



South Campus Entrance

Introduction

As part of the 2004 millage approval, the City of Traverse City – Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority (“Rec Authority”) is providing funding for the entrance from Silver Lake Road as a southern ingress/egress to the Grand Traverse Commons.

The Rec Authority desires to ensure the most effective design and implementation of the South Campus Entrance (formerly known as the Franke Road Extension) that meets legal and regulatory requirements, provides optimal access to all forms of transportation, and respects the natural and historical features of the Barns property and the Commons as a whole.

In order to meet that goal, the Rec Authority is engaging road agencies, local governments, adjacent property users, and the community to provide input on the most effective design for the South Campus Entrance. In addition, the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission, established by resolution of the City Commission and the Garfield Township Board for planning and zoning jurisdiction for the Commons, has initiated a process to prepare a Master Plan and zoning ordinance that includes a transportation plan.

These efforts are being coordinated to address the key issues of traffic flow, pedestrian access, and historic and natural features preservation for the development of the Commons.

Background

The Traverse City State Psychiatric Hospital operated from the late 1800’s until 1985, when methods to treat individuals with mental disabilities shifted from institutionalized to community placement. A dedicated group of local citizens worked to secure the property from the State and develop a visionary plan for its future use.

An important stipulation of the transaction from the State to the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation of the former State Hospital property was the requirement to provide a southern entrance to the property from Silver Lake Road.

Memorandum of Understanding: In 1993, a Memorandum of Agreement between the Michigan Department of Management and Budget and the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation and Act 38, P.A. 1993 provided for conveyance of Parcel RR’ (the Barns and surrounding property) with a provision that a 66’ strip of land shall be identified prior to conveyance and will be dedicated for the development of a public access road from Silver Lake Road to the Arnell Engstrom property.

Easement: In 1995, the State Administrative Board conveyed the 66 foot easement, not a fee simple conveyance, to the GTCRC through a quit claim deed. The deed stipulated that

the State will convey the 66 foot parcel “upon development of a final road design, and upon request by the City,” The conveyance will include a reverter clause that, in the event the parcel is not used for public road purposes, the State may take possession and title to the parcel.

District Plan: The District Plan, approved by the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township in 1994, regulates development on the Grand Traverse Commons property. The District Plan calls for the removal of Elmwood Street extended from Silver Lake to near Eleventh Street and proposes a new access road in the southern portion of the District to connect Eleventh Street to Silver Lake Road (p. 46).

City – Minervini Letter of Understanding: In 2007, The City of Traverse City and the Minervini Group, the developer for core and other areas of the Commons, entered into a Letter of Understanding to clarify the intent for the use and design of the 66 foot public easement of Silver Lake Drive that would connect the South Campus Entrance to the main campus with a focus on pedestrian use as the primary design consideration, significant design consideration to bicycle traffic and parking in the right-of-way, and minimize negative impact of traffic through traffic calming or similar measures.

Design Requirement: The State Attorney General and the City Attorney agree that a final road design must be prepared and a request submitted to the State for all property transfer requirements to be met.

Failure to prepare a road design and provide public access from Silver Lake Road to the northeast corner of the TBAISD property may bring into question the viability of the transfer of the Barns property, but at a minimum, may invoke reversionary rights for the 66 foot strip of land to the State, resulting in a loss of local control for the fate of the South Campus Entrance.

Givens

To ensure that all participants understand the framework to generate ideas and opportunities, a set of givens have been established by the Recreational Authority.

These Givens include:

- ✓ The terms of the property transaction between the State of Michigan and the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation must be met.
- ✓ The Grand Traverse Commons District Plan must be followed.
- ✓ State and Federal historic standards must be followed.
- ✓ The Recreational Authority, the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission, and the City Commission will agree on the final design of the South Campus Entrance.
- ✓ The City Commission will have the final decision over the development of the South Campus Entrance.