STATE OF MICHIGAN

COUNTY OF OTTAWA

PARK TOWNSHIP

IN RE: PARK WEST DRAIN (Proposed)

BOARD OF DETERMINATION

Proceedings commenced at 7:00 p.m. on November 11, 2009 at Harbor Lights Middle School, Performing Arts Center, 1024 136th Avenue, Holland, Michigan 49424 - In Re: Park West Drain (Proposed), Board of Determination, held before Nancy A. Spykman, Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 525 and Notary Public for Ottawa County, Michigan.

APPEARANCES:

Paul Geerlings, Drain Commissioner
Linda Brown, Chief Deputy Drain Com.
Michelle L. Wittingen, Assistant

Board of Determination:

Bill Cargo, Chairman
Peggy Weick, Secretary
Ken Souter, Board Member

Bill Chappell, Driesenga & Associates

Holland, Michigan

November 11, 2009

Commencing at 7:00 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS:

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Hello, Folks. It's 6:30, and the meeting is supposed to start. We have probably over 100 people outside lined up waiting to get in. We'll be a tad late starting, and I just thought that I would let you know why. Please relax and have some neighborly conversations, and we'll get started as soon as we can.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: It's past 6:30, so we are going to start the meeting.

First of all, it is November 11, Veterans Day, and I would just like to say thank you to all of the Veterans and their Families.

(Long Applause.)

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Thank you for that long applause. I'm sure they appreciate it.

First of all, my name is Paul Geerlings. I'm the Drain Commissioner for Ottawa County and have been. Since March/April of 2008, until now, we have had an inordinate amount of precipitation. The year 2008 brought 48 inches to Ottawa County. Our average is 35 inches.

We had significant snowfall in '08/'09, and significant rains -- December 27th comes to mind. July 19. A week ago Friday. So, I had some important dates in my mind. I don't know about you folks, but several of you do, as I'm sure you do, as it came into your homes.

When you get water in your home, it's a very

emotional issue. When you are asked to pay for it, that is a very emotional issue. I recognize that. I would like to remind you of what my Mother always reminded me of, remember who you are when you speak tonight. We'll appreciate that. Thank you.

The Board of Determination is -- I have selected three people who are comfortable in dealing with public issues, environmental issues, and have some history of such service.

First of all, I have Peggy Weick. Peggy is with the USDA and NRCS over in Grand Haven Township. She actually lives in Ferrysburg.

Next, I have Ken Souter, who is a retired Ottawa County Road Commission employee, who has dealt with drains for his entire career.

Then I have Bill Cargo, the Manager of Grand Haven Township, who deals with public issues, drainage with me over -- over several occasions. So, they do

have some idea on how to deal with public issue.

I encourage you, if you have a statement to make, to come forward. They will call your name. They will give you the opportunity. Please come down and state your name and address. We have Nancy Spykman over here, a Court Reporter, so that every syllable, every comment I say, will be a permanent record, and, further, I have Linda Brown, my Chief Deputy, up here. I also have April Atattoy. I have Michelle Wittingen. I have Terese Conrad, and I have John from the Road Commission for road sedimentation, an inspector, over here, who

will help me get through this tonight, if we can.

Some of you want this drain very badly. So I'm not pushing it down your throats. You don't, half of you, don't realize putting the drain in is going to affect many personally, but I believe it needs to be done.

I would ask that all cell phones be turned off or put in silence mode, so, if the meeting goes long, phones won't ring. And comment cards are being taken care of at the front.

COMMENT: We can't hear you. Turn it up a little bit.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: It's not loud enough? How about now? I will try to keep it right in

front of my mouth. Very good. Thank you.

The function of this meeting is not to address whether or not you are in the district or not in the district. You were invited tonight because you possibly are in the district.

Secondly, how many of you have heard that we're going to lower the ground water in Park Township, and ruin the blueberries? The Drain Commissioner does not have the authority or jurisdiction to lower water -- ground water. We will not be dealing with that tonight, either. We'll be dealing with whether or not a drain is necessary to drain off stormwater/surface water. We'll not deal with ground water.

The only function that this Board has is to listen to your comments, and determine whether or not it is necessary and practicable to drain off the storm

water/surface water in the area. If they determine that is not necessary, we can all go home and forget it, and it cannot be petitioned in that area for a term of one year.

If they determine it is necessary to provide some drainage relief to the people who are suffering, then they turn it over to me. I hire an engineering/surveying company to determine what ground flows into the drain, and I determine how much

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assessments, percentage of costs will be assessed to that property.

The second decision that they make will be whether or not a portion of the cost of this drain is necessary for the health of the community at-large, and whether or not that community will be assessed at-large for that portion. The community being Park Township.

At this time I will administer the oath for the Board Members, and at that time I'll turn it over to them. They will hold a public meeting to elect a chairperson, and a secretary to keep minutes of the meeting, and from that time forward, please address all comments to the Board, and if they have questions, they will ask the Township, Board Members, the Engineer, or myself, or my staff for answers to those questions.

If you Folks would please rise and respond with "I will" after I am through: You and each of you do solemnly swear that you'll faithfully perform and discharge the duties imposed upon you and each of you as required by law as Members of the Board of Determination

appointed by the Drain Commissioner of the County of Ottawa to determine the necessity of a certain drain to be known and designated as the Park West Drain in the Township of Park in said County.

Bill, what's your answer?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I will.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: And Ken?

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: I will.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: And Peggy?

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: I will.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: At this stage -- testing? Nothing? Nothing? Nothing. While they work on that, we'll go on with the next process. We need to elect a secretary and a chairman. Is there any nominations for chairman?

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: I'll nominate Bill Cargo for chair.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Second.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Are there any other nominees? (No response.) Seeing as though they are no other nominations, we'll close the nomination process. All in favor of Bill Cargo being the chairperson, say aye. (All Members voted aye.) I will then act as the Chairperson of this Board of Determination. That was easy.

Next, we need to elect a secretary. I'll nominate Peggy as secretary.

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: There are no other

nominations or proposed nominations. All in favor of Peggy being the secretary, say aye. (All Members voted aye.) Peggy is now the secretary.

At this point, following the Agenda that has been given to us, the Park Township Board would like to make some comments. Who from Park Township will be making the comments?

PARK TWP. SUP. AMANDA PRICE: Good evening. I'm Amanda Price. I'm the Park Township Supervisor. I want to thank you all for being here. This is more of a turnout than we could ever hope for. So, we appreciate your time this evening.

Real quickly, I just want to point out, we have our Board Members here this evening. They are basically Doug Dreyer, Skip Keeter, Jerry Hunsburger, and Mike Toscano is right here. If you have questions afterwards, please feel free to call them or us, and I also want to introduce Jerry Felix, and have him stand up really quickly because -- sorry to draw the attention to you, but we have recently changed our form of government in Park Township. We're no longer -- I'm not a full-time person. I'm a part-time position. Jerry is our full-time township manager, and most questions that you have are directed towards Jerry on a variety of matters. I just wanted to point that out for you.

I want to thank Paul for allowing me to speak this evening. This is typically not done. So, I

want to thank him for that.

I want to take you back as to why we are here this evening. As Paul earlier mentioned, we had an awful lot of precipitation over the last 18-19 months. We had the June 7th event last year. We had the June 19th event this year, on top of record setting snowfall. So, we have had a lot of precipitation -- a lot of snowfall. Some areas and some predictions that we have seen or models, the water table has gone up from anywhere of 6 to 10 feet in Park Township over the last 18 months.

We have taken a lot of steps, as the Township Board, to address the issue in the last 18 months. Earlier this year you will remember, Estate Drive had water completely over it, and made it impassable. So, we authorized that the Township pay for a pump to pump out that road, and that still is actually going on.

Recently it was pumping as much as 16 hours a day. More recently, in the last few days, it has been six hours a day. So, the water table is still very high in that area.

The Board appointed a study committee

earlier this year made up of our citizens and some well-qualified citizens, to help us review and understand what is happening throughout the Township. The committee recommended hiring an engineering firm to study the problem, and after a request-for-bid process, we hired Driesenga & Associates, and we have engineers here this evening from Driesenga.

Driesenga conducted a study of water from the Wyoming water treatment plant, if they were a contributing factor to the high water table, and I'll say it, the Wyoming Water Treatment Plant is not the factor or not the cause for the high water in Park Township. It is a high amount of precipitation that we've had.

We even hired a special hydrology engineer and, he, or they, drilled about 20 different wells throughout the Township in the area of the Wyoming Treatment Plant. It very clearly showed that was not a contributing factor.

The residents on Estate Drive earlier this year had previously filed a petition for -- with the Ottawa County Drain Commission, and at our May 2009 Board meeting, the Township joined in that petition on behalf of the Township, and that is one of the reasons why you are here this evening, because that earlier

petition was expanded by the Township Board.

Driesenga further conducted studies of water levels throughout the Township, and did a thorough examination of existing drains and drainage in the Township. Upon receiving information from the engineering report, the committee developed a report to the Board with several recommendations, and maybe you might have picked up one of these packets of information as you came in, but the recommendations of the study commission were to establish and conduct the Park West Drain because Park West Drain provided the best

long-term relief of surface water, and would be the most cost effective.

They looked at several different options, taking it down different roadways and different paths, but in order to address the issues from the northern side of the Township, down to the southern portion, they felt this was the most effective.

The system is all gravity and no pumps are required, which is a cost savings measure, as well. The system will be an underground system of pipes minimizing surface changes.

The system will serve the most adversely affected areas of the Township including Northern Estates, Quincy, Riley, Greenly and 168th, James,

Lakewood, Perry Avenue. The system is ready to go as petitions have been filed with the Drain Commissioner.

As I mentioned, this system would have the least amount of impact on the blueberry farmers. It's recommended that they study the Waukazoo drainage area drain system. It recommended we initiate storm water system mapping and recommended that we conduct storm water evaluation, and continue on updating our annual report for ditch and drain maintenance on an ongoing basis.

Since the committee presented those results, the drains along Quincy have been cleaned and realigned, and really dramatically affected and improved the area. Post Avenue drains have just been completed, and that is working quite well. One of our engineers said it's working really well. We had a significant amount of

rain, and that has really moved water away from the area.

One of the goals for the Township Board and the study committee -- basically I'll read the statement: To provide a means for the surface water to be removed from problem areas, protect the farms in Park Township, to find a cost effective solution to this problem, and to protect the economic viability of the entire Township, and our individual homes.

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We spent in excess of $100,000 on the drainage studies to-date, and we feel it has been very public. We have involved a lot of our neighbors and friends and we asked for public input. We have been very transparent about this. Probably had about 7 or 8 public meetings on this.

We realize that the cost of the project is a concern for you, and I believe we have outlined a method that will be most cost effective, yet affect or impact the most of the least.

I want you to realize Jerry has been instrumental in doing this. We have applied for other funding mechanisms for this. Through the County, they have a stimulus fund available called the Recovery Zone Facility Program Revolving Line. We have applied for that.

Currently, I believe there is about 31 million dollars available, and we are looking at that, and also the County has a revolving loan program, as well, that we can tap in to. Hopefully, we can get some

grants, so it won't be on a loan basis.

I guess, that's about it. Thank you all for being here, and we appreciate any comments or questions that you have. Give the Township a call. E-mail all of us, if you would like. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The next item -- testing.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Is it on?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: It's on. The next item on the agenda is a presentation by the Engineer, Driesenga & Associates, and, so, I'll turn it over to you, and I'll give you the microphone.

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: That's the good mic.

ENGINEER BILL CHAPPELL: Good evening. My name is Bill Chappell, and I'm with Driesenga & Associates. Our firm was hired to do an extensive study in this western part of Park Township where all of the surface water and underground water problems have been noted.

You'll notice up on the screen, put the one up, it's the incident map, please. There. The first thing we did is gather all of the complaints/calls to the Township that indicated that they had water problems, and every orange dot with a name on the side of it represents an area of problems.

You'll notice it's highly congested in the north end and in the Northland Estates area, coming down Ransom, Estate Drive. We have problems along Greenly, Riley Street coming down. We also have problems down

168th, starting at around Lakewood, going from Lakewood to the Perry Street area.

Now, we also have problems to the east, but the western part of the Township is where the biggest areas of concern were. Once we found out where the problem areas were, we did an investigation of what kind of drainage systems were there, and what we found is basically what I already knew after 40 years of working in this area, is that there is no drain system, or any major system, or major design system in that area.

