

REPORT TO PARKS COMMITTEE July 17, 2007

GOAL - New Parks and Recreational activities in Scio Township

PROGRESS –

- 1) Prop J passed (2004), generating more than \$5 million over 10 years to get land for, in part, “new parks”, and “recreational activities”.
- 2) Somehow (and that is a big question) criteria for the acquisition of land for parks and recreation purposes was left out of the original Scio Township Board ordinance for the implementation of Prop J. Now the board has included criteria for the purchase of land for parks and recreation within the ordinance.
- 3) The Scio Township Board has ordered a Parks and Recreation Plan from Carlisle Wortman, which will provide a lot of good information and make us eligible for state grants.
- 4) The Parks Committee has been authorized by the Board of Trustees to bring proposals that relate to parkland before the Board.
- 5) The survey of residents has spoken. It’s summary letter said “A large majority of residents thinks that Scio needs additional public parks”.
- 6) The Scio Township Board has voted to spend 25% of Prop J funds on the fee simple purchase of land to be owned by Scio Township, (although they refused to say that any part of that land should be useable for purpose like parks and recreation).

This is all just peachy, but nearly three years after the passage of Prop. J, we have made no progress on the ground whatsoever towards getting a park going for recreation, (except that Barry did compile a partial list of potential park properties – before he was told to stop doing this by members of the LPC).

Supposedly, the Board has given the LPC until November to come up with significant progress on parks and recreation.

We know that our State of Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application deadlines in 2008 are April 1 and August 1. What must be done now to insure an end to our Glacial pace of progress? Here are the most basic first steps that could be taken to get moving (and any attempt to block them would be transparent obstructionism aimed at thwarting the will of the voters expressed long ago in Prop. J.),

- 1) Barry could be encouraged, by the LPC or the Board, to finish his list of good potential park properties for Scio. He knows Scio so well. That is the key step.

- 2) The Board could pass a motion to make it known to our commissions and consultants that it is Board policy to pursue land for park and recreation uses and we want all appropriate efforts made to be ready to submit a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund on either April 1 or August 1 of 2008.

thank you, Chuck Ream

I called Lucy of Carlisle Wortman, who also spoke to Doug Lewan, to ask them when the Parks and Recreation Plan for Scio Township will be done.

She said that April 1 is the deadline for the submission of our proposal for parks funding, which means that our Parks and Recreation Plan would have to be given to the State by mid March.

Many steps must be completed before the Plan can be submitted to the State of Michigan, so we are right up against the deadline. There will need to be a month long period of review where the plan is open for comment. There must be a public hearing.

(And we must make a strong showing at the Planning Fair Aug 13 and make the need for parks and recreation very clear).

Therefore, there must be a complete draft of the Parks and Rec plan **by January**, and Carlisle Wortman is perfectly capable of meeting that deadline **if extra delays not encountered**.

As this draft is being created there will be a "steering committee" to shape it, which Lucy will chair. We must certainly be part of this committee.

The committee will come up with goals and priorities for the next 5 years. It was suggested that in a plan such as this it was better to include a lot, sort of like a wish list or vision.

Lucy said that there is a second date (Aug 1) by which applications for land purchase could be submitted but that it was much preferred to get our application in by the April 1 date (since proposals that are not funded in April may be revised after review and then resubmitted in by August 1 - and have a better chance of approval)