

# **Grand Traverse Commons Joint City of Traverse City/Garfield Township Planning Commission**

**Wednesday, June 1, 2016**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Governmental Center, 2nd Floor  
Committee Room**

**400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, MI 49684**

**Posted: May 26, 2016**

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## **AGENDA**

1. Call Meeting To Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes of the April 6, 2016 Regular Meeting and the May 2, 2016 Special Meeting.
4. Kids Creek Restoration Project and Storm Water Management Project for Grand Traverse Commons. (Sarah U'Ren, The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay presenting.)
5. Grand Traverse Commons Draft Zoning Ordinance
  - a. Review of possible changes of the size and shape of Development Envelopes.
  - b. Review of Subarea 3 (M-3) Development Envelope Height Limits
6. Charter Township of Garfield request to the State of Michigan to convey a 40 acre parcel adjacent to the Grand Traverse Commons for use as public parkland.
7. Reports and Updates
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

# Grand Traverse Commons Planning Commission

Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, April 6, 2016  
Governmental Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Committee Room

## MINUTES

Present: Commissioners Hale, Serratelli, Clark, Warren  
Absent: Racine

Staff: Russ Soyring, City Planning Director

1. Call Meeting To Order. The meeting commenced at 7:02 PM.
2. Review and Approval of the Agenda - Conflict of Interest.

Motion by Commissioner Warren, supported by Commissioner Clark to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Minutes of the February 3, 2016 Regular Meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Serratelli, supported by Commissioner Clark to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion passed.

4. Final Report of the US-31/M-37 (Division Street) Planning and Environmental Linkages Process

Patty O'Donnell, MDOT presented the report.  
Discussion by the Commission regarding historic properties, congestion issues, pedestrian crossings, impact on local streets and sidewalks along Division Street.

Kathleen Steves, 800 Cottageview commented on audible pedestrian crossings  
Ray Minervini, TMG, commented pedestrian crossing challenges on Division Street.

A motion was made by Commissioner Serratelli, seconded by Commissioner Clark to endorse the Final Report of the US-31/M-37 (Division Street) Planning and Environmental Linkage Process and urged continued work towards improvements on Division Street in recognition of the time constraints the ballot language has to exercise use of parkland for the street modifications that

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provides opportunities to improve pedestrian access to the Grand Traverse Commons, the botanical gardens, the historic barns and Munson Medical Center.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Racine was absent.

5. Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan Committee.

Commissioner Serratelli reported out the Master Plan Committee determined the Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan does not need to be revised or rewritten at this time. The Committee recommends the minor changes to the Master Plan be initiated after the draft Development Regulations currently being worked have been adopted. The current Master Plan is being used as a basis for the development regulations.

A motion was made by Commissioner Warren, supported by Commissioner Clark that the Grand Traverse Commons Planning Commission determined it is not necessary for the Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan adopted in 2010 be rewritten and any minor revision should be deferred until the draft regulations have been adopted.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously. Commissioners Racine was absent.

6. Grand Traverse Commons Draft Development Regulations

- a. Review of possible changes of the size and shape of Development Envelopes.
- b. Review of (M-3) Development Envelope Building Height Limits

Mr. Soyering reviewed the memo regarding proposed changes to the development envelope areas. Staff supports having the envelopes abut one another but feels there needs to be more analysis regarding the expansion of the envelopes areas. Some of the areas suggested to be included as a development area are areas that incorporate creeks, wetlands and steep hillsides.

Discussion.

Raymond Minervini commented and agrees with staff that more review was needed on the extent of the development envelopes and supported the Planning Commission walking these areas to get a better understanding of the physical aspects of these properties.

Chairperson Hale inquired about the suggested building heights for the M-3 envelope also known as Parking Lot K.

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Planning Commission discussed and expressed an interest to have balloons raised to the elevation that would reflect how tall any new building at this location could be developed under the proposed building height limits. Photoshop imagery from different vantage points were also discussed as a tool to help the Planning Commission visualize the impact new buildings built at maximum heights would have on historic buildings in the vicinity.