In other words, it's water seeps into the ground. Most of the time that works fine, but there are periods when the ground water comes up as much as 6 to 8 foot, and I know of at least three times where we have had this type of problem. This particular period of trouble was probably the most severe in my history, but then I'm only 66. So, I don't know what happened before then.

Once we determined where the problem areas were, we started looking at the various options, and what we came up with is the line that you are seeing. The gold line runs down through the center of the Riley Trails area, going up along Estates Drive, and, then, heading north along 160th up towards New Holland. Then it comes down to the south side of Riley Trails, heads

westerly, and, then, goes down 168th to Lake Macatawa.

That is one system that we are looking at.

You'll also notice there are several branches going down Lakewood, James Street, Greenly, Quincy, and Riley. Those are branch systems to the main trunk line.

It's important to keep in mind that this is not a final design. This is a preliminary design. This is a system that we think can work, especially in the area of Riley Trails. There will have to be some issues worked out with the DEQ and with other property owners as we head north. So we have located the problem areas. We provided a means of solving the drainage problems.

The next thing we looked at is: How many people could be serviced by this system? And it's very important to keep in mind when you put together a map like this for this type of meeting, it's imperative that you go out to the outer extremities of what can be serviced by a particular drain. There is a very good possibility that there will be no need to service the South Lakeshore Drive area, for example. But, if that does have a problem, we can service it. So, the people that would be serviced by that South Lakeshore Drive area were included in this preliminary map.

If this is approved to be a project, the Board approves it as a project, then we'll start taking

a look at exactly who is going to be serviced, and, then, we'll fine tune the actual drainage district.

So, what is shown up there is probably the most active, the most people that could possibly be served. It does not represent those that are necessarily going to be included in the drainage system.

That is basically what we have done before

we turn the project over to the Township, who, in turn, turns it over to the Drain Commissioner's Office, which has now turned it over to the Board of Determination.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you. One follow-up question. You have worked on a lot of developing areas, urban/suburban areas, is it unusual in this part of the State not to have a drainage district?

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: It's extremely unusual not to have a drainage district of some type, which is one thing that made this area very difficult to try to get a handle on. Most of the rest of the Township, and most of the rest of the County have some type of drainage system -- be it poor or good. This one didn't. We are trying to create something from scratch where there was nothing before. So, that is unusual.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you. We are going to open it up to comments soon. Before we do, I am going to turn it over to Peggy who has reviewed, as

we all have, a great deal of correspondence that has been given on this issue. Peggy, I am going to turn it over to you to try to give an overview of the correspondence that we have received.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: We would like to have entered into the record the correspondence that was received in respect to this issue. There were 24 in opposition; 3 in support, and 1 that was -- just had questions.

All of these pieces of correspondence will become a part of the record of tonight's proceeding, and

anyone who wishes to read the correspondence -- we're not going to read it out loud because of time constraints tonight with all of the people here, can go to the Ottawa County Drain Commissioner's Office. It's located at 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive in the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex. It's in Suite 141. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: At this stage, we are going to begin moving through testimony and comment cards, and asking people to make comments. One of the things I want to stress is to limit comments to -- we have a very narrow box that this Board of Determination can look at. As far as the issues, we're only looking if problems exists that causes a need for a drain.

So your comments should be directed, yes, there is a problem with surface water and drainage, or, no, there's not a problem with surface water and drainage.

And the second question is: Whether the Township should be assessed a portion of the cost for public health, safety, welfare reasons.

Under State Law, that's all we can do. We cannot deal with other issues. We cannot deal with assessment issues. We cannot deal with whether you should be included in the district or not. Those are questions that will be dealt with later in the process, should it move forward. Understanding that, we'll begin. Before I do, Ken, do you have any comments?

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: No.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: No.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: We're going to be here to listen, and we're going to start, and the first person is -- I can't read it.

Bill Fluharty at 2653 168th Avenue. Is there a Bill Fluharty from that address? Can you come up to the very front and give your comments? We are limiting the comments to about three minutes. So, again, as you prepare your comments, try to keep them to three minutes. There are over 800 people here tonight,

so we are going to hear all of you.

MR. BILL FLUHARTY: All right. One question and comment, if I could. The executive summary expresses a lot of activity, but it's not clear to me what the sequence of events are. Mrs. Price mentioned that some of the drains had been cleared that are not part of the new system, and they seem to be working, and there is some positive news there.

Is there additional activities that can happen with the existing drain systems on the map that you showed here? There is quite a few that exist that could improve the situation.

I guess, my basic question is: What is the sequence of events? How much can be done before this pretty major project has to be done?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I am going to turn this over -- would you like to make a comment on that?

TWP. MAN. JERRY FELIX: Paul, is that okay?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Go ahead, if you would. Jerry Felix is the Township Manager.

TWP. MAN. JERRY FELIX: If I can capture the question? What is going to happen or what is the sequence of all this stuff? From the executive summary, there were five or six different action steps that the committee recommended, and the Board adopted.

Of those action steps, this is one, of course. In the case of the Post Avenue Drain, it's already completed. In the case of the storm water drain, it's up for bids. In case of enforcement or review after authorization, that is in process as part of the proposal that we'll get back from engineering firm. This is all encompassing in terms of basically anything west of 160th.

This is kind of a separate issue. There was some work on Quincy that was an interim step that was done by the Road Commission. We petitioned for it. They came in. I shouldn't say we petitioned. It has a different connotation. We asked them to come in earlier and clean the drains on Quincy, which they did. This is an interim step. This would supercede this interim step because it's under emergency conditions. It does not mean all of the things in the executive summary are happening simultaneously.

MR. BILL FLUHARTY: The question is when do we get to the point that we know for sure this has to be done?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: We are past this point.

MR. BILL FLUHARTY: We are past it?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Again, that is the

purpose of the Board of Determination to determine the necessity of developing the proposed Park West Drain. Thank you.

Gerald VanWoerkom? (No response.)

The next one will be Mr. Lambert.

MR. LAMBERT: I'm at 462 Lakeshore Drive, and, I guess, well, you said already that you are not going to decide tonight who is in the district, who is not in the district, but I would make a case for some of us who I don't believe are in the district.

I'm looking, at least, at the people west of Lakeshore Drive that I don't believe their land drains into this drain district, and so when you are determining who should be in and who should not be in, I think that you need to take a look at what the benefits are for the people who are going to end up being in the drain district.

From what I understand, the water west of Lakeshore -- well, the ground water, I believe moves in a southwesterly direction. At least that is what they told us when we had to hook up to the municipal water because of a plume that supposedly was coming down in a southwesterly direction.

So, I don't believe our land drains into the existing drain district. So, I would urge you to

consider that when you make decisions about who should be in and who should not be in.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Just a clarification. First of all, it's not a sewer. Water travels the same way ground water does. The detailed survey to determine who is in and who is out is very costly and time consuming. So, for the purposes of this meeting, we made the boundaries big enough so that we knew that everybody that was in the drainage district would be invited to this meeting. We did not want to expend the funds before it was determined necessary to build a drain.

MR. LAMBERT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Is there a Barb Cote? And the next will be Lisa Turkstra.

MS. BARB COTE: Yes, I'm Barb Cote, 4211 Lakeshore Drive, approximately where Quincy is. My question is regarding whether there is an overall plan when there are developments, such as what Camp Geneva did, the golf course condominium complex, those kinds of things because their needs to also be, I think, some proactive planning as to whether you do have drainage systems, when you put asphalt in the ground and take some of the absorption areas away.

So, that is kind of my question: Is

that: Do you have policies and procedures that would prevent future incidents like this because I have concerns about how much development may be contributing to some of this.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: What I am going to do is direct you to talk to Jerry Felix at a later time. The planning commission is who deals with development.

Jerry can talk specifically about that.

MRS. COTE: That would be a proactive policy. I don't know if we have that policy. Do we have that?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I can't answer that, so I am going to direct you to Jerry.

Lisa Turkstra. The next is Jim Van De Vosse. I have only been here 20 years, so I can't pronounce all of your names.

MS. LISA TURKSTRA: Hi, Lisa Turkstra, 4260 North 160th. I'm opposed to the plan, at least the assessment part of it, based on the scope that is outlined on the map. I think that everything that I believe that I have heard tonight from the Madame Supervisor and Driesenga & Associates, we have an anomaly in the weather that the Township has not seen in 66 years.

I think we are proposing a drastic solution

to a short-term problem. When we built our house seven years ago, we used environmental soil borings to determine where the high water table was at that point, and where we dug a pond at that time, and although the Drain Commissioner is not allowed to or given permission to lower water tables, everything that I hear is that the suggested situation is bleak because of increased height in the water table.

I don't know how you plan on draining surface water without adversely affecting the water table. If so, and the end result is the lowering of the

water table, who is going to take responsibility for people who are going to be adversely affected by the ponds -- lowering the pond to the point where we don't have one, even though we built our pond in accordance to Park Township and advice from environmental help.

So, not only am I opposed to a knee-jerk reaction to a weather anomaly, I'm opposed to the position that you are not going to affect the water table. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The next will be Brian Douthitt. I can't pronounce any of these names.

MR. JIM VAN DE VOSSE: I am going to have to talk to Felix. So, the next person can go ahead.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Brian? The next one is Wallace Mugg. I like that name.

MR. BRIAN DOUTHITT: I'm Brian. 2041 Laurie Lane. I support the Park West Drain mainly because we have many houses that do not have any place to dispose of any water/groundwater that they might be pumping out of their basements, and that is especially true, it's true throughout all of that area along 168th along Quincy, Riley, Ransom. So, I'm in support of it.

I'm disappointed that we actually won't try to mitigate ground water directly. If that's not within the jurisdiction of the Drain Commissioner, they will -- I will have to accept that.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you. After Wallace Mugg, I have Sue Phillips.

MR. WALLACE MUGG: My name is Wallace Mugg. I live at 4607 168th. This is one of the fringes of the district. We are in the far northwest corner of the Township, near New Holland, across from the water treatment plant.

We do not have a problem at our house. We have some old holes in the basement floor that have exposed sand. I have been monitoring it. The sand has never been damp.

We have not experienced any outstanding water on the lawn. We are on top of all beach sand. I do not get a direct benefit from what this district is going to provide.

One of the questions that I have would be a publication of what a minimum assessment would be, and if this is more than I would care to contribute for the public good, is there a way to redistrict to exclude these areas or some sort of opportunity for a homeowner to opt out? I would be opposed as it's drawn right now.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Sue Phillips, and John Miner, afterwards.

MS. SUE PHILLIPS: My question was regarding the assessment, so we are not addressing that tonight. I understand.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Are you in support? Do you think there is a necessity or not a necessity?

MS. SUE PHILLIPS: Where we are? I think not.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I appreciate that. John Miner. And, then, after John Miner, is Dave Trinka.

MR. JOHN MINER: John Miner, 350 Erin Isle Drive. It's a question: It appears that the northern

part of the project, when you drive around in the storms, they need some relief.

Did the preliminary engineer look at going through the dunes, straight over, so could it be broken into more economical units to handle 168th, going south, and the northern area going through the dunes?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Again, I can't answer that question. I think that if there is a determination tonight that there is a necessity for storm water improvement, that could be something that the engineers could examine.

The next will be Richard Finlayson.

MR. DAVE TRINKA: My name is Dave Trinka. I'm the Director of Research for MBA Marketing -- blueberry marketing. Several of MBA's members reside in the Township or Park Township. I have had several discussions with them over the past couple of weeks. They are adamantly opposed to the current plan, for good reason.

The improper drainage of soil/water from the fields will cause immediate and irreparable harm to the blueberry bushes, the most economical viable agricultural industry in Park Township.

Management of soil and moisture is critical to the successful establishment and growth of

blueberries, and any change of that water table can have dramatic negative affects on the blueberries. Blueberries have a very shallow root system. They are very inefficient absorbers of water. Most of the roots of the blueberry plant is on the top 12-inches of the plant. Very seldom do they root deeper than 24-inches.

This fiborous root system, no root depth areas, poor absorption of water, and their shallow rooting depths really limits the blueberry plants to the changes in soil moisture and in the reduction of static water depths.

They have a couple of better authorities than me that are in print, and all of them do say that the water table for blueberries needs to be on the top 14 to 24 inches. Any change in that is going to have detrimental and irreversible impact on plant health and production.

