

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday, November 18, 1985 at 4:00 P.M. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex.

Chairperson Lowe called the meeting to order and the following roll was recorded:

Present: Comm. Berglund, Corkin, DeFant, Valente and Lowe.

Absent : None.

Also in attendance were Bruce Rukkila, Finance Officer, Patricia Micklow, Chief Civil Counsel, Ron Koshorek, Resource Development Director, Norman Gotschall and Charles Drury, bidders on the Brookridge property and Randolph Osstyn, their attorney, Bruce Closser, Appraiser, Robert Cowell, CPA, William Sanders, from Lincoln Poley, Architect Inc., and David Berns, Director of Social Services.

No one wished to speak under public comment.

Chairperson Lowe explained the purpose of the meeting to discuss the proposal regarding the Brookridge property and asked if there are any changes in the proposal. Mr. Gotschall commented and asked that appraiser, Bruce Closser, be present to give his findings.

A communication was read from Virginia Long, Secretary, Marquette Beautification and Restoration Committee, giving their approval of an application presently being completed by Barbara Kelly to have Brookridge named an historic landmark by State and Federal Authorities, and to also urge that demolition be postponed until State and Federal approval or rejection of the application is received. The communication was placed on file.

Communications from Phil Watts, Ph.D., and Harvey A. Wallace, Ph.D., of Northern Michigan University, regarding their support of a Country Inn and Wellness Center for Marquette County, were read and placed on file.

Bruce Closser, Appraiser, commented regarding the appraisal that was done for the County. He cautioned the Committee on using the appraisal as a accurate guideline, as it is now two years old, and things have changed since this was done. He explained what was taken into consideration at the time it was done and distinguished between the business aspect and the real estate. Mr. Closser reviewed how they took a survey of country inns now in operation in the country and how they operated.

Comm. DeFant asked Mr. Gotschall if he figured Marquette has improved in the real estate market since two years ago. He said he felt it had improved, although the restaurant business should be looked into carefully before jumping into it. Mr. Closser stated that old buildings are not bringing a good price.

Comm. Corkin questioned what type of a person would be interested in the Country Inn aspect of business. Mr. Closser stated someone to provide a homey type atmosphere, possibly a couple. He said this would not be a professional type ownership.

William Sanders, of Lincoln Poley Architects, stated that the Wellness Center would fill the local need, that it would provide jobs for the community and explained how this would bring extra dollars into the County, once it was in operation.

Robert Cowell, CPA, stated he wonders if we are going at this in the right manner. They have to get investors to put their money in it and a lot of people are going to have to invest.

Chairperson Lowe reviewed the steps the Board must take at this time. First they have to determine whether they are going to take steps to have the Brookridge building preserved; second, would be to

make a determination as to whether or not they want to divest itself of that property, or if there are other alternatives available.

Comm. DeFant commented on the business aspect of the proposal. She stated that as commissioners they must evaluate the proposal in terms of County welfare and County policies. They must work out a public purpose for this sale or retention, and in order to do this they must know how risky or how solid a business proposal this is, and regarding the \$30,000.00 offer, where this money is coming from. Bruce Rukkila, Finance Officer, commented also regarding the questions posed. He said they have a lot of good ideas, but have not seen a master plan yet. Mr. Gotschall stated they feel they cannot draw up a complete plan until they know they own it. They want to be able to come in with an offer and have the County Board tell them they either will sell or not sell.

Comm. Valente stated he understands their problem and has no objection to the offer to sell with certain options.

Comm. Berglund stated that six weeks ago the commissioners were ready to raze the Brookridge building. He said it is not up to them to make a decision whether it is a good project or not, that if we are going to preserve the building, why not this group, as no other one has come forward.

Comm. Corkin questioned the economic impact this building will make. He said we are not just talking about Marquette, because Marquette County is widespread, and as far as future governmental use, we must look at people living in Republic, Gwinn, Michigamme and throughout the County.

It was then moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Corkin and unanimously carried to recommend to the County Board that they proceed at this time to maintain the Brookridge building, that they stop demolition and proceed to secure and protect it in the most economical way until further decision is made.

It was moved by Comm. Corkin and supported by Comm. DeFant to recommend to the County Board that the County retain the entire