Mr. Soyering stated that MMC has been asked to prune or remove trees along Cottageview Drive to address safety concerns regarding the flight path for the helicopter pad.

Discussion by the Commission.

7. Reports and Updates.

None.

8. Public Comment

Raymond Minervini, TMG provided information about a possible building expansion building where Left Foot Charlie's and Higher Grounds is located and for Building 58.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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Dated

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Jan Warren, Secretary

# Grand Traverse Commons Planning Commission

Special Meeting  
Wednesday, May 2, 2016  
Higher Grounds Trading Company Parking Area  
806 Red Drive, Traverse City MI 49684

## Walking Tour

### MINUTES

Present: Commissioners Hale, Clark, Racine, Warren

Absent: Serratelli

Staff: Rob Larrea, Township Planning Director, Brian VanDenBrand, Deputy Planner,  
Russ Soyring, City Planning Director

1. Call Meeting To Order. The meeting commenced at 12:04 PM.
2. Walking Tour

The Planning Commission and members of the public walked to Development Envelope M-3. Steve Tongue and Doug Wiperman both from Munson Medical Center stated that the red balloons were raised to the existing height limits set for this Development District in the Grand Traverse Commons District Plan.

Light winds made the balloons fly at an angle with a lower height. Discussion continued as the Commission walked to the front lawn of Building 50 to discuss view corridors and building types for the M-3 Development District.

Discussion. Public in attendance commented including Karen Anderson, Cordia and residents from Building 50.

The Planning Commission toured Development Envelopes V-2, V-4 and V-7 and the areas The Minervini Group would like to extend for additional development possibilities. Ray Minervini and Raymond Minervini commented and answered questions from the Commission during the walk.

Discussion.

3. Public Comment

Justin Reed, Cottageview Drive commented on maintaining natural areas within the Commons.

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SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
May 2, 2016  
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4. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 PM.

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Dated

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Jan Warren, Secretary



Russ Soyring <rsoyring@traversecitymi.gov>

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## Update - TWC stormwater planning work at GT Commons

5 messages

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Sarah U'Ren <suren@gtbay.org>

Fri, Apr 22, 2016 at 10:56 AM

To: Russ Soyring <rsoyring@traversecitymi.gov>, Roberto Larrea <rlarrea@garfield-twp.com>

Hi guys,

As I think you both may know already, TWC has a large-scale restoration project going on along Kids Creek. Right now a lot of our work is concentrated on Munson's campus, but we are also in the middle of a stormwater planning project for the GT Commons and GT Pavilions area and have planned work there as well.

Since the area we're working on is covered by the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission, I wanted to be sure to keep you updated on our activities in that area.

I actually think one of our planned BMPs we're installing this summer with the Pavilions and Munson falls within the boundaries of the commission... it's a constructed stormwater wetland at the NW corner of Medical Campus Drive and Elmwood Ave. Is that within your boundary? We also have a stream restoration project planned for this fall or early next Spring on the tributary that runs between the Pavilions and Commons (we call it Tributary AA of Kids Creek, but Ray Minervini said it's also called '90-degree Creek'). Would the joint planning commission like to know more about either one of these projects?

We are also drafting a stormwater management plan for the Commons/Pavilions area, just like we did for Munson. As of right now we have worked with Chris DeGood and others from AECOM to inventory the area and look at site conditions. We recently had a meeting with representatives from the Pavilions and GT Commons to discuss potential stormwater BMPs aimed at reducing the quantity and improving the quality of stormwater entering Kids Creek, as well as reducing flooding in the area. AECOM is planning to have a draft of the plan ready for review later this summer.... Would you like us to share that with you at that time?

Feel free to call/email with any questions, or pass this along to the commission members if appropriate!