I am sure that many of the blueberry growers are aware of a situation south of Muskegon where an interchange was put in, Sternberg Road and U.S. 31. That area was dewatered. Thousands of blueberries died.

Many of the wells in Park Township are used for irrigation, as well as some of the households, are what can be termed as shallow wells.

I guess, I'll just warn you that some of the

property owners that may be petitioning for this, may be also knocking on your doors when their ability to

irrigate from the wells, from the shallow wells, are negatively affected.

So, it's my hope that you will consider these comments and those of MBA's Blueberry Producers before proceeding further.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: What is the average water table, right now, within the blueberry production area of the Township, Dave?

MR. DAVE TRINKA: Me? I'm sorry, I mean --

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I understand it was 6 to 8 feet, as low as 14?

MR. DAVE TRINKA: In my duties, I don't go around digging holes for blueberry fields. I know when I go down 12 inches to take a soil sample, the water is not there. That's all I can say.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you. We have Richard Finlayson is coming up next. And after that, it will be Jeff VanSloot.

MR. RICHARD FINLAYSON: Excuse me. Hi, I just completed my home in June and did due diligence as far as the drainage of that property -- two years, watching the water. I'm right on the blueberry drain,

right there, and, I guess, that I had no knowledge of the fact that those homes up to the north, right up there on New Holland, were having the drainage problems they were having.

But before I built my home, I wanted to make sure that I was not going to have a water problem, and worked with my builder on that, and I'm against it. I

really don't believe the necessity to include that huge of an area. When you are buying a home, you have to do due diligence as far as to what is going on in the area; what is going on with the drainage, and I'm opposed to the drain -- you know. How big is the drain going to be -- is it going to be, like, eight feet? Exactly what are they going to be doing on 168th?

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: The final design has not been completed.

MR. RICHARD FINLAYSON: What kind of a project is it going to be? A ditch? I know you said enclosed.

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: Which area?

MR. RICHARD FINLAYSON: 160th. I'm up near Ransom.

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: Probably in the area of 18 to 24-inch. It's the smaller, if it's enclosed.

MR. RICHARD FINLAYSON: Are they going to be

tearing up the road?

ENG. BILL CHAPPELL: Final design? As far as the projection is, no, they will not be tearing up the road.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: We are waiting for Jeff to come forward, and afterwards, Rodney Westhuis 17055 Inavale.

MR. JEFF VANSLOOT: My name is Jeff VanSloot. I live at 16680 Quincy. I'm in favor of this drainage. I have been a resident of the north side of Holland for 36 out of my 37 years. Previous to this, I

lived on the corner of 168th and Lakewood. I can attest to the fact to the problems. There has been water drainage problems 36 of 37 years. My parents had water in their basement years ago.

Yes, we had an abnormal amount of water these past couple of years. But if you want to look at Park Township and where the majority of the development has been, it has probably been in this area, right here.

So, over the course of these 30 years, we have taken up the impossibility of lots of areas where water could have naturally drained -- where the high school was built, and so on.

I have one concern that this will work. Obviously, somebody who had the bright idea to take that

pump, and pump the water off Estates Drive, and dump it on Quincy Street in the drainage ditch, and that's the first time that I had water in my basement. (Applause.)

It was probably Driesenga & Associates that decided (Applause.) to pump the water off Estates Drive and dump it on Quincy and pump it there, and I have my reservations, I guess, because I can't say it's going to happen or solve the problems.

So, I ask each one of you to please understand there is many people who suffer water in their basements, and it is a problem, and unfortunately I think it needs to be done. I don't want to pay the money. I have three young children, you know, it's a tough economy, but I can attest this is something that has been long -- a long time due, and if anybody should be upset, we should be upset at Park Township, for all

of the five items on this list.

(Applause.)

I thought that I have been paying taxes for this type of drainage ditch maintenance. I thought my tax dollars was going to this. I'm surprised this is now going to be something that we are going to start doing.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Hello. Rodney

Westhuis, 17055 Inavale. Gene Picciotti.

MR. RODNEY WESTHUIS: 17055 Inavale. Again, I'm opposed to this. When I built my house 20 years ago, I did research to see exactly where the high water was.

Obviously, every time you drive by a blueberry farm in the springtime or fall, you can see it's always under water.

I think when people buy a home, do their research. Don't buy in bottom land. I think the biggest offender is Park Township for allowing building in low areas. (Applause.)

And I'll back up. This is a weather anomaly. I have not seen any serious amounts of high water. So, I'm against it. Thank you.

MR. GENE PICCIOTTI: 2374 Sunset Bluff. I originally wanted to comment regarding what is listed as a drainage district map, but your comments apparently show that there is not an issue. My concern is hearing that there are existing drains that were clogged, and

after people were flooded out, those drains were then opened up, and seemed to be working.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: There is not drains in this area, right now.

MR. GENE PICCIOTTI: There are drains

elsewhere that were clogged?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: They were cleared up in this area. There is no drains.

MR. GENE PICCIOTTI: When there are drains, who will keep them unclogged?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The Drain Commissioner.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: The Drain Commissioner will respond to calls in the area. This is not like road plowing. They have a revenue source.

Other than specialty assessment, if we're going to go out and spend your money to clean your drain, we just ask you to call us and say you would like us to do so. So, you don't get a surprise bill.

In the last three years, we've had so many calls from people requesting we check drains, we have not been able to send the three people in the Drain Office to check the rest of the 800 county drains in Ottawa County to determine whether or not they need cleaning. That is unfortunate, but that is the fact that we are faced with.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: The next one is going to be Vince Duckworth.

MS. DIANE JOHNSON: Diane Johnson, 16165 Ransom. We personally don't have any trouble with

drainage. We're on a crest. We're on sand. We researched it to make sure we didn't have problems, but I do feel for all of the people with the problems. And I do agree something needs to be done, but I'm not sure this is it.

I know that you spent $100,000 for research. Before we spend six million, is more than one engineering firm available to review this? No disrespect to Driesenga intended.

I would kind of like a second opinion, and also, those of us with well water, I know you are not going to touch the water table, but the water table is fed by groundwater drains. For those of us with wells for our homes, I would like to make sure it was not affected.

And if this does go into effect, I have heard from Amanda Price multiple times how this will benefit the whole, entire Township, and, then, the whole, entire Township and everybody in it, should foot the bill.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Next up will be Joe Zainea.

MR. VINCE DUCKWORTH: Good evening. My name is Vince Duckworth. I live at 3360 Elderwood. That is the Riley Shores Subdivision. I have submitted a

written statement to the Board, and I would just direct the Board to that statement, that e-mail to the Drain

Commissioner, but, in addition to the written statements there, the reason that I am here, and the reason I think so many people are here, we received in the mail a notice that said you are personally liable. It didn't say you may be liable; you might be liable; this is an idea that we have.

It said: "You are given this notice as a person that is liable..." So, when you tell folks that this is what happened, we all show up and we say I don't know if we are supposed to be in this district or not, and in my letter I explained why folks in Riley Shores and Elderwood west of 168th, closer to Lakeshore Drive, we have sandy soil. We have wells that are deep.

I was just talking to one of my neighbors up in the audience, and he had his well redug to a depth of, I think, 58 feet, Randy told me before he could get to potable water, and the documents that I just looked at showed they were 37 feet before they got to any clay.

So, our subdivision, we don't believe either contributes to the surface water nor do we benefit from the proposed drainage district, and for those reasons and mainly for the reason of getting a notice that we are a person that is going to be liable, the wording

here, we are here -- at least I am here in opposition to the district as described, and I would just support the comments before that if the idea is to cast the net wide to see if maybe we can share the burden here, then maybe this should be a Township-wide issue.

(Applause.)

We feel there are folks/families that I know

are suffering from water damage. I'm not here to say that they should not be helped, but if it's such a problem that requires a more collective approach, then let's not draw arbitrary lines. Let's look at the entire subdivision, and maybe everybody should contribute that way, thanks.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Sandra Huizenga.

MR. JOE ZAINEA: My name is Joe Zainea. I live at 2286 Perry Street. We built our home on Perry Street six years ago, and it's part of the Warner Dunes Subdivision. To get the approval of this plat, the developer had to place a dry retention pond that runs, I would say, about 320 feet east and west, and about 120 feet north and south. It's about 12 to 14 feet deep at it's lowest part. We are not allowed to use this. Our lot line goes right to the center of the drainage lot.

So, in effect, a drainage facility was built

by the developer and priced into the value of our lots. In effect, we gave at the office.

And I would not say, however, that this is not a Township-wide problem that needs to be taken care of and financed on a Township-wide basis, and I would hope that motivates the engineers to look at other less expensive alternatives.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Next up will be Sandra Brace.

MS. SANDRA HUIZENGA: Hi, I'm Sandra

Huizenga. I live one 16465 Greenly. I have lived there for 32 years. My husband and I are adamantly opposed to the construction of the drainage system. We do not believe we'll receive any benefit from a drainage system. The existing proposal will drain away localized surface water that is directly next to the system.

In other words, it will only drain road runoff, and the water that residents pump to the road. This amount of water is pretty insignificant and will not prevent anyone from having water issues in the current circumstance nor the pumping -- the necessity of pumping out water out of their basement.

If a typical drain system could provide effective relief, the residents of Greenly east of 160th

would not experience the magnitude of water problems that they did this spring and summer.

Personally we spent a considerable sum of money to keep the water out of the basement. We have no need of a district wide drainage system. We can manage this issue ourselves rather being assessed thousands of dollars from which we'll receive no benefit.

Rather than a district-wide system, there are certainly less costly ways to deal with the few areas in the Township, such as Estates Drive, where the water comes over the road.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Next up will be Matt Zimmerman.

MS. SANDRA BRACE: 3949 168th Avenue. My question is: How many people/residences are in this

assessment area? Do you have a number?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: I believe there is 300.

MS. SANDRA BRACE: How many residents are directly affected by the water?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: How many are affected by the water?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: We can only tell you how many properties in the proposed drainage district

and that number is 300. We can't tell you how many people -- we don't have that information.

MS. SANDRA BRACE: I think that is kind of important. Anyway, I'm opposed. I live on 168th close to Quincy. We are in the sand, sand, and sand. I have lived there 23 years. I have to bring in black dirt compost for my plants to get them to hold water.

We never have water standing in the ditch, no matter how much it rains. My neighbor had a new drain field put in a month ago. The guy from the township water came to check the water level. The guy digging could not get his equipment far enough in to hit water. He could not extend the backhoe. There is no water standing in my area and never has been.

So, as far as assessments, you are talking part of the Township being assessed. What is the premise for that? Because the other part is not affected? I'm not affected. That's a faulty premise. I'm not affected.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Again, one of the

things we are here to determine is whether there are storm drainage problems in the district.

MS. SANDRA BRACE: I told you where I live, and there is none in my area.

(Applause.)

MS. SANDRA BRACE: Thank you.

MR. MATT ZIMMERMAN: Sir, good evening. Matt Zimmerman. I am here representing Dr. Daniel Bird. He lives at 15415 Riley. Dr. Bird is out of state right now and could not attend, so he asked me to represent his interests, and the interests of several of his co-blueberry owners.

Dr. Bird owns and operates a blueberry farm on Riley Street, and he also is actively pursuing undeveloped property within the proposed drainage district to plant additional blueberry crops. He first planted blueberries at his farm in the early 1950s. His family selected this property, as an awful lot of blueberry farmers in the Township here tonight did, specifically because the conditions were conducive to good growing for the blueberries, and that means a high water table.

Dave Trinka already spoke to that point. Obviously, the water table is fed by surface water. So, the fact that these blueberries have surface water that is not draining is what is giving the ground water conditions they need to be successful. So your task is, as the Drain Commissioner appointed you tonight, was to determine whether there is a necessity to drain surface water away from properties within this proposed

district.

Obviously, for the blueberry farmers that question can be answered only one way -- no. In fact, if you facilitate the drainage of surface water at their farm or upgrading their farms, they are going to be hurt. They're going to be damaged.

Dave Trinka researched the project in Muskegon County. I represented the blueberry farmers in that particular project. They were awarded a substantial recovery because -- because of the damage that was caused, because of the drainage of water from the blueberry crops.

I'm not asking you to take my word for it, but the Drain Commissioner has represented and his Counsel can tell you have three different choices that you can make tonight: You can find there is public necessity, you can find there is not public necessity, or, you can find that there is public necessity for part or a portion of what the Drain Code uses -- a portion of the area proposed for this district.

