

Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission



The Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission meeting is scheduled for
Wednesday, September 28, 2022
Antrim Creek Natural Area Schoolhouse
9890 Old Dixie Highway, Ellsworth

MEMBERS

Jarris Rubingh
Annual Appointment

Don Miles
12/31/2022

Lauri Gear
12/31/2023

Carl Veenstra
12/31/2024

Douglas Seaney
12/31/2023

STAFF

Jeremy Scott
Deputy Administrator

James Hunter
Parks Director

Margie Boyd
Secretary

OFFICE ADDRESS

P.O. Box 187
Bellaire, MI 49615

PHONE: 231-533-6265

FAX: 231-533-8111

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you wish to attend this meeting and require special assistance, please contact the County Administration Office by writing PO Box 187, Bellaire, MI 49615 or calling (231)533-6265.

MEETING NOTICE

7:00 p.m. Call to order
Public Comment
Approval of July 27, 2022 Minutes
Trail Project Update
Parks Director Update

- Maintenance Update
- Signage Update
- Schoolhouse Update
- Metal Detecting

Schoolhouse Master Plan
Various Matters
Public Comment
Adjourn

If you have any questions, concerns, please contact the Administration and Planning Office at 231-533-6265.
We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Thank you



Memorandum Administration Office

September 13, 2022

TO: Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

RE: Approval of Minutes

A draft of the minutes from the July 27, 2022 meeting is included in the agenda packet. If there are no corrections, please consider the following motion:

Motion by _____, seconded by _____ to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2022 meeting as presented.

Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

Don Miles
Douglas Seaney

Jarris Rubingh, Chairman

Carl Veenstra
Lauri Grear

ACNA Meeting Minutes

DATE 7/27/2022 at 7 PM held at the Antrim Creek Natural Area Schoolhouse

Members Present:

Members absent,;

Others present: *James Hunter Antrim Co. Parks*

1. **The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Jarris Rubingh.**

2. **Public Comment**

None

Approval of Meetings

Motion by Miles, seconded by Seaney to approve the minutes from May 18, 2022 as amended.
Passed unanimously.

Amendment of May 18 minutes involves changing the date at the very bottom of p. 2 to reflect 7/27/2022 as the next meeting date.

3. **Parks Director Update**

Maintenance Update:

Discussion on maintenance of ACNA to date & work needing to be completed.

Trash Cans:

These have been installed, working on logos now. Commission would like to know if the bear hunters association would also like to purchase half of the can for the new trailhead.

Signage Update:

Discussion on the email sent by Steve Lagerquist regarding the updates to the signs. Distributed to commissioners & asked them for feedback.

Trail Expansion:

New trailhead is complete & trail is 60% chipped. New trail looks very good & followed the same guidance of the previously finished trails.

Draft of ACNA Schoolhouse Master Plan

Was distributed to commissioners for their additions or recommendations to be completed prior to the next meeting so that the final plan may be approved at the next meeting.

Explained grant writing, need for forward thinking for how to access funds. Explained county process of asking for additional funds for grant matches & other places funding could be accessed for projects such as the Schoolhouse. General discussion ensued regarding funding sources.

4. FY2023 Budget

Budget discussion occurred regarding projects for next year. It was determined additional funds should be set aside in anticipation for Schoolhouse project for possible match or maintenance/repairs to be made in the form of \$10,000. The rest of the budget was to match FY22 so funds were available when needed.

Motion by **Miles** seconded by **Rubingh** for a FY23 budget of \$22,557 to be distributed as \$4,000 Operating Supplies, \$4,000 Contractual Services, \$4,500 Grounds Maintenance, \$5,000 Building Maintenance and \$5,000 Building Project (Schoolhouse). **Passed unanimously.**

5. **Various Matters**

Private Donations

\$100 donation received from Karen Jones in honor of the memory of long time commissioner & ACNA advocate Elizabeth Hoffman.

Future donations were asked to be responded to by Commissioner Lauri **Grear** who asked if she could write a personal letter to donors on behalf of the commission. Commission agreed this is how they would like to proceed. All future donations would preferably be put into ACNA fund and not earmarked so the most pressing maintenance or issue could have donated funds available for spending.