Thanks,

Sarah

**Sarah U'Ren**

**Program Director**

**The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DEQ AWARDS MORE THAN \$598K TO THE WATERSHED CENTER**

**FOR KIDS CREEK RESTORATION**

Traverse City – The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay will continue work to restore Kids Creek with a \$598,573 grant for its “Green Infrastructure and Stream Restoration in the Kids Creek Watershed” project from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Non-Point Source Pollution Control Fund.

The Watershed Center has been working on Kids Creek-related projects since July 2003. Currently, a 2-mile portion of Kids Creek is on the State Impaired Waters List due to sedimentation and stormwater runoff. Much of the project over the last few years has coincided with the preparation for and construction of the new Cowell Family Cancer Center on the northern part of Munson Medical Center’s campus.

“We’ll be continuing our partnership with Munson Medical Center on our Kids Creek Restoration Project by installing green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques to reduce stormwater runoff to the creek at additional locations on Munson’s campus,” said Sarah U’Ren, program director at The Watershed Center.

Green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques are small-scale stormwater management practices that mimic and work with nature to reduce stormwater runoff. These strategies use things such as green space, native landscaping, pervious pavement, green roofs, and other techniques to encourage water to infiltrate into the ground.

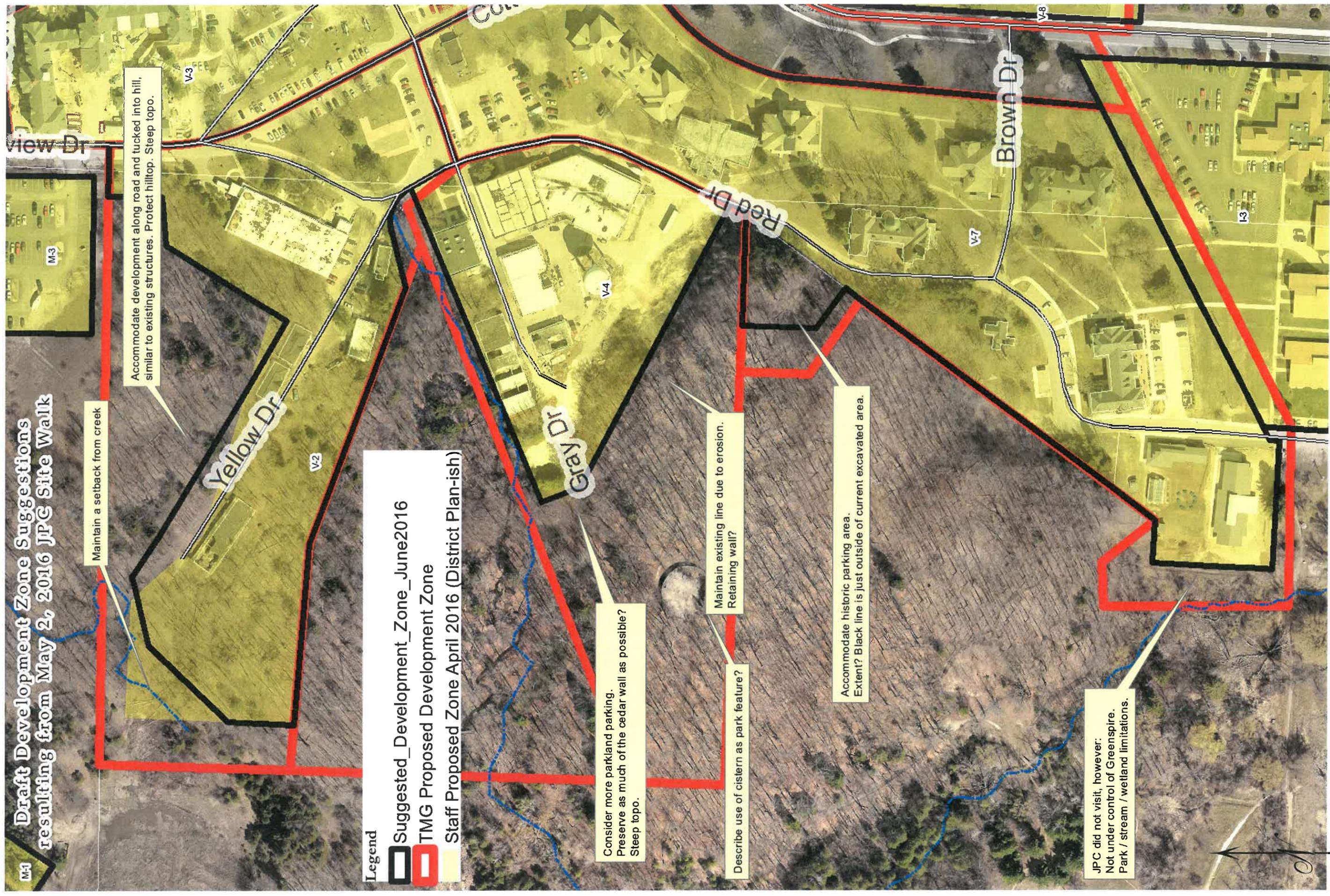
“This project will complement what we’ve already done along Kids Creek to effectively and noticeably reduce the amount of runoff making it to the Creek during rain events and snowmelt,” said U’Ren. “In addition to reducing the volume of water to the stream, it will also reduce sediment, phosphorus, nitrogen and other pollutants commonly related to stormwater runoff.”

