already mentioned. **Lauren Dake** indicated she was of the same mind with her initial choices by clustering higher density to the south side close to the Village, but feels parcel 6 might be to far away. She also indicated that we should be picking parcels that would be desirable for R-3 and not just picking for the sake of have some R-3 identified. **Bill White** when asked about parcel #6 indicated that it is quite wet in areas but would support the growing of hay. He also indicated the Committee should not base their decisions solely on a parcels current use as of today even if the current use is agricultural for over time and different economy a property’s use could likely change.

**Renee' Mischel** stated we are to remember that parcels selected need to be the best use of our communities' resources, and felt it is a good idea to encourage developers into areas in the Township where sewers are already needed. She feels we should be looking more closely at parcels 16-17-18 for these very reasons. **Matt Webb** indicated he was also in agreement with Renee' and Shen with the idea of defining clustered areas where higher density already exists would be of benefit. He feels we should be looking to define separate areas one toward the Cairn Highway area (parcels 10-11-12) and the other to the south of the Village (7,8 & 9). **Pug Sliger** indicated he feels parcels 7-8-9 are ideal for clustered developments. **Vince Cooper** indicated he likes parcel #9.

**OTHER COMMENTS:** **Chair Amos** asked if the audience had any comments or suggestions. **Emile Sabty** recapped why various parcels were placed on his list being highway, infrastructure and size of the parcel. Higher density requires larger parcels so that more open space can be created within a development if there is sufficient land to start with. Discussion regarding the number of units that could be placed on a single acre resulted in 6 units per acre but doesn't take into account parking or open space. **Patrick Brady** when asked if he had an opinion replied "the thrust of development should be built in and not thrust out". **Steve Ravezzani** indicated he is in favor of parcel #9 as it is compatible with the Village. **Bob Bassett** stated he was impressed with the Committee and pleased with the work being put into this project.

**Chair Amos** indicated the Committee should now, based on all they have learned so far, begin the process of working toward a final list. Discussion on parcels 6,7,8 & 9, with a comment from **Marshall Wright** that 6 & 8 might be considered as viewsheds. A motion was put forth by **Marshall Wright, 2<sup>nd</sup> Matt Webb** to place parcels 7 and 9 on the master list. By roll call vote the **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimous). **Chair Amos** indicated she will add parcels 7 and 9 to the list being compiled toward the final recommendation list. As the time was getting late **Chair Amos** stopped further consideration of additional parcels at this time.

Discussion of a date for the next meeting resulted in **Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM** as the next meeting.

**ADJOURN:** A motion was made by **Jean Derenzy, 2<sup>nd</sup>** by **Marshall Wright** to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shen Smith, Secretary  
R-3 Joint Committee