Seaney had two separate vendors out to review the foundation & roof of the school house for integrity & they are working on quotes to submit to Parks for review & possible BOC action.

6. **Public Comment**

Metal detecting- How to handle permission for metal detecting. Parks Director suggested he draft a permission slip & policy which would require someone with permission to have a set duration in writing & have the permission slip on them at any time they are using the ACNA for detecting. Parks Dept and ACNA Commission would have first right of refusal of any findings on the natural area.

Adjourned at 828 PM by Rubingh

The next meeting is scheduled for September, 28th 2022 at 7PM to be held at the Antrim Creek Schoolhouse.



Memorandum Administration Office

September 13, 2022

TO: Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

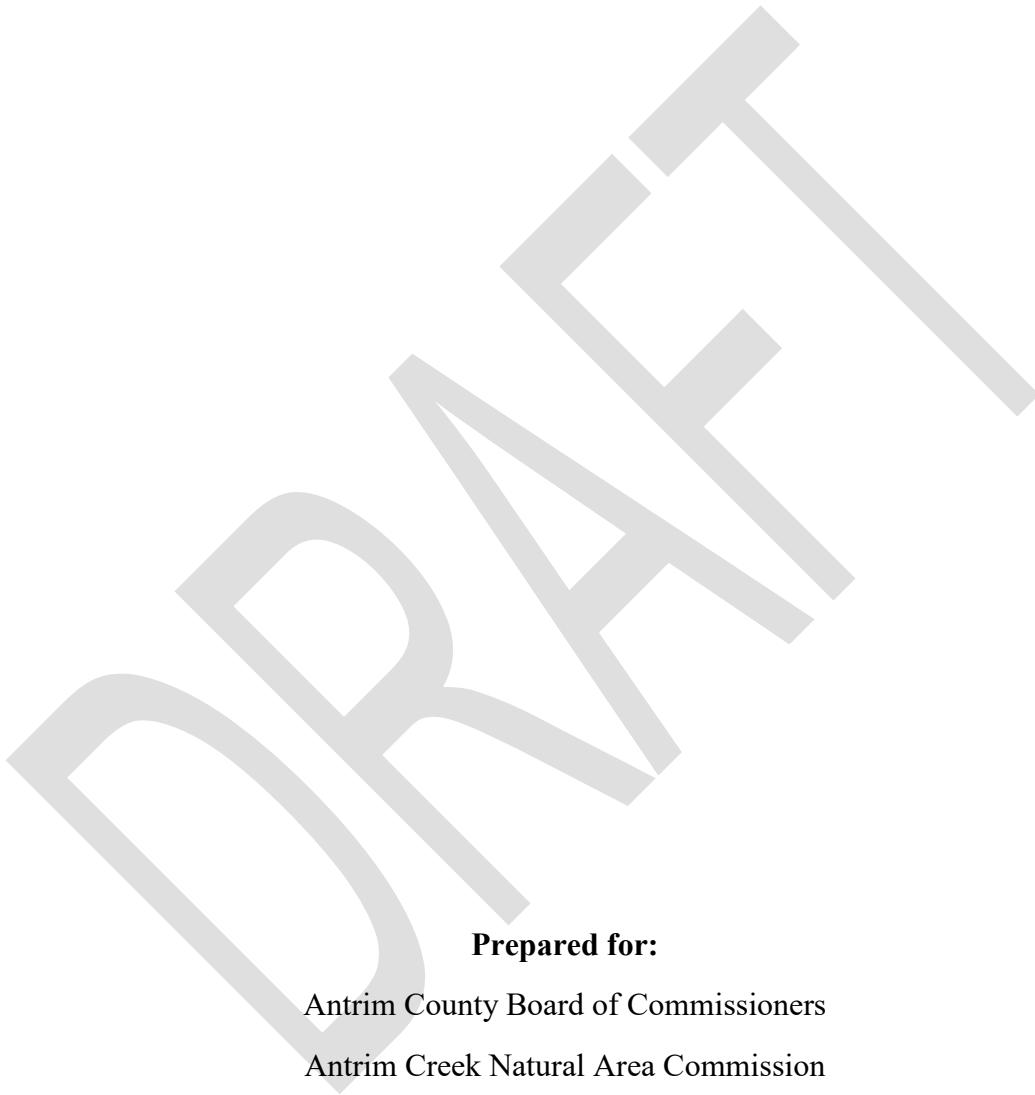
RE: Schoolhouse Master Plan

A draft of the master plan for the ACNA Schoolhouse has been included in your packet for review. Once you have had a chance to review and discuss, the following is presented for your consideration:

Motion by _____, seconded by _____ to approve the Antrim Creek Natural Area Schoolhouse Master Plan meeting as presented.

Antrim Creek Natural Area Schoolhouse Project

Antrim County, Michigan



Prepared for:

Antrim County Board of Commissioners
Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

By:

James Hunter, Antrim County Parks Director
Antrim County Parks Department, 2022

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Introduction

The Schoolhouse master plan is a production of the Parks Department in collaboration with community members and ACNA commissioners in partnership with the Friends of Antrim Creek to produce a written plan for the school house. The schoolhouse and accompanying land was acquired in 2021 after a longer than 20 year attempt to purchase the last remaining piece of property & schoolhouse. With this monumental completion of the natural area, comes the task of a written plan for the school house and where the funding will come from for realizing the dream of completing the natural area.

Background Information

Historical and Current Uses

Antrim City School (ca 1868) was originally a log cabin, which burned sometime that same year and was rebuilt ten years later in 1878 as according to Charles Bud Arnold in his “History of Antrim City School” which he produced for the Antrim County Historical Society, January 2009. The schoolhouse served as Antrim City’s schoolhouse until around 1941. After that time the schoolhouse has changed hands multiple times and was converted into a home where a family lived, with its owner (previous to purchase of the school house) attempting to make it into an artist’s retreat.

Currently, the school house stands in a state of disrepair after sitting vacant for a number of years. After its acquisition, the ACNA Commission has held their meetings inside of the school house, with an open house and rummage sale held inside the building by the Friends of Antrim Creek.

Access

Currently, the schoolhouse is accessible to the public by appointment only as there is currently no staff available to ensure no vandalism or theft occurs inside the building. There are two entryways used to access the school house, one at the front (east) and one on the south side of the building. Both entries are in a state of disrepair due to drainage issues and age. Currently there is no ADA accessibility to the building.

Significance of the structure

Antrim City was a logging community which failed as a result of not having a natural port into Lake Michigan for shipping. Although the city it supported failed, the significance of the building is valuable to the community as a historical remnant of the original settlers to the area. The first cemetery in the area is across the street and is still visited by the public.

Conservancy easement

There is a limited conservation easement on the ACNA property for endangered plant species and monitoring by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy which was an agreement between the donors from Antrim County. The easement does not cover the area specific to the schoolhouse.

ACNA Use

There is no data prior to 2021 to provide usage details of the natural area. However, during 2021 & 2022 there were visitors to the ACNA park every day during the summer and several requests for cross country trail grooming to be provided in the wintertime. The ACNA is being utilized nearly every day of the year and has become a growing attraction in Antrim County. The ACNA is being accessed by visitors who cross state lines and stay in the area as well as from other countries.

Project goals

The goal of the schoolhouse project is to provide the Natural Area with an interpretive visitor's center which can also be used for community functions.

Primary goals are:

1. Restoration of the building
2. ADA Accessibility to the building
3. Interpretive displays
4. Display of archaeological discoveries from the ACNA
5. Provide public awareness to environmental stewardship
6. Provide public with educational opportunities

Restoration of the building

The current building was built in 1878. The foundation is a mixture of field stone & porter concrete which is normal for a building constructed at that time. The roof's structure has been altered over time from its original state by various owners to serve different purposes.

The foundation has holes forming in the porter sections which require attention to ensure stability of the building. The roof also requires some reinforcement & modern solutions to allow for new roofing material to be installed. The following is not an all-inclusive list of improvements to be made, but most important to complete within FY22-23 timeframe is the foundation & roof to prevent the building from falling into a further state of disrepair.