The project will also include stream restoration activities to restore natural stream function to Tributary A of the Creek on the Munson property and work with the City of Traverse City to improve preservation of urban vegetation resources for stormwater management.

Trees and other riparian vegetation are critical components of healthy watersheds because they prevent erosion, filter contaminants before they enter waterways, absorb rainfall and snow melt, recharge aquifers and slow stormwater runoff.

Working on long-term protections for urban vegetation is especially important in Traverse City, which is the largest urban center in the 1,000-square-mile Grand Traverse Bay watershed and the largest input of stormwater to Grand Traverse Bay, said U’Ren. “Kids Creek is located on the west-side of Traverse City so any effort to improve the preservation of urban vegetation will help reduce stormwater impacts to the Creek and ultimately Grand Traverse Bay.”

**M-1 Draft Development Zone Suggestions resulting from May 2, 2016 JPC Site Walk**



Maintain a setback from creek

Accommodate development along road and tucked into hill, similar to existing structures. Protect hilltop. Steep topo.

- Legend**
- Suggested\_Development\_Zone\_June2016
  - TMG Proposed Development Zone
  - Staff Proposed Zone April 2016 (District Plan-ish)

Consider more parkland parking. Preserve as much of the cedar wall as possible? Steep topo.

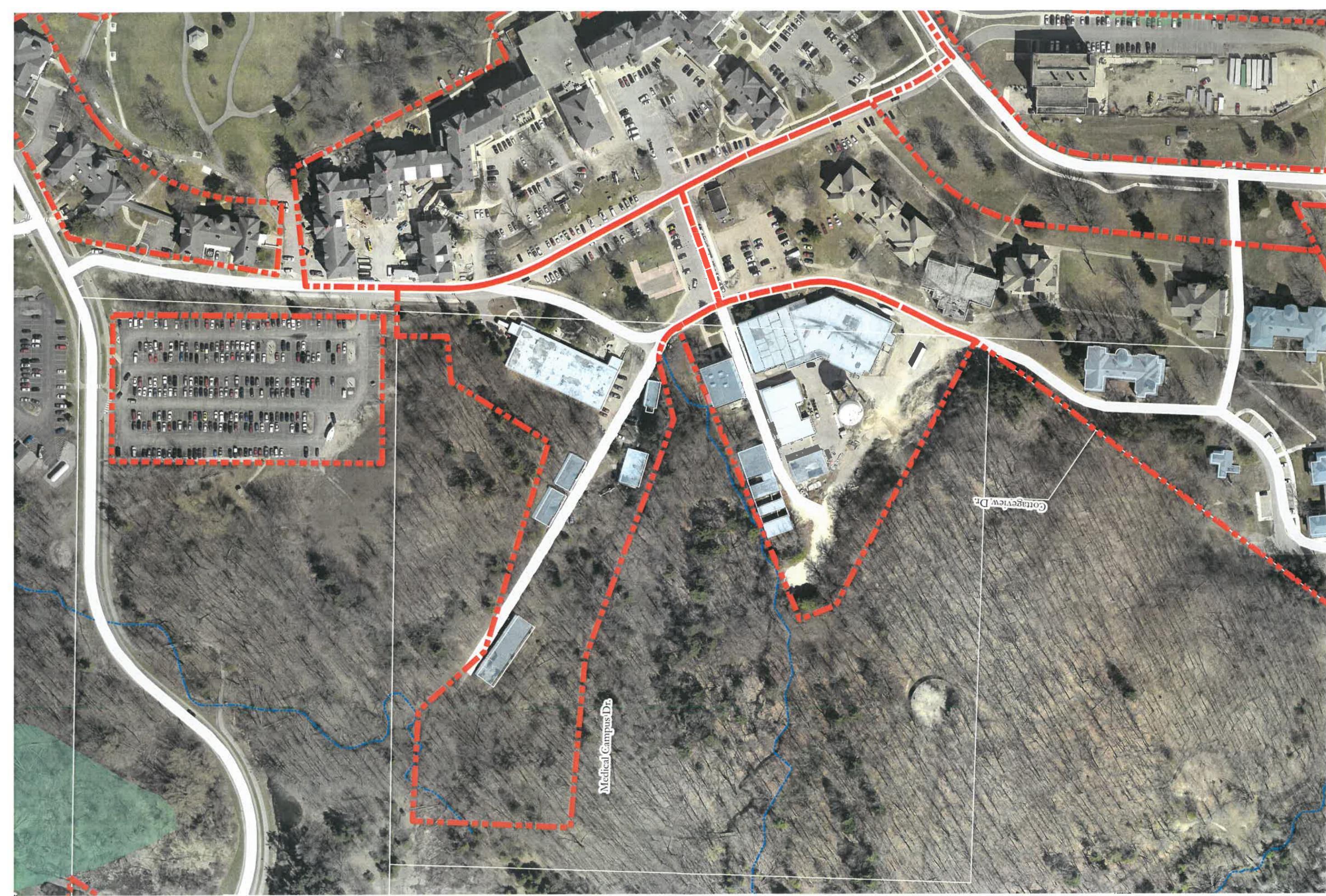
Describe use of cistern as park feature?

Maintain existing line due to erosion. Retaining wall?

Accommodate historic parking area. Extent? Black line is just outside of current excavated area.

JPC did not visit, however: Not under control of Greenspire. Park / stream / wetland limitations.