So, I urge you to find that the areas where the blueberry farms are located, where they need that high water table, and they need the surface water to replenish it, there is no public necessity to drain those properties. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: A quick follow-up question dealing with the issue of blueberry fields:

Are there areas of Ottawa County that have some existence of blueberry fields and storm drains? Do all the areas of blueberries have no drains?

MR. MATT ZIMMERMAN: I know that it's not your charge tonight, but I do believe you have the authority to condition your approval, if you do find there is public necessary. There is case law that suggests that you can direct the Drain Commissioner at the engineering stage to make sure that the design of the surface water drainage does not lower the water table.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Very good point, thank you.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Wes Nykamp. Does Wes Nykamp want to speak? (No response.) We'll move on to Allen Hoekstra and Kurt Lower.

MR. ALLEN HOEKSTRA: Hello, Allen Hoekstra, 3977 Tall Grass East, and I support the Park West Drain. When you read the report that is on the Park Township website, it indicates over the past 35 years flooding has been a recurrent issue in this area.

Studies have been done in 1974. They have been done in the late 1970s. The study was done in

1991, and, now, we're studying it again in the year 2009.

Our family has been directly affected. Our home has been flooded many times in the last 18 months. The issue in our area is we have no way to get rid of any water that we pump out of the basement. There is no way to drain it away.

From my perspective, this issue impacts our whole community and quality of life. The value of real estate, for example, for the homes that are impacted by the flooding is going to be a large negative impact. Damaged homes with no solutions to get rid of the water will, for example, negatively impact our whole area. Everyone knows when you get an appraisal of your property, they look at comps in the area, and I think this is an issue that affects the value of everybody's home in this area.

You know, in the past, we have studied it, as that report indicated, and we have really done nothing, and, obviously, that does not work. I think we need a comprehensive long-term solution to this problem. I would like to see us all move forward as a community and support the Park West Drain. Thanks.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Richard Thurston will be

next.

MR. KEN LOWER: My name is Kurt Lower. I live at 3705 160th and I'm a blueberry grower. I have lived there 32 years, and I am going to keep it short and sweet.

I'm adamantly opposed to this district-wide Park West Drain District. There are folks, some areas are hurting, but I think it could be better addressed on a different scale, and there is other blueberry growers on the street, and I know for a fact they are adamantly opposed, and, so, I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: After Richard Thurston it will be Dan Brown.

MR. RICHARD THURSTON: Good evening. Up until the point that you couldn't answer one question, I was on the fence, and, now, I come in opposition to it, and the question that you didn't answer was how many people are in the district as it is drawn currently? And how many people will directly benefit from the drain?

Now, you said something like 3300 people as the district is drawn now. 100 people? That's the question that I have. I know that you can't answer it. I would like to know what that number is to understand

how many people are actually going to benefit from this. Okay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: After Dan Brown will be Robert G. Byrne.

MR. DAN BROWN: Dan Brown 4220 Estate Drive, and I would like to say I'm very much in favor of this. I realize there is a lot of people that are not affected by water, but if you are one of the people, like we are, our road is under water. You can't get through at times. This is very devastating. It is really a very, very serious issue, and I would like to say I'm in favor of a Township-wide millage, whatever, to pay for this -- similar to schools.

Schools are not used by everybody, which everybody pays for, which I don't have a problem with.

This is something for the public good, like, schools. I think that everybody should pay for it.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: After Robert Byrne will be Loren DeFeyter.

MR. ROBERT BYRNE: My comment has been already covered. I'm opposed to it.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: After Loren DeFeyter, Dan Kooiker.

MR. LOREN DeFEYTER: You need some Dutch people up there. First of all, no offense, but you are killing our names.

It's Loren DeFeyter. I live at 16884 James Street, just west of 168th. I lived there for 23 years. Never had a problem. I have no doubt there are people that are hurting, and my heart goes out to you. I would not want to be in your situation whatsoever.

That being said, since I have no problem, I don't think that I should have to pay for a problem that I don't have.

I agree with everyone else. If it's an issue of common good, then everyone in the Township should pay for it. I realize it's not your decision as much as our Township Board's decision. So, that's my comment. Please make it fair and have everyone pay for it.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: After Mr. Kooiker, there is going to be a Robert Ringswald, West Olive.

MR. DON KOOIKER: Hi, Don Kooiker, 183 South 168th. I'm not aware of any problems south of Perry on 168th. The problems that I do see are north of Perry. A lot of this was just due to very poor planning. Some of these homes have their driveways sloping from the

road to the garage. How that ever happened, I don't know. Water runs downhill. That is asinine.

(Applause.)

I believe that it's a problem. I feel for these people, but I don't know what else to say. I don't feel 168th south of Perry should be included in this. There may be people that do have problems, but I'm not aware of it. So, I very much opposed. Thank you.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Janet Havdenburg.

MR. ROBERT RINGWALD: My name is Robert Ringwald. I'm not a resident of Park Township. I was at one time. I'll say this: I'm not too far from where your drain is going to start, and I have seen different situations in the State similar to this that take place, and the actions that are caused by one community are the adverse reaction in another. You'll have a great risk of lowering the ground water in several communities around Park Township.

I had one question, though, because we are dealing with this in Port Sheldon Township, also. I would like to know from the Drain Commissioner if a few can petition to get this action going and the mass cannot oppose it, will the petition address where is the

legality of that? That is a question to, Paul, and I would like it answered to how a mass will pay, when five can petition for it, and many cannot oppose it. Where is the answer?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: That would be a good question for your state legislature because I do not find it anywhere in the Drain Code.

MR. ROBERT RINGWALD: Neither do I. I find that the Drain Commissioner is given an extreme amount of power in the county. Whatever county he may serve in, but there is not much to be done to stop his actions. So, I have questions on what is taking place. I have another question on behalf of the berry farmers.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: One of the things I want to keep track of: Do you believe there is a necessity or not?

MR. ROBERT RINGWALD: I oppose. I do not believe there is a necessity, but I have a question for the Park Township people, but what is minimal adverse reaction to farmers mean? Thank you.

MS. JANET HAVDENBURG: Hi, Janet Havdenburg, 2436 168th Avenue, North. I am opposed. Right across the street from where I live is probably four holding ponds, and there are trees that are growing in the holding ponds -- maybe five feet tall. There is a tiny

trickle of water that is going into one of them. There used to be water in them. I don't know when it stopped

or why.

There also use to be a pump that you could see as you walked along the bike path on James just north of, I'm sorry, west of 168th. I can see pipes that are laid out there now. You used to see a pump that was working. There is none now.

I have never had any problems with water, and I'm opposed to it, and my heart goes out to those people that do. I know there is a problem, but I agree succinctly with the lady that spoke first. We had a horrendous weather situation. I'm opposed.

(Applause.)

I would like somebody to look at to why the holding ponds are not getting water in them anymore, if there is a drainage problem.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Is there a James LeGrand in the audience? Stan Szymanski.

MR. JAMES LeGRAND: My statement has been noted, and I am opposed.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: It looks like Dave Mirick, 1713 James. Following that will be a Steve Redmond. Dave Mirick? (No response.) Steve Redmond? Tom Budde.

MR. STEVE REDMOND: My name is Steve Redmond, 16531 Greenly Street. 25 years ago when we moved into our house, I did my due diligence. We are on sand. Not a lick of trouble.

The last year has been a nightmare. We had standing water in our basement. It has caused all kinds of problems. When the water finally went down, we

asked, is this a 100-year event? So we never have to worry about it again. Like many of my neighbors, we bit the bullet, spent ten grand. In the recent storm, we would have been flooded out, again.

So the surface water is a problem. It's a continuing problem. Many of my neighbors have spent as much as $30,000 to solve problems. Many of us have not finished the basement because we don't know if the backup battery pumps are going to work the next time we have a rain storm.

So I'm definitely in favor of the storm drain or the drainage system. I basically believe pay now or pay later. If we defer taking action, first of all, it will cost us more -- prices go up. This is going to be a hard to sell properties, if you have a water problem, and there is no guarantee of drainage, it may be more difficult to sell your house.

In the future, developers are going to keep

putting more homes in this area, and that is going to mean more homeowners are going to be coming back asking for it in a few years, if we don't do it now.

It seems there is a reasonable plan in place. There is some potential for Federal or State dollars and grants, and maybe some Stimulus Dollars. We are going to be paying for the Stimulus Plan for 50 years. We might as get some benefit of it into Park Township.

(Applause.)

But my sense is many of my neighbors and

friends is that we don't know if the steps we have taken are going to be adequate unless a system like this is put in place. We expect sometime in the future, no matter how much money we have spent, we'll have water in our basement again.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Do you have a pump system in the basement?

MR. STEVE REDMOND: I do. We have the pump and drain field. We cut out a whole part of the drain field, put in a couple of pumps, and battery backups. After the last rain storm, the regular pump --

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Where do you pump to?

MR. STEVE REDMOND: It pumps it outside of the house. It slopes away from my house. My house was

backfilled, so the house --

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Not to the drain? Just --

MR. STEVE REDMOND: There are no drains where I live.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you.

MR. STEVE REDMOND: I would also propose to make it Township wide. If I look at the map, all of the people in the Township are not going to help us if there is not support. If we don't get something in place now, as new homes are going in, eventually the cost will be much higher, and it will be many more people that will be affected. So, I urge you to take action now. I'm in favor.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Tom Budde and a Doug

Wehrmeyer.

MR. TOM BUDDE: Hello, Tom Budde. I'm at 3353 North 160th Avenue. I would just like to say I'm opposed to the project. I do believe, as others have said, this is an anomaly. This is a once in a one-hundred-year type of thing. I also pulled the graphs, and as you have seen on the websites, this is not the average amount of water/rainfall. It's an exception.

A lot of people made a lot of points. I'm not going to go over them.

What I don't understand is why with this magnitude of the project, three people with no vested interest in the Township, no offense, are going to make a decision that is going to affect all of us? Why can't we put this to a vote?

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: After Doug Wehrmeyer, Donna Wehrmeyer.

MR. DOUG WEHRMEYER: 4115 Estates Drive, and, you know, I can tell you horror stories up and down, and contrary to popular belief, there are people being hurt, right now.

Other than the idea that we might be hurting the blueberry farmers, let's talk about the people that are suffering the devastation right now. We know what is happening with them.

I guess, I don't understand the issue of the blueberry farmers because it has been very -- from what

I understand, they are concerned about lowering the water table for the berries. Everybody has been very clear and adamant that we're not lowering the water table, and basically all we're asking for is what everybody else in the Township has. We have no drain

system.

There is probably 100 people within a half mile from you that we pump 50- or 60,000 gallons of water a day. We have been doing it for 18 months. We have had to take boats down our road. It becomes a health, safety, and welfare issue.

We have gone weeks without mail, without the newspaper, without garbage service, school buses come down, but you know what happens with kids when they get out -- no emergency services.

So, it's a quality of life, type of thing, and, I think, you know, where I'm at, you know, whether this goes or not, I'm sinking or swimming. I'm going down with the ship. It's bigger than me.

It's for the future of the Township, and to keep our Township the way we wanted it to be. I mean, three houses, within a mile from me, that people walked away. We're going to curtail people from moving into the district. We are going to curtail future development, which means we are going to have to do more with less.

So, you worry about assessments. But our taxes are going to go up, if the district takes a hit because of this. So, we're going to pay, eventually.

I would like to think that we work for the

whole of everybody. I think we can use the logic, it does not benefit me for everything we pay for, and the thing that sticks out the most is the school system. I've probably paid taxes for six or seven years for kids that have gone to school. Why am I going to do it? It's going to benefit -- it's going to make a benefit for all of us. Maybe one kid is going to be a doctor who is going to save my life.

So, it's for the betterment of the whole Township, the whole community, and we are just asking for what everybody else in the Township has. Thank you.

MS. DONNA WEHRMEYER: And I am very much in favor of it. As my husband said, we are the ones who are pumping and have been pumping for 19 months. Every single minute of every day. We have not stopped. It definitely affects your life. It controls your life.

We have taken care of our own situation to the best that we can. We have backup systems. We have everything in place, but it can still get worse. We know that. We take care of our situation, but we have nowhere for the water to go. We have nowhere for it to go, except to come back in our basement, and keep going over and over, and we are not the only ones. It becomes a welfare issue, I believe.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Again, do you have

anyplace -- so you are not pumping to a drain? You are pumping to your yard?