There is an existing chimney which is in a state of disrepair. It has been suggested if the roof is to be rebuilt & new roofing installed, the chimney is to be removed to increase the longevity of the newly installed material.

Add-on to the west side of building

An add-on or extension of the existing structure should be considered to facilitate an interior bathroom, kitchenette & lockable/securable space for valuables. This add-on is also structurally necessary as it allows for new construction methods to be completed to secure the back wall of the existing structure to stabilize the existing foundation & provide a year round usable space at the ACNA schoolhouse.

Bathrooms

A uni-sex barrier free bathroom would be added into the add-on to the rear of the building, but also an exterior vault toilet is to be added at the trail head to allow for bathroom access to hikers during non-visitor hours at the schoolhouse. Vault toilets can be inexpensively constructed & utilize a septic tank which is serviced annually or bi-annually.

Barrier free access

The issue of altering a very old building to adhere to new standards for compliance causes issues with reconfiguring the structure to allow for wheelchair access and will require the installation of a ramp to allow barrier free access to the building.

In addition, the building will require an ADA pad to be made of concrete with an accompanying sidewalk.

Parking

The building site could accommodate a significant amount of parking available once configured. See the figure below for the suggested configuration of the parking lot. The parking lot is to be completed in three phases:

Phase 1: Removal of topsoil, grubbing (removal of trees/roots) and leveling of the land with the installation of a culvert to allow the existing ditch to continue to function.

Phase 2: Installation of new Grade A-22 gravel to allow for 6-8 parking spaces to be oriented in one of two options: Along the side of the building, or slot parking from off the road. Due to the limited size of the available space, roadside parking would be the optimal option by allowing for the largest amount of parking for the lowest amount of cost.

Phase 3: Installation of ADA compliant parking pad & sidewalk with ramp for barrier free access to enter the building on the existing front (east) entrance. This will also allow for improvement to building foundation drainage problems by extending the existing roof there to cover the ramp.

Historic displays

Panoramic displays through the area's history with photographs, explanations & input from local tribes, families of the original settlers & historians allow for visitors to step into the early times of Antrim City & the original settlers of Antrim County.

Meeting space

Currently, there are limited meeting places for local hunters, groups & educators/historians to provide classes to the public. The displays & furniture would all be able to be moved easily to allow for the space to be used for setting up fold up tables & chairs to facilitate local meetings on an as needed basis.

Project Funding

Project costs

This project is to be funded with as much grant funding as can be located. Grants are to be written by the Parks Department to request funds from the M-DNR grants, federal, state and local grant opportunities. Local tribes have been sought for their input & willingness to support the project seems well received.

Antrim City Schoolhouse interior committee

Purpose

The schoolhouse interior committee was formed from a pool of volunteers who stepped forward with knowledge of the schoolhouse & interest in improving it for visitors of all walks of life to enjoy into the future. The committee was requested by the ACNA Commission to facilitate the development of a rough draft of possibilities and options way to pursue improving the schoolhouse for future visitors.

Involved persons

Liz Lee Evans & Katherine Bretz Berst of Torch Lake Township along with Commissioner Carl Veenstra met & discussed the possibilities for the Schoolhouse in July, 2022 and prepared the following report:

Interior committee report

Description of existing interior

Interior space approximately 25 feet by 34 feet. Entry doors on south center and east center. A raised teacher platform runs along the entire west wall, about 10 feet wide. Two original windows on the south wall which were later modified, and one small non-original window added later. North wall has three original windows which were later modified. East and west walls have wide plank reddish hemlock with faint white imprints of the original lath and plaster walls over it. Wood stove in the center of the west wall about 7 feet from the wall. See approximate drawing provided. Remove wood burning stove but leave the original chimney (non-operational); remove cement from original brick. See rough drawing attached.

Areas Brainstorming information

Five ADA compliant doors: new emergency door into new construction lean-to housing for: ADA bathroom, mechanical and heating, storage/office, first aid/ kitchenette area. New West wall door near north wall leading to the new construction lean-to.