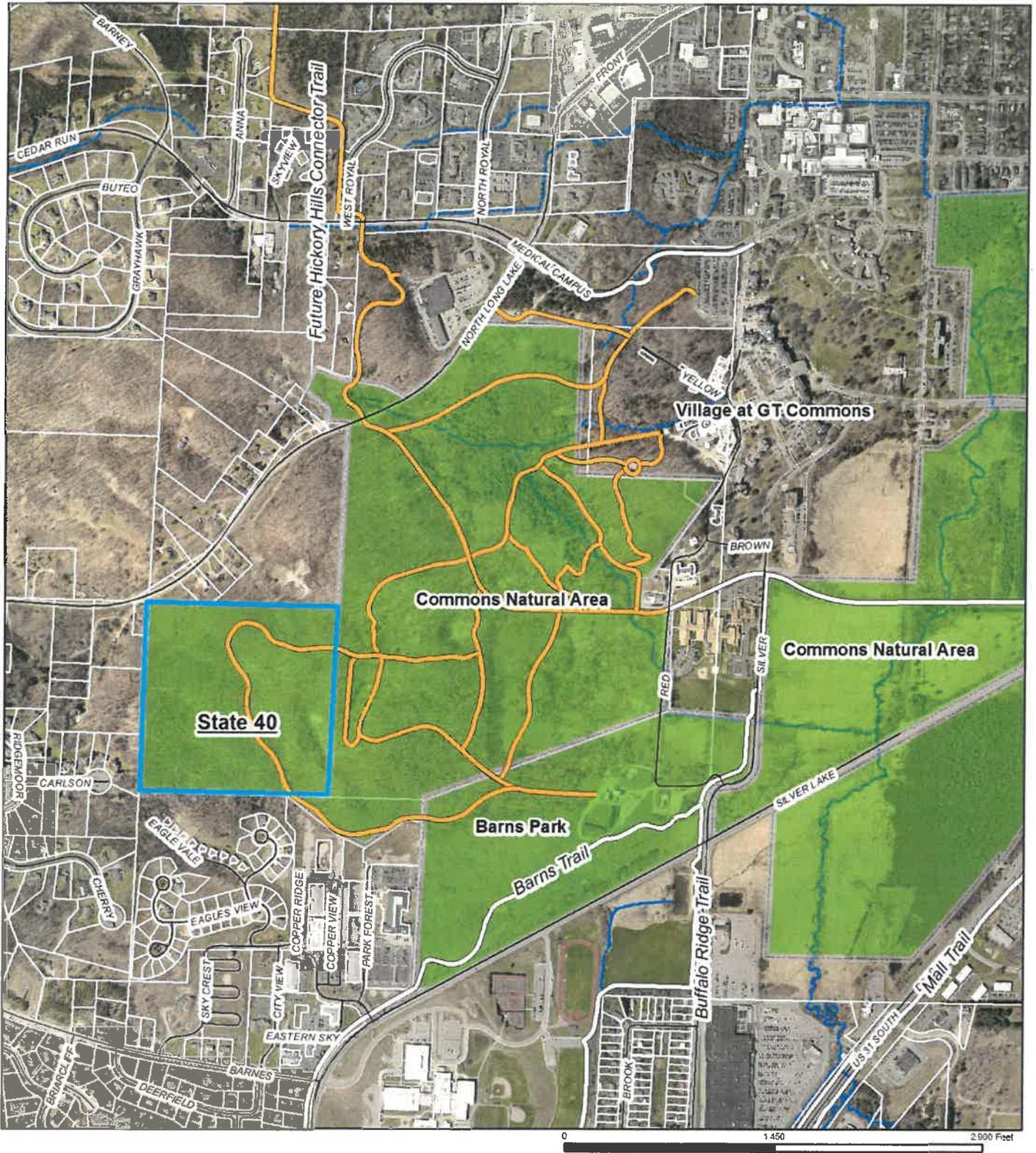


Medical Campus Dr

Collageview Dr



0 65 130 260 Feet



### Parcel Map

**Legend**

- Bike Path
- Singletrack
- Parkland
- Parcel 2015

Garfield Charter Township  
 3848 Veterans Drive  
 Traverse City, MI 49684  
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This map is based on digital databases prepared by Garfield Township. The Township does not warrant, expressly or impliedly, that the information on this map is current or positionally accurate. Always contact a surveyor to be sure of where your property lines are located.