MRS. DONNA WEHRMEYER: Exactly.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROBERT COLES: Robert Coles, 3694 North 168th. I have been there for 26 years. I have read the Driesenga Report that has been on-line, the 52-page report, on the whole drain. I'm opposed to the drain, and the main reason for that is the final comment that was made by Driesenga was: That there was improper maintenance or cleaning of existing ditches.

And the funny thing about that is you also paid to have this done in 1974, in the mid '70s, and you were told the same things. That is 30-plus years of being informed that you need to clean your ditches. You need to maintain them.

When I first moved in and built the house, I had a ditch on the east side of the road along 168th. They came through with city water and they filled it up. It has not been there since.

I think if you had proper drainage and ditching to divert the water, as you see on the east side of 160th, that people who have the water ditch, people would have a place to drain to.

I ask the question: Is there a drain? Well, do you have a ditch? There was housing developments put in and they were not developed with proper drains.

So, I think that needs to be something that is looked at. Whether you improve the drains that you have now, Drain 37 should be cleared out and put in use,

instead of being dead-headed. You have a major issue. If you put in proper drains and ditches, you would not have to go to the big expense of this.

(Applause.)

MR. RANDY SCHIPPER: Randy Schipper. I'm representing about 100 property owners in Sunset Bluff and Lake Court. Sunset Bluff is on the southwest part of the district and Lake Court is in the northwest part of it. There are probably several property owners in between there who are in a similar situation.

I filed a notice of objection with you already. The gist of that is this: The drainage district cannot, not should not, cannot include lands that would not be drained by this drain. The boundaries are supposed to be determined before this point of determination.

So, when I see a map that shows my property is in it, I have to assume that I need to be here to

object.

We are in the Lake Michigan water table. We didn't want to spend the money on engineering to figure out what property might be in or not. I would urge you not to spend a whole lot of money on it because it's hard to determine what the watershed boundary is -- Lake Macatawa watershed versus the Lake Michigan watershed.

It shows -- the whole point of a watershed boundary is that water outside of the watershed does not drain in. Water inside of it does. That's the whole point. We have a landfill that touches the Lake

Macatawa watershed. The water flows towards Lake Michigan. Being near the property is not being in the watershed.

Sunset Lake Court are not even near it. Our water, since we are on top of a dune, our water flows straight down to the dirt, until it hits a confining layer, which in our case is the water table about 40 feet below our homes.

By the time we have a flooding problem, Noah will be in the neighborhood. We don't drain in this district. We won't benefit from this. That's true of Sunset Bluff, Idlewood, and also almost of all of the property north of James and west of 168th.

There is no reason for these properties to

even be proposed to be in this district.

There is a real problem here for the studied areas, two and three, the north part of the Township. There is a real problem in studied area four around Lakewood and 168th.

I would suggest a drain in Holland would not be necessary. At best, it's a very simple solution. I think something a lot less will take care of once-a-generation problem.

Those of us outside of the Lake Macatawa watershed shouldn't, but can't be part of this.

If the Township wants to tax us all, that is their choice. Otherwise, we can't be in this district. Thanks. Thanks.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Is there a Paul VanDyke or a Steve VanDyke? (No response.) Ken Schaap,

17 followed by James and Ruth Dykens.

18 MR. KEN SCHAAP: 4100 Estate Drive. I live

19 in an area where we have a lot of water, as you already

20 heard this evening. My electric bill in six months will

21 pay for the assessment on this drain. The electric bill

22 is around $500 a month, just for pumps -- to keep water

23 out and keep dry the basement. So, money is the issue.

24 I'm for this, and, totally for this drain.

25 A couple of questions: As I was listening

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1 this evening, the blueberry farmers come to my mind. My

2 sump pump did not run from 1992 up until a year and a

3 half ago. The water was 6 to 8 feet lower than it was

4 presently, and the blueberry farmers survived very well.

5 (Applause.)

6 And I'm glad they did because my wife and I

7 love blueberries. So, I take this with a grain of salt

8 about the blueberries drying up if we put a drain in. I

9 think it's only common sense. I see no other

10 alternative than putting in a drain. This drain should

11 have been put in 20-30 years ago.

12 (Applause.)

13 God forbid we ever get a calamity, national

14 or local calamity, in this nation, from the pulse of it

15 this evening, we would all have to fend for ourselves.

16 I thought the community was standing together and

17 helping one another out. We'll travel all the way to

18 Louisiana and Mississippi to help people over there, but

19 when we have a neighbor, thank you, when we have a

20 neighbor who is losing their house, their floors are

exploding, and the walls are buckling, as my neighbor next door to me had happen to him, and all these things are happening, and we can turn a deaf ear? We live in a "Christian" community. I wonder where our Christianity is? It seems like it rests in our hip pocket.

(Applause.)

As far as footing the bill, who is going to pay the bill? I have four grandchildren. I have nine great grandchildren who never went to a public school. I own many properties. I pay thousands of dollars in school property taxes. I benefit zero. That is not a true fact -- I do benefit. As far as my own family, and they all go to other schools, private schools.

Bike paths? I don't ride on the bike paths -- neither does anyone else. They all ride on Quincy Avenue.

(Applause.)

It's sad to say a young man got killed a couple of weeks ago riding on a street rather than the bike path -- along the bike bath.

All right. I am going to sum this up. I don't need the public schools. I don't need the bike paths, but I'm more than willing to pay for this because it's necessities of life. It's something that we have to accept. You know, when we have problems, we have to deal with them, and we have to stand together, and we have to band together, and, Folks, let's set aside all this other nonsense, and just get this thing done the way it should have been done 20-30 years ago. Amen.

(Applause.)

MR. JIM DYKENS: Jim Dykens, 4105 Estate Drive. My wife and I support the Park West Drain, a system. I have photos here of Estate Drive with 8 to 12 inches of water, for months and months and months, and I think that Park Township is 30 years out of the loop as far as getting a drain system, and we have been lapse in doing nothing. It's high time to get a drain system. I support Park West. Thank you.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Jim Theis.

MR. JIM THEIS: Jim Theis, 2051 Leisure Boulevard. I have a few questions. Some of my questions have been answered a little bit, but I would still like to ask these questions:

Will the drainage district, installed system, protect all of the houses of the people having flood problems? And I believe the answer is no.

Other areas of the Eastern Township are already protected by existing systems, yet, they are excluded from the drainage district. Why is the standard not applied to other areas? Western parts are already protected by the Ottawa County Drain Commission's approved drainage systems, such as Tiffany Shores or Leisure Acres. If these established drains drain anything into the system, are they included in the district? Will the district then assume the

responsibility for the maintenance of the detention and retention ponds?

In these areas that I have mentioned, they have functionally paid for drainage systems of retention and detention ponds. We bought that when we bought our lots. To ask us to pay for another drainage system for another area does not seem appropriate.

If Eastern Park Township is truly protected by a drain system, why were houses, many on your side, also experiencing basement flooding? So, much for that prevention.

Some of the problem is the drainage districts themselves have homes that are non-compliant with existing minimum building requirements. They were built too low and their owners know it. Will the new drainage district force those homeowners to become compliant?

And in the last few years a new clay top was installed on the Riley Landfill for the purpose of stopping water infiltration into the landfill. Therefore, it increased runoff. Which ways? North and south/east and west. People along Riley, thank the clay cap on the landfill, for much of your flooding -- in addition, to the lack of ditches.

There is another alternative. Once you have

this monstrous thing, how about locals solving local problems? Why is there not a retention/detention pond system on the Estate where there are problems?

You can make a smaller solution that does not affect everyone.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Tom VanEenenaan and Bruce

Townsley.

MR. BRUCE TOWNSLEY: I'm Bruce, if Thomas is not here.

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: I think the other one is coming right here.

MR. TOM VAN EENENAAN: Do you ever notice when you're talking about all this water that you have got to go to the bathroom?

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I was going to mention that.

MR. TOM VAN EENENAAN: I was not up front, like, you guys are. Tom VanEenenaan, thank you for getting my name right. I thought you would get VanEmmen out of it, and enough said.

I want to back you up on a time machine to 1974, and I'd like to cite a report. It has been referenced, but not stated exactly.

Mr. Kinsler (sic) says: "Of course, many homeowners would not be faced with flooded basements, if their homes had been built high enough in the first place. Careful inspection by the building inspector of each site could go a long way to end future problems."

As an aid to the inspector of Park Township, the drainage map, 1974, indicates the elevation of the water table at several points of each section.

It goes on from there and basically says -- tells us prophetically about the standing water,

Northland Estates, Estate Drive. Once again, 1974. And as a nation and Park Township, we slept through it, and here we are, with a weather anomaly, high water. What do we do?

The challenge is we have a problem with the small amount of -- of housing sites compared to 3,300 or 6,000 or whatever Park Township has.

We have places that have been built by developers that got away without putting the proper drainage in; getting away without putting the proper things -- the drainage systems around the house, and sloping driveways downhill.

Now where do we go as a nation and as a people? Because the challenge is we are at a point in

time where it takes a lot of money to fix things. We don't all have that money.

So, I implore you, I am against the proposal without a Park Township contribution by all of the entire citizenry so we can look at it, and say do we want it and do we have the money, or can we back up to what a recent gentleman said, can we find a solution that is much smaller than what we are looking at?

I would ask my fellow constituents to look at it carefully -- what has been found very clearly about Park Township, but look at the report, because it's prophetic, and, here we are in the year 2009. Thank you.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Bruce Townsley, and, then, Tom Buis.

MR. BRUCE TOWNSLEY: 94 North 168th Avenue.

I'm located just north of Perry. I am in favor of the district because my nightmare began back in June of 2008 with two and a half feet of water in my basement.

Currently, I estimate that the water table is approximately one foot above my basement floor. How I have been able to keep it dry is I had a dewatering system installed in my home, which is 14 well points that go all the way around the outside of the home. That has been able to keep it dry, and I was able to

survive what happened in October.

What has been my difficulty, what you see on the map, across the street is one of the retention ponds, the asterisks on the map, and Parkwood Commons, which is my subdivision, I'm the lowest one, and I'm the bean counter, not a construction person. I never thought of checking anything out when I bought the house.

But all of the runoff in the subdivision comes into the retention pond and does exactly that -- it retains. It kind of percolates into the ground, and that's where I get the water surrounding my house. I'm the one that spent $30,000 so far, fighting this, and, hopefully, I think that I have, at least, got it solved for the near term.

Two years ago, the spring of 2008, I did put my house up for sale. That was prior water problems. My wife relocated to Lansing. At that time the house was appraised at $160,000. Right now, I have it listed at $135,000. I get several showings, but people are

just afraid for reasons that since I'm a houseboat on dry land, they don't want to touch it or they don't like the $300 electric bills.

The reason that I just point it out, it has been mentioned a couple of times when this house sells,

it's going to affect the SEV values for the area. It's going to affect Township revenues, and being an accountant, the banks are going to look at this and say I am going to loan "X" amount on a neighbor when this house sold for $135,000. So, there is that impact. It's not necessarily healthy. It's going to affect the values.

Finally, I'm going to reiterate everything what all of the people said, living here for 20 years, I have voted for every school and bond issue. I don't have kids in the system, but I did it for the betterment of the community. Any questions for me and what I have got?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: You don't have a place to pump to?

MR. BRUCE TOWNSLEY: Just to the retention pond, and it's obviously retained there. The way that the map shows that retention pond goes into the drain and out to Lake Macatawa, and brings the water table, hopefully, down a couple feet below the basement, and I admire what you guys are up to. So thank you for volunteering to do this.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Tom Buis? (No response.) Verne Bush.

MR. VERNE BUSH: My name is Verne Bush. I live at 3914 Tall Grass Court, and thank you for your time tonight. I think there has been a lot of good comments on both sides of this issue.

I am in favor of the Park West drainage system. As I look at the map, east of 160th Avenue, there is a drain system. For us who live west of 160th, it appears that there is no drainage system.

All I'm asking is that some type of a storm sewer drainage system be installed for residents who live east or west of 160th. I understand that it's difficult to pay for it, and I think that I support a millage for the entire Township to help pay for this drain system. Thank you for your time.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Is Willard VanHarn here?

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Ben Groenhof. (No response.)

MR. WILLARD VAN HARN: Willard VanHarn, 2225 West Lakewood Boulevard, and I don't deny there is water problems for some of the people, but I'm totally opposed to the drainage system.