New West Door area: Sales... set up like an old store? Of books, maps etc... all cash locked in the new lean-to section.

Cozy Area: Situated in the southeast corner, (small gatherings, reading, relaxing, and small talks) with a lightweight 3 person sofa and two swivel chairs with floor lamps & bookcase along the west wall. Area to be used for educational programs offered by volunteer Friends of ACNA.

Fireplace: with BTU's sufficient to heat the 25 by 34 space (or gas/propane Franklin stove type) area in the southeast corner away from windows and doors so exhaust pipe with elbow pipe can run outside south wall according to code.

Electric/lighting: Overhead light and fan to circulate warm air in winter and cool air in summer. Electrical outlets installed to exterior walls to allow for coffee pots, lighting etc. to be added as needed.

Ceiling: Install drywall and insulate to reduce heat loss through ceiling / roof.

Bookshelves: Books such as: Norwood, A Legacy etc...Pioneer Notes, Whistle up the Bay, Potawatomi Indian Summer, History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians by Andrew Blackbird, A Visual Culture History of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa" The Way it Happened", etc.

Historic Maps/books: Reproductions of maps & books to be offered for sale.

Schoolroom set up: A small reproduction of student seating & a teacher's desk era equivalent set up to show how the schoolhouse functioned & to provide local schools with an opportunity to bring their students and visually show them how education used to be delivered.

The following information corresponds with the attached drawing found on page 9.

Section I. starting to the right of the East Door:

Brief Geology and archeology section, 5 Feet to corner, 12 feet from corner along north wall with code compliant electric outlet on east wall and overhead directed lighting for each section:

Geology, Archeology and the Earliest Original Peoples and Anishinaabek- The Original people of Northwest Lower Michigan and their cultural lifeways; kinship/clans, sacred land and sites, Culture heroes, Origin myths/traditions, etcetera; Example: Liz Evans Anishinaabek Maps, Antrim Creek Natural area map. Some prehistory, 1500, 1600, 1700

Earliest French and English contact Anishinaabek with French, Voyageurs, trade and marriage relations and interactions; Metis, English interactions

Section II: From Northeast corner heading west:

American and European settlers and Anishinaabek- Integration? Names of Ojibwe and Odawa families and leaders from the 1800's, photos of them, Greensky Hill and the Mail carriers from Mackinaw to Traverse City?

1812 and after -American and European Settlers and Anishinaabek

1835 and 1855 Treaties- 1836 Michigan becomes a State of United States

Beaver Island, King James Strang, and Latter-Day Saints?

Section III: Along North Wall 8 feet long

1850s Civil War participation of Michigan citizens and Anishinaabek and land grab/'mustering out' pay 160 acres

White European attitudes and U.S. Government Policies of Assimilation and re-education, Anishinaabek "quiet resistance" (McClurken), and their use of the law to protect their biological and cultural existence and protect their rights and the LAND. Truth and Reconciliation? Examples of Integration and cooperation between Anishinaabek and settlers.

Section IV: Toward Northwest Corner

1800's Early European and American settlers of Northwest Lower Michigan- Local Communities: Norwood, Atwood, Inwood, Eastport, Charlevoix, Beaver Islands and their social, cultural, educations, professional interactions. Antrim City development and demise.

Section V: Standing, mobile, panels protruding from wall near chimney out about 15 feet. Dividing the School House area from the Panoramic Tour Area: Info on both sides of the mobile panels. See the Historical Society of Charlevoix Harsha House

1900's Local Communities, the people of Norwood, Antrim City, Eastport, and History of the Antrim City School; Platt maps, historical maps, Betty Beeby map of Eastport, flat road, Norwood, census records, etc...

Materials used for construction:

Use Hemlock board on West and East Walls to burn in large font the names of all students of Antrim City School and contributors to the Antrim City Schoolhouse Project (major donors). Also burn names of all attending student names onto the School Benches who attended and family names of community members with a burn etch technique.

Display cases: Five glass locking display cases and mobile display panels for each section as needed in which to show valuables from the different eras.

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Subcommittee Drawing