**NOT A LEGAL SURVEY**

Garfield Township Planning Dept: 1/7/2016

		<b>Charter Township of Garfield</b>	
		<b>Planning Department Report No. 2016-08</b>	
Prepared:	January 6, 2016	Pages:	Page 1 of 3
Meeting:	January 12, 2016 Township Board	Attachments:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject:	Application for public use deed - Grand Traverse Commons "State 40"		

**STAFF COMMENT:**

Mr. Matt McDonough, with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, has brought to our attention a possible opportunity to acquire the State-owned property which is adjacent to the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. Known as the "State 40," it is already very popular among park users, who routinely cross the invisible property lines and enjoy all of the land as one park. The subject property measures 40-acres and abuts the west line of the Commons, to the north of the Copper Ridge development (see map, page 3). This land was originally part of the Traverse City State Hospital campus.

Formerly, a Michigan DNR communications tower was located on this property, which is why the land was retained when the hospital was closed and the other property was deeded to the Township to become the Commons Natural Area. However, the communication tower has now been removed and the land is no longer considered an essential parcel for the State to hold onto.

Though this land has been used by the public for years, its future became imperiled with the removal of the tower and when the Michigan DNR Real Estate Division, acting on its policy to consolidate its state forests, classified the property on its "dispose of" list, meaning at some point it could be auctioned to the highest bidder.

We have been working with the DNR for a number of years to express our desire to acquire the property, to keep it open to the public as one of the most unique and important portions of the Commons, and protect it from development. Unfortunately, those efforts have stalled, but as noted above, there may be another opportunity.

Knowing that we are actively planning for the future of this park, Mr. McDonough informed Staff that the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act of 1994 allows the State to convey tax-reverted property to a municipality for public use, for a nominal fee. This property was tax-reverted in 1939.

Therefore, attached to this report is a resolution to request the DNR to convey the State 40 to the Township so that it can be incorporated into the Commons Natural Area. As the Board is aware, we have undertaken a number of planning and management activities at this park, including hazardous tree management and multi-use trail planning. It would be a great time to acquire the property so that it can be officially integrated it into the planning and improvements which are ongoing at the Commons, while ensuring that it will always remain open to the public.

In closing, this appears to be a unique opportunity to acquire this key property without needing to compete in a potentially expensive bidding process. The application fee is only \$300.00.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

(MOTION) THAT Resolution 2016-04-T, authorizing an application to the DNR for conveyance of the "State 40" to Garfield Township for public purposes, be approved, with the application fee of \$300.00 to be taken out of the park fund.

*Attachments:*

*Resolution 2016-04-T*

*Application for Public Use Deed*

*Application narrative*



### Parcel Map

**Legend**

- Bike Path
- Singletrack
- Parkland
- Parcel 2015

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NOT A LEGAL SURVEY

Garfield Township Planning Dept: 1/7/2016

## APPLICATION FOR CONVEYANCE OF STATE LAND FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES:

### APPLICATION NARRATIVE

The Charter Township of Garfield, Grand Traverse County is requesting that the State of Michigan convey parcel #05-008-049-00 to the Township for use as public parkland.

Known in Traverse City as the "State 40," this property is already very popular among park users, who routinely cross the invisible property lines and enjoy all of the land as one park. The subject property measures 40-acres and abuts the west line of the Township's 140-acre Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area and is proximate to the City of Traverse City & Garfield Township Joint Recreational Authority's 56-acre Historic Barns Park (see map, last page).

#### History

This land was tax-reverted to the State of Michigan in 1939, and became a part of the Traverse City State Hospital campus. Founded in 1885, the philosophy of the institution was to surround mentally ill patients with beauty in order to help cure ailments. In addition to the beautiful Kirkbride main buildings (which became the Village at Grand Traverse Commons), the campus was surrounded by arboretums, a working farm (which became the Historic Barns Park), and woodlands, hills, and streams (which became the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area).

After the State Hospital was shuttered in 1989, the State deeded the majority of the land to the Grand Traverse Redevelopment Corporation. Ultimately, this land was then conveyed between Garfield Township, the City of Traverse City, the Traverse City / Garfield Township Joint Recreation Authority (each for parkland), and The Minervini Group (developer for the historic redevelopment project).