If our Township had been doing their job, there would not be houses there. Most of the lots would

not be tillable land according to EPA and Government regulations for a farm.

Because if there is standing water, the farmer is not able to till the land. Why are we building houses in a swamp?

They get what they deserve for where they built.

(Boos Boos)

MR. GLENN RUMMLER: Glenn Rummler, 7917 that's a tough act to follow. I will do my best. I live in Northland Estates. When they had the map up there, that is the one that was red that caused all the problems. Where we are, are the reddest up there. I have five acres, and I have lived there 40 years. I never had a problem.

When they were building houses in that subdivision, I stopped on the way to work to talk to one of the developers. I asked him if he had a shovel. I dug a hole. It filled up with water. And he said maybe we should not put a basement in this house.

They had a Parade of Homes home in there. A week before the Parade they had to sump pump the water out of the basement. It was this high. It was a problem 40 years ago. It didn't change two years ago. It had been there. That's all I have.

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: Ottawa County Extension, in Ottawa County I work -- I work with the blueberry farmers. I work with Ottawa County and Counties in Southern Michigan, and some of the growers asked us to provide some expert opinion about this issue, and there are some questions regarding the study that I have, and that I would like to address.

One of the problems that we see is that blueberries have a very shallow root system. I know how deep the water table is in this area because I have been conducting studies on the affect of water on blueberry fields. It has been mentioned the water is in the roots of the blueberries. It's three or four feet for the whole season.

One of the conditions of the blueberry fields is there is around four to five feet of roots that contains all of the water that the blueberries need. When you remove the surface water, basically you are dewatering the blueberry fields because the blueberries cannot take water from more than 18 inches down into the ground.

So, we are not against or in favor of this project, but we want to have the assurances for the growers that this will not affect their productivity.

At the moment when Michigan is one of the

best blueberry producers in the world, and Park Township has one of the best blueberry fields in the nation, and one of the reasons for that productivity is because they are consistently in soil that is suitable for blueberries. Naturally, the water will can the soil conditions, and it will not be suitable for blueberries.

We would like to see more study on the impact of these blueberry fields because we want to know what will offer the least adverse affect.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: A couple of follow-ups. Have you been here for 20 years? How long

have you been --

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: Since 2002.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Since 2002. There was comments tonight that the water table was much lower in the 1990s. Were these fields productive in the 1990s or not?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: There is the surface water going deeper in the underground. So the water table underground might be 10 or 12 feet down, but it's not the water that the blueberries are using.

The blueberries are using the water that is collected, between the first five feet of the ground, just like a solid soil that does not allow the water to go down.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: So these blueberry fields are not irrigated? They rely on the ground water table for irrigation?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: They are supplemented with irrigation. If we have a summer drought, those are very common in West Michigan, and that's when we really need the water to pump it or --

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Do you work with blueberry fields in other parts of Ottawa County?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: As a question, do blueberry fields in other parts of Ottawa County have storm drains adjacent or next to county drains?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: There are drains all over the place. We work through M-45, 144th and M-45, there is a big drain over there, and the blueberries,

you can see in the wintertime and in the summertime that probably the water is just like one feet from the surface, and there is no problem -- if I understand your question.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I'm trying to understand -- I have an expert here. What you are saying is that there are areas in Ottawa County where storm drains and blueberry fields co-exist?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: I believe, if the water

table is not lowered, if the surface water is not excessively lowered more than three feet, they might co-exist, but we don't have the data until more in-depth studies are done by the Board or by whoever, but we try to get our best guess, and also we'll be able to provide any assistance to the County in the decision.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: So, you work for?

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: Michigan State University Extension Office, County Extension.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: If the engineers wanted you to work with them to help design these drains, you provide that type of service as part of the --

MR. CARLOS GARCIA: We will provide our expert opinion and whatever assistance we can provide.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Thank you.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Cindi Andrews, and, then, a Carl Manning. (No response from either.)

Paul Marentette followed by Julia Johnson.

MR. PAUL MARENTETTE: Hi, Paul Marentette,

2236 Whispering Dunes Drive. I have not had any problems with water, but I know some of the neighbors have. I'm just against it, right now.

One of the reasons is I don't have, really, a cost. I know there is an estimate, but sometimes

estimates can be way off. And with the unemployment rate so high, I don't think it's a good idea right now. That's about it.

(Applause.)

MS. JULIA JOHNSON: Hi, Julia Johnson, 16371 Greenly Street. I'm kind of right in the middle of where I hope the eventual Park West Drain will be. My house is six years old. We built up and trucked in all kinds of sand and dirt to build our site up because we knew there was a high water table.

We were told by the realtor if we went four feet away, we would be safe, except we are not. We have not had lots of water. We have had some water. Our sump continues to run. We have nowhere to pump it. It goes to the front yard. So my husband and I support the Park West Drain. Thank you.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: James Mills, followed by Jim Warner.

MR. JIM MILLS: Jim Mills, 3255 North 160th. I'm adamantly opposed to this drain. I have no problems with my property. I think that you have got some serious issues with this drain. I have listened to the people tonight, and there is, indeed, localized problems in localized areas.

I urge you not to approve a district that

encompasses almost half of this Township. It's not right. Let's go back to the drawing board. Let's set up realistic districts for those areas that need it, and those homes that will be the benefit of those drains. I believe these areas could be served with much less cost and effort of cleaning existing drains and extending the drains that are very near to them.

As the map in my hand shows, there are several drains within an eighth of a mile. They are existing. Let's get them cleaned out. Let's get them extended and do some localized problem solving.

I'd ask you tonight not to approve this based on the current district. You can't even tells us what the boundaries are tonight. For gosh sake, everybody wanted to know -- who is in? Who is not? You can't tell us. I think that's necessary to approve a district like this.

I'm not in the mood of giving the Drain Commissioner a blank check tonight to do whatever he wishes in half of this Township. I think it's wrong.

So if the only decision that you can make tonight is to say yes or no to this district? Absolutely say no. Let's go back and set up some realistic districts, and give the people that need the help, the right help.

(Applause.)

I'm opposed to the plan as it is. I would

like a second opinion.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Rich Jakubczak.

Jim Warner?

MR. JIM WARNER: My question has been answered.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Jill VanDyke. Followed by Douglas Sutherland.

MS. JILL VANDYKE: Jill VanDyke, hi, 1690 West Lakewood Boulevard, and I have -- my family has been there basically since 1963. 48 years or so. I have lived right next to Drain 23, which is an issue.

I have had flooding, again, for the past two years. It has gotten worse since the development of the Pine Island Subdivision, and some of the development north along James and 160th.

I was listening to some comments about this is a one-time event, and it's just due to the freak storms we had this year, and I don't believe that is actually the case.

We know that the ground water levels tend to fluctuate in a cyclical manner. They were high in the early '60s; high in the '70s, and in they were high in the '80s, and now, again, they are high.

The problem with the fluctuation with the ground water, the development, the additional runoff, and, then, the lack of the drains. The Drain 23 doesn't really effectively handle the drainage -- increased drainage, particularly now. And since I'm right next to it, the additional flow and volume tend to come right into my basement. So, I'm about 15 feet away. So, I

had increased flooding. So, I can see a benefit for additional drainage.

My concern is that when you look at the U.S. Topography maps along Lakewood, from my property, and the drain raises in elevation 20 or 30 feet going to the west, and that is true to about Tiffany Ridge. There is about a quarter mile section from Tiffany Ridge to 168th where the flow is back towards the proposed drain. So, if the drain can actually be constructed to drain the water away from Drain 23, I'd be for it.

What scares me is the proposition is it potentially could direct more water into Drain 23. That would make my situation worse and the people in the area behind where Drain 23 tend to go. I guess, if you can design it so it goes west, I'm for it.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Doug Sutherland. Mr. Gil Lamar, 15535 Ransom.

MR. DOUG SUTHERLAND: Doug Sutherland, 83

Iroquois off from 168th. Currently, that area has what we call a leach basin in it. I have been there 31 years, so I can really do due diligence. The home was built when I bought it and this winter, of course, it went to hell in the hand basket with water in the basement.

I have a couple neighbors that are pumping water, right now, regularly, and the only place they can put the water, because there's no outage or outlet, is down the road. So, the leach basin is on my property, and it gets recycled back into the water table. That's

why I am in favor of getting the drainage district.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Tom Mason, then a Michael Scott.

MR. THOMAS MASON: I'm Thomas Mason, 3681 160th. I can't speak directly to the engineering aspect of the plan, but I can address the underlying science for it. For the record, I have a Doctorate in Earth Science. I have studied hydraulics for 32 years. I think I have some knowledge.

I have read a lot of the documents that was generated and played with the numbers, and I think, quite frankly, that a lot of important data has been excluded or misinterpreted

The issue -- we really have two issues: Surface runoff and groundwater. People here are talking about water in their basements, not water in their second story bedrooms. We need a ground water solution, and the solution presented tonight does not really address overall problem.

Yeah, there are rationales, such as future housing values, transportation interruption. They are not scientific or engineering concerns. If the concern is a community betterment, that means the community should take full responsibility for it.

Last spring I suggested when this stuff started to get to the forehead that we cease issuing all building permits in Park Township in the troubled areas before we continued. It was nothing but cold-shouldered.

The 1974 study clearly lays out where problems are, but Park Township went on giddily giving out building permits and Park Township has the full responsibility for this, not just a select few.

(Applause.)

Where does this leave us tonight? We don't know for sure where the drain is going to be.

Two, we don't know the cost of the drain. I have had estimates or heard estimates -- seen estimates

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of anywhere up to eight million dollars. It's quite a spread.

We don't know who is going to be required to pay for them. We don't know the terms of payment. Is it going to be cash upfront, two years, 20 years. We don't know this.

We do know some things, though. What is being proposed tonight will not prevent basements from flooding. If your basement floods now, it will in all likelihood flood in the future. In fact, there are some homes that will be aggravated by this.

There may be some sort of aggregate cost rate provided by the system, but the next time it's flooded and the system is in place, you won't have as much money to repair it.

(Applause.)

The whole project is open-ended. We are buying into something that we don't know what it's going to be. In essence, we are going -- using a sledgehammer to kill a fly. I do sympathize with those people who

have ongoing problems. Why does everybody who has not/does not have the problem, have to pony up?

I don't think that should be the case. I really question a lot of the data interpretation. We definitely need to take another look at it.

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(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Michael Scott, Ed Start. (No response.) Don Miller, a Leon Bangma.

MR. JOHN MILLER: I'm John Miller. Contrary to what the lady said earlier about Drain 23, my property, the back lot line of my property, is Drain 23. Last summer, it was dry. There was no water flowing in it for a number of weeks. Right now, there is about a foot of water in it.

I don't see a problem in the Tiffany Shores area. I'm at 295 Tiffany Shores Drive, and, frankly, I don't see a problem. I think, like some of the other people, I think this is just a sledgehammer to kill a fly. Granted there is a problem in the north area and maybe some isolated problems in the southwest, but I think to have an area this large and assess people for this large of a project is, frankly, ridiculous. I think it's just -- just way overkill for the problem.

I don't see why the areas from the north cannot be pumped into the blueberry drain. It's an existing drain. If it were maintained, as has been pointed out a number of times, the blueberry drain may very well drain that area, if you could pump the water to that area. I don't see why you have to have a colossal district.

You can look at this to solve what it is -- in essence, a local problem. I'm very much opposed to it as proposed.

(Applause.)

MR. LEE BANGMA: I'm Lee Bangma. I live at 1833 Golden Eye, which is in Tiffany Shores. I have been there about 12 and a half years. I have had no problems at all with water.

However, before that, for eight years, I lived in Marigold Woods, and looking at this map, that would be just on the Windemuller Drain. Never had a problem with the water. People before us never had a problem. It was built in the '70s.

In the past two years, the area is sitting on a drain. So, I'm questioning whether the drain will have the effect they want it to have.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Ellie Buggeln, Lorelle Ortiz on Hollywood. (No response.) Dick Carroll.

MS. ELLIE BUGGELN: Good evening. I'm Ellie Buggeln, and I live at 3645 Lakeshore. We do not have a problem on Lakeshore. We live on a private road. There are almost 20 houses -- 19.

I estimated that in the last ten years we have probably have paid about a million-plus in taxes. We do not have snowplow service because we have a

private road. We don't have garage collection like no one else does, and I'm wondering where all the money

went?