The State 40, however, was retained because it was the site of a State of Michigan communications tower. At or around the time that the communication tower was removed, the property was listed on the Real Estate Division's "dispose of" list.

Though this land has been used and enjoyed by the public for years, its future became imperiled. The Township has been working with the DNR for a number of years to express our desire to acquire the property in order to keep it open to the public as a unique and important portion of the Commons, and to protect it from development.

#### Current status of Grand Traverse Commons Campus

There are a lot of exciting things happening at the Commons. The Minervini Group continues to redevelop The Village at Grand Traverse Commons, which is one of the largest historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects in the country. Having recently completed Building "50," the original massive Kirkbride structure, the project is moving on to a number of outbuildings to create a unique and thriving mixed-use community, including restaurants, retail shops, professional offices, bakeries, schools, market-rate and subsidized housing for all age

groups, and more. The surrounding parkland, hiking and biking trails are heavily used by Traverse City residents and visitors.

Just to the south of the Village and southeast of the State 40, the Historic Barns Park is also under active development. As noted above, this area once served as a functioning farm that kept the hospital fully self-sufficient. Anchored by two massive barns, one of which was recently renovated as an event venue, the site is also home to Traverse City's Botanic Garden. Two regional TART Trails, the Buffalo Ridge Trail and the Historic Barns Trail, converge in this park.

Garfield Township is actively working to improve the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. In the winter of 2016, a hazardous tree removal plan will be implemented to remove nearly 500 trees identified by a forester as a hazard to trail users. Concurrently, we are working with a local stakeholder group to inventory all trails in the park, both marked and unmarked, to revise and improve the system. Our end goal is to design a high quality trail system to accommodate hiking, mountain biking of various disciplines, skiing, snowshoeing, and snow biking.

Stakeholder groups are at work to establish a snow biking trail at the Commons, over the shared property of the Township, City, and The Minervini Group. Regionally, capable individuals are also pursuing a single-track connection to Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows, less than a mile to the north and where active park planning and investment is also underway. This connection between the Commons, Hickory, and TART's Leelanau trail will establish a premier single-track opportunity in the heart of Traverse City.

Lastly, the Garfield Township Park Plan (approved by and on file with DNR Grants Management) recognizes and supports acquisition of the State 40 as an important goal.

#### *Investments from DNR Trust Fund*

The Township has worked closely with the Natural Resources Trust Fund in order to generate much of the park momentum described above. The Trust Fund has provided grants to Garfield Township for both the Historic Barns Park and Gardens development project, which helped to fund the Historic Barns Trail as well as renovation of the park's visitor center, and also a grant for Phase II of the Buffalo Ridge Trail, which connects the residential areas of Garfield Township to the Grand Traverse Commons.

#### *Importance of State 40 to Recreation*

This property already functions as part of the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. It helps provides access to the overall parkland from adjacent development areas (Copper Ridge). Due to the elevation change on the property, it is critical to the development of a multi-use trail system within the overall park. Starting with lower elevation to the south, it gradually rises to the north, providing a challenging but doable climb to the highest elevations on the property (a lot of the other elevation change within the overall park is simply too steep for sustainable trails). The Conquer the Village Mountain Bike Race, growing in popularity every year, depends on the State 40 for its route.

The property is also already home to, and the best location for, a number of freeride mountain biking trails. Riders from all over the state come to this property to enjoy these trails. Garfield Township's intention is to continue to encourage the development of safe, sustainable freeride trails as part of a multi-discipline mountain biking draw, including the IMBA-quality singletrack, the freeride zone, and a to-be-built skills park, pump track, and dirt jump area located off of North Long Lake Road.

In closing, the conveyance of this property will allow the Township to formally fold it into the planning and management activities which are underway at the overall park, and secure it for the enjoyment of future generations of Traverse City residents and visitors.

Thank you for your consideration of our application for conveyance of this land.