But I do think we need to address the problem in the area of the north side. They have water, and we should have done something about it a long time ago because we certainly are collecting enough taxes, and those people need our help.

And someone previously said we give our money for general help like education. Why not do something for this -- for the people, and I like the suggestion of a millage because then we don't have to have that legal aspect where maybe by law you cannot assess people who are not in the affected area -- who are not in the affected area.

So I think that you are going to have to look at the legal part, and also help those people in the north end because obviously if you move into a community like Park Township, and it's great, and you say, oh, what a wonderful place, and you never look at the drainage map, and say do I have a good drainage system?

So, we are all naive in that. Whether you do due diligence or not, I think that -- does this line mean that the drains are that much bigger than the ones

over on the other side or is that just to emphasize?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Just to emphasize.

MS. ELLIE BUGGELN: Well, I think that maybe we have been negligent in using our tax dollars, and we have to be good citizens, and fair community members.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Karen Coulson, followed

by a Ryan Stauffer. (Stauffer passes.) Gerald Degraeve.

MS. KAREN COULSON: Karen Close, 4017 Estate Drive. I have had about a year and a half worth of flooding on my property, and, unfortunately, there is just nowhere for the surface water to go. It's recycling the ground water and flooding the basement.

As we heard tonight, this is not a one-time problem. It's recurring. It happened in the '70s, the '90s. It's likely to recur again. It's likely to get worse in Park Township.

We also heard tonight it's unusual not to have a drainage system. Park Township has already paid for engineering studies. Please don't let it go unused only to revise it several years later. I urge to support the Park Township West Drain.

MR. GERALD DEGRAEVE: My name is Gerald Degraeve, 248 Sea Esta Avenue, and I have three

engineering concerns tonight about this:

First, I don't hear much about elevation, and the first thing I went to is the quadrangle maps to see that the properties that are having the most problems are up to the north, and there are 45 feet above my elevation. I'm at the very bottom in Lake Breeze Subdivision at five stories -- four and a half stories underground more than they are. So I don't know why there is water up north on the higher elevations.

And if this is just about drainage, my subdivision already has an engineered drain and it

works, and, then, my third concern is -- then my third concern is, you thought that the main trunk of this drain going down 168th is only going to be about 18 to 24-inches. I don't know if anybody takes a drive in the township in the spring, if you go into a ditch with the car, in the water, it's so violent, it can engulf and take it away. I don't see how it's effective.

Go back to the drawing boards and get another opinion. Be more localized. I have got a drain, so why am I in the district? So I think it just needs to go back to the drawing board. Thank you.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: It's 24-inch -- the 18-24-inch drain was estimated for 160th up near New Holland, it will be much greater in size than at the

downstream end.

MR. DAVE JASPERSE: Dave Jasperse, 135 Tiffany Ridge. Do you have maps of the proposed drainage in front of you? You'll note it's -- there is a creek running north/south from 160th -- 160th to 168th, cross Perry and into Big Bay.

The people on the east side of Tiffany Ridge property size are half acre to an acre. Most of the property is in that drainage district, if you will, but that was included in this proposal, the map, and you are going to have to make a decision about the necessity of this.

We are on about 25 feet of sand. We are in the Tiffany Ridge area. The people between Tiffany Ridge, going east to 160th, all drain into that creek that goes out into Big Bay in Lake Macatawa. We're not part of

the problem -- and shouldn't be part of the solution. But, more importantly, overall, the map before you, before you is a real crummy map.

You have heard a number of people say the watershed, as it's drawn for this drain district, does not include the Lake Michigan watershed exclusion, does not exclude the (Inaudible) Creek, and I think that the creek should be named "Jenny Creek" because my daughter has run up and down it a number of times, but I would

urge you to reject the proposed drain, send it back to the engineering firm, maybe a different one, that can draw a more accurate map for a proposed watershed district, to address the problems along 168th, Greenly, Riley, and some of the other streets. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. JOHNNY LITTLE: My name is Johnny Little. I live at 16588 Quincy, about 900 foot south of Quincy. I have had water three times. The first time it was a 100-year rain. I didn't do anything to my basement. I put it back together. They didn't say it was going to last 100 years, but, anyway we had it again. I've spent $80,000. I have no water in my basement. I won't have no water in my basement, but a gas generator, natural gas sump pumps, and wells, and everything else.

You know, it's about time you quit blaming Park Township for the past. Let's get along with the job and get it done. I mean, everybody blames everybody else. It's time to let's start doing our thing and get

a drain.

As far as the blueberry farmers go, they put my in-ground pool in in 2002. It's ten foot. It set seven foot below groundwater. It never hit a drop of the water. The blueberries survived. I ain't no

engineer. I didn't finish high school.

I know if water sets on the ground, it will go down. It's not going up, and the blueberry farmers -- I see blueberry farmers digging ditches to get rid of the water.

I mean, you can go down 160th Street. You can see them on Quincy Street. They want to get rid of the water. So, I'm for it. Because, in the meantime, of that year and a half, I had a fire. It cost me $192,000. My house has appreciated to $100,000. I have a big home. Fortunately, it's time to quit blaming everybody and it's time to do the job. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. TRACY ZERNER: 16771 Ashley Lane. If I pass out, it's because I don't speak in front of large crowds. Tracy Zerner, 16771 Ashley Lane. It's just north of 168th and James. We have lived there about four years. Our house is 17 years old. We have never had water in our basement, never had water in our yard. We don't have a sump pump. There is no water problem.

Our concern is the map. It looks like it's going to run right behind our property, and there is a hill back there, and we are just curious -- we have heard kind of conflicting reports -- if it's an enclosed pipe, an open ditch -- that is uphill from our house.

How assured can we be it's not going to suddenly create a problem for us? I'm really sympathetic. I'm for the people that have problems, and financially, I really don't even mind paying to get a solution in place. I just don't want to try to fix one problem and create another problem.

(Applause.)

I think maybe we need to just go back and try certain areas -- maybe a smaller solution, but that's what I have to say. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. RODGER WYNSMA: Rodger Wynsma. I'm Rodger Wynsma, 4256 Lakeshore. I'm opposed.

Nevertheless the County or the Township should foot the bill -- all of us, instead of some of us. I'm not affected by the water. So, I shouldn't pay, unless everybody else does.

Also I think maybe the Drain Commissioner should get out and inspect the drains every now and then, instead of waiting for a phone call.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: John Edwards, Jeff Martin, and Ed Davison.

MR. JOHN EDWARDS: 141 Tanglewood Drive. I'm opposed to the drain plan. Our neighborhood has a

drainage system installed. We are between 168th and Lakeshore. It's not a county drainage system. It was

put in specifically for the neighborhood, and it works pretty well. So, do I have a place to pump water? Yes, I can pump it and our neighborhood system will take that. Do I pump water? No. Fortunately, I don't have a problem -- don't even have a pump.

I think, you know, by drawing boundaries so wide, you have incorporated a lot of properties that really don't have an issue. So, you know, it's kind of like you have built a conflict into the whole process. So, it seems a little bit flawed from that standpoint. So, once again, I'm opposed to it. Thank you.

MR. JEFF MARTIN: Jeff Martin, at 2214 Sunset Bluff Drive. My concern is that if this drain goes in, it might have a negative impact on the existing drain system that flows into the Lake Breeze drainage area. It's pretty much my opposition as to what is being proposed here today.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Ed Davison and Barb Callahan. After Barb, Deanna Hanson.

MS. BARB CALLAHAN: My name is Barb Callahan, 16359 Riley. And my husband couldn't be here tonight, and I'm -- we're both in favor of doing some type of drainage system.

Just the one thing that had really sold us is that you can see the east side has an extensive system, whereas the west side does not have anything. So, that's why we feel we need some assistance on that side. Thank you.

MS. DEANNA HANSON: I'm in favor of something. We need to address the problem.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Paul Hughes, Robert Hartman.

MR. PAUL HUGHES: Good evening. I'm Paul Hughes, 3293 Elderwood in the Riley Shores area. First off, if you are going to use the sledge hammer to kill the black flies in the summertime -- you can do that.

What I have heard tonight and what you have heard as a Board is a lot of conflicting information -- how long the problems existed; whether it is localized. We know there is/has been pockets that have been desolated, but in my experience of being here 15-some odd years, it has been only a couple of years, we have heard it's anomalies from the '70sh to the '40s to the '80s.

We have heard all kinds of complaints about the map and the system as it is drawn out. I know for a fact that the east side system, there was standing water off the road on Riley. That drain system does not do

the job well enough.

I think if you draw a conclusion to proceed with this tonight, you are jumping to a conclusion. I don't believe that you have enough, and possibly this gentleman is correct, maybe the data has not been studied well enough. It would appear that the committee would be jumping to a conclusion that this is the answer.

Whereas, certainly we have a need to address the issue, but whether or not this is the answer, I don't think we have enough information that you can make

that decision tonight.

MR. ROB HARTMAN: Rob Hartman, 21 North 168th, and I have, after hearing everybody talk, I have more questions than a solid opinion. It's really not clear to me, yet, how rainfall and surface water relates to ground water.

I do know my neighbors immediately next to me and across from me have been pumping their basements for a year and a half ago. I have seen the dumpsters in front of their houses with their basements inside them. I have been up in the middle of the night with them for sumps that could not keep up.

Some thing needs to be done for the area that I'm in. People talk about surface water not

related to ground water. When neighbors are pumping, we have a pond on our property. The pond raises. The pond is groundwater. Evidently, in my mind, there is a relationship. So, I'm in favor of the drain.

I have to believe that if you don't have -- I don't have a water problem. I could say that I don't want to pay for it, but, actually, I'm willing to pay some for the drain.

I'm in favor of an approach of where everybody pays equally, as opposed to only the people in the district. It's simply not fair to charge people that are not being affected here, and, then, not charge the other people in the Township.

(Applause.)

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Brent Allen McDonald. Raynetta Praest? (No response.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: There has been a lot of good comments. We are going to close the public comment section at this point.

We, for the next few moments -- minutes, half hour or so, are going to deliberate. The deliberation will occur in public. We're not going to take any additional public comments. Do we need a chance for a recess for a moment?

(Off the record. On the record.)

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We'll take just a five minute recess after Paul has a comment. We'll come back and we'll deliberate at that time.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: The public comment period has been closed, and I notice sometimes at the meetings like this, some people choose to leave not waiting until the decision is made.

I made a statement when we opened. Water in a basement or getting in your wallet are pretty emotional things, and I really want to thank you for your decorum that you demonstrated here today.

All of the public comments were pointed, yet, done appropriately. I really appreciate that, and knowing that you can go home, and go to rest, and meet your neighbor and look him in the eye, we didn't really blackball you. It has to be good for you people, as well for us, and, once again, thank you for coming.

Feel free to stick around. As soon as they get back and reconvene their meeting, they will come up with a decision. We'll know whether we go forward or

not. Thank you.

(Off the record -- recess. On the record.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: We are going to begin to deliberate openly, and discuss the issue, and because of that, we'll do it in front of the public. So, we are

going to have a discussion up here. We're going to try to share two microphones between the three of us, and talk about what our thoughts are before we put it up to a vote.

First of all, I am going to say, does somebody want to start out and share some of their thoughts and --

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: One of the items that I am concerned about, and I think it's a big concern of a lot of people here is -- is it realistic what is the district? And we don't really know what the district is.

We seem to have -- we definitely have a problem. I have lived in the area all of my life. I happened to drive through in the spring. We know that the people have a horrible problem up there in certain areas of the County.

I don't know how to improve the drain. I think that the drain really -- something needs to be done. What -- what needs to be done? I don't think it's part of what this Board can say that the design is right; the design is wrong.

Is there a problem? Our job is to say is there a problem? I, for one, think there is a problem in certain areas. I'm not an engineer and designer to

say how it is supposed to be designed, and where it is supposed to go. Could we exclude some of the lower part and drain the water to different drains? I don't know if this is cut and dry, but this is the way it has to be.

I think we are at the very start of a solution to a drainage problem, but I'm not here to say that is the solution.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I agree our purpose here is not to take a look at modifying the district boundary. If the district boundary needs to be modified after the drain solution has been designed, they will exclude people who are not receiving benefits or contributing to the problem. That is what is required under State Law.

I think it's very unusual to have a suburban/urban area without drainage in it. I think I agree with some of the comments. It's unfortunate it was not put in 20 or 30 years ago.

Obviously, I have looked at pictures of the areas, from both the north and south side. So, there is a necessity to remove storm water. This is not ground water that is seeping up. This is storm water that is not going anywhere. It's not being conveyed.

The Township did a study. It concluded what

they needed. We have to take it into account. I also believe that you can design a storm water system that

will mitigate or prevent problems with blueberry fields.

Grand Haven Charter Township has hundreds of thousand -- not dollars, but hundreds of acres of blueberries. There are some large storm drains immediately adjacent to the blueberry fields. So I know that it can be designed, in fact, not to negatively affect, but I think they can work with the Michigan Cooperative of Michigan State Cooperative to try to ensure that.

Also, we don't know what the weather pattern is going to be. We're not here to decide if this is an unusual event or whether it's something that is going to be repeated -- something on a regular basis.

We're only here, right now, looking at the facts in front of us, and I see the flooding that has occurred as being a necessity for having some sort of storm drainage system put in place. Again, not knowing if it should be localized or a bigger design. It's an engineering solution, and the Drain Commissioner is going to have to live and die by the engineering -- the decision that the engineer makes.

I also want to say that one of the problems is that you don't have any place for the pumpage from

the dewatering systems these people have, that they are making efforts to keep their homes dry. They are spending a lot of money to put in new systems.

If you don't have a way to convey that water away from their homes, you are simply recycling the water. They end up with very expensive electric bills. They may keep a dry basement, but are doing nothing to

solve it.

I don't want to confuse road ditches with Ottawa County storm ditches. The road ditches are simply meant for the water from the roads to have a place to sink into the ground. It does not convey the water away. Storm water drains from the county are supposed to convey the water away to another location.

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: I worked for the Ottawa County Road Commission my entire career, and a lot of the drains, the ditches along the roadways, the County Road Commission, were only ponding areas. They were an area for the water to go into and seep away. They were not designed or constructed to take the water from the area and take it to a lake, or a stream, or something else.

It was mostly just for drainage for the streets. If you throw the snow up there, you have to have a place for the water to go. This area seems to be

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very void for any established drains, which is very unusual for the County.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I also just wanted to point out there has been variations of the ground water table and the blueberry fields continue to thrive. I think that you can design it so it does not negatively impact it. Again, from high water tables to low water tables, the blueberries have thrived.

I think it's important to say one solution is not going to solve all of the problems. We can't expect that, and they are not asking us to do that at

that point, but it can mitigate the potential ones -- guarantee it can mitigate the potential ones.

I think that retention and detention ponds could work. You could have a small local solution to some of the areas. You may be able to connect to the back side of some of the current drains that exist.

Unfortunately, for those drains, they have been sized for the area that they are serving. If you brought in a larger area, you would have to enlarge the entire existing drains that are currently on the east side of the Township. The east side of the Township already paid for the drains or at least a portion of them.

When you are talking also about whether it

is localized, I'm looking at the map with the complaints. I see problems starting from the very northern boundary, going down to almost Lake Macatawa.

So, although it may be localized in terms of the west side of the Township, and not in the dune area, not in the lake hill area, there is still a very large area that's being impacted negatively by some of the runoff.

I agree that the district may need to be amended. I heard a lot of very good comments and my recommendation to the Drain Commissioner is as they come up with a solution, they are going to have to look very closely at the district boundaries, but the Drain Commissioner at the very beginning of the meeting said exactly that. We may -- in fact, you stated that you have over-designed the proposed district as it is right

now.

You can shrink a district without having another public hearing, but you can't expand a district. So, there is a tendency on the part of the Drain Commissioner to make a district too large, rather than go through the entire process all over again. I think that is what occurred here.

The design of the system, the scope of the system, and what the assessments are going to be,

depending on when this system is put into place, is outside of our scope. They are all good questions. Our answers can give you assurances, except to this, but the process has worked on thousands of other drains throughout the State of Michigan.

If you want to change State Law, and this should be up to a vote of referendum, that means you have to change State Law. The system may be a little backward, but I will say it has worked in thousands of county drains throughout the State of Michigan -- throughout the State of Michigan -- Michigan's 83 counties -- 80.

So, I have some trust in the Drain Commissioner. He lives and dies by his decisions. He's an elected official. His goal is to get it right. If he doesn't, it has a huge impact on his limits.

Honestly, I'm -- I'm, right now, I'm strongly saying there is a problem. It necessitates a storm water solution, and another aspect is that the County and, more specifically, Park Township, for the

public's safety, health, and welfare should be assessed a portion of this cost.

Again, we can't say what portion, but we can say as part of our decision they have the responsibility to solve the problem. Peggy?

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SEC. PEGGY WEICK: They covered a lot of it, but I would like to say in making this a larger area, making it larger than it may have to be, I think that I would ask the Drain Commissioner to look and make sure it's in a watershed area, those boundaries, because that is where the drainage is going to be.

There is economic impact, both to the blueberries and the homeowners. I say it's not just a localized problem. It's all the way down.

I'm very, very familiar with the blueberry industry, and I would very emphatically caution you to work with somebody so that they are not impacted. Agriculture in Michigan, right now, is number one. Agriculture. You want to keep our farmers and our growth here, but you can see their problems and there have been -- we can't point fingers. This happened ten years ago and 30 years ago. It's now happening. It's a problem, and it's happening now.

I'm not a weatherman. I don't know what the weather forecasts are going to be from now on. So, I can't deal with that.

And it's not a one-size fits all. So, you really need to look at where their problems are and effectively deal with those. If there are drains that are already helping the problem, then I would take that

into consideration, as well.

But I do believe, as Bill does, that there is a necessity, and I do believe there should be an assessment.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Assessment to the Township?

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: To the Township.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Anything further?

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: No.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The comment from the community from the gentleman with the Hope College sweatshirt, I agree. Although, both of my daughters go to Calvin. I just wanted to point that out. There is common ground, even for us.

At this point --

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: I want to apologize to those who names I have mispronounced. This is the first meeting that I have ever been at that Paul has pronounced my name correctly. After doing all of the neighbors' names here, I apologize to all of you that I have battered.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: My grandparents emigrated from Finland. If you think your names are complicated --

I am going to make a motion. I am going to

move that the drain is necessary.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: At that point, we have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Aye.

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: That motion is unanimously passed.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The second motion is that -- I'll make a motion. Again, I move that the drain is necessary for the protection of public health in Park Township, and a portion of the costs shall be apportioned to the municipality at-large. Is there a second?

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: Second.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: It has been seconded by Ken. All in favor say aye.

SEC. PEGGY WEICK: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Aye.

MEMBER KEN SOUTER: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Opposed? Again, there is no opposition. It was unanimously approved.

Again, those are what we are required to do under State Law, and so at this point the public hearing

is closed, and unless the Township would like to make some comments, I'll close down the public hearing.

COMMENT: Tell us what happens next.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: I will do that -- when the Supervisor has a chance to speak.

SUPERVISOR AMANDA PRICE: Can you hear me? Again, just a couple of notes about comments that I

heard the entire evening, and I'm hoping that people are aware of when it was discussed in the paper about the possible costs, now, again, we had several people talk that we don't know what the cost is, right now.

Our estimates at the beginning of this process and through this whole time were that people would have approximately a $900 to a thousand dollar assessment over ten years.

So, it would be about 100 a month or, I'm sorry, 100 a year. It could possibly go 20 years. The timeline has not been decided about that. So, I wanted to point that out.

And, then, there was a comment about drains in the Waukazoo area, people live very near them and they still have problems, and we realize that there are some things that need to be corrected in the Waukazoo area that has to be done or we are in the process of doing, and I wanted to assure you that we are very much

in the process of trying to understand what we are doing -- I don't want to say it that way -- we are trying to understand where the drains are, how we can improve them, and make them more effective. So, that is it.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: I, as the Drain Commissioner, would just like to give my thanks to the Drain Board, the Board of Determination, that I selected. This has been, by far, the most contentious and difficult drain hearing that I have had in my nine-year tenure of Drain Commissioner, and I really

have to hand it to you three the way that you handled the open discussion and the democratic process that was followed. You just need to know that I really appreciate your input. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Real quickly, can you just talk about the steps that occur from this point forward? I know what they are, but it should come from you.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: From this point forward, we'll hire an engineering firm. Logically, I'll work with Driesenga's firm because they had all of the preliminary information and have done all of the field work to this point.

They will do a detailed survey to find out

exactly which land slopes which way and determine if your land is in or how much of your land is in the drainage district, and a defined boundary will be established.

Once the boundary is established, then the sizing of the drain pipes and ditches will be made, necessary DEQ permits will be applied for, obtained.

We do have an issue with the Southwest Ottawa Landfill that we have to be very careful with -- we can't just bust through there. I don't know how close to the cap portion that we can come or near. That is a design issue that will take place over the next three to four months.

Once the design has been completed, we'll try to segment it out so that we can bid a quarter of it at a time or a third of it at a time, but stagger it so

that we have one section of it bid, and then go to the next section, because one construction company cannot possibly build this all in one construction year.

So, we can't bid them all on the same day, get all three or four or however many sections that we do. There will have to be some decisions made on the timing of that. I would like to see this be constructed during the next construction season. Try to bid it out in the winter when the construction companies are hungry

and, hopefully, the bids come in lower than the engineer estimated.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: What kind of period of time is it between the design and assessment phase?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: I'll give you that. If anybody disagrees, they have ten days to hire an attorney and take it to court. That is your only recourse to stop it.

At this point, if it goes forward, and if it goes through, we'll have the assessment set according to what we had determined the runoff benefit, percentages, are for each parcel. You'll be notified. If you want to appeal that assessment, you can do that within how many days of notification -- ten days of notification.

So, you do have some appeal process that is available.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: When will they be able to be part of the design and see the design?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Will the public people see the design? If the public wants to see it,

they can. It's available in my office.
CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Normally, Townships would probably make it available at their office and so forth.
DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: We have always

worked with the Townships.
CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: It's a Township issue.
DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: It's unique in the fact that Driesenga is located on Holland's 8th Street in the Old Federal School, and my office is in West Olive, and I'm sure that Driesenga would be able to supply the Township Office with a set of plans, as well.
It's a publication that the end process is going on. So, we'll not send a notification, first class mail, to every person in the district to tell them that the bid process has started and the plans are available.
Wait a minute. What do I know? That's why I have good staff. It's an easy job with them, let me tell you. They will get notice of the bid process. Okay. I stand corrected.
So, then, we might even be able to put them on the Township's website. So, if you have the website address, you can look it up and keep yourself posted, as well. Any other questions?
CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: The only thing that I recommend is before you go to bid, the Township give the public an opportunity to look at the design. If there is concern about the design about negatively impacting their property or not being sufficient to cover their

property, that would be their only opportunity prior to going to bid. That is something that I make a recommendation that the Township take it upon themselves to make sure that the public has a chance to look at the design.

(Applause.)

COMMENT: I have a question. I know comments are overdue. The residents that are within the district drawn out now have a right to petition to be out of a district as a group because you said that the new lines, who is assessed has not been done?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: There is no petition process to be out of the district. The district will be determined by the gradient of the surface of the ground. Water flows downhill, and if your land flows toward the drain, you will be in the district. If the land flows the other way, you'll be out.

COMMENT: What if there is an existing drain there already?

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: Like the Number 23.

COMMENT: I'm on Estate. There is the blueberry drain. Will it be part of this drain?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: You won't have to pay for another drain. You'll have to pay for the

improvements that we plan to do, part of the new drain, part of the overall drain.

COMMENT: The entire Township, is that the watershed?

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: The entire Township will be assessed and apportioned, could be 25% of the overall costs.

CHIEF DEP. DRAIN COM. LINDA BROWN: At-large.

DRAIN COM. PAUL GEERLINGS: Everybody said they wanted it. I don't know. I heard the Township said it would be $900 for a home.

CHAIRMAN BILL CARGO: We closed the public hearing, and I thank you.

(Public Hearing Concluded at 10:00 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER AND NOTARY PUBLIC

STATE OF MICHIGAN
SS
COUNTY OF OTTAWA
_____/

I, Nancy A. Spykman, Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 525 and Notary Public do hereby certify

that this transcript consisting of 114 pages is a complete, true, and correct transcription of my stenographic notes of the Board of Determination Hearing held on November 11, 2009 In Re: Park West Drain.

I also certify that I am not a relative or employee of or an attorney for a party; or a relative or employee of an attorney for a party; or financially interested in the action.

_____ _____
Date Nancy A. Spykman, CSR 525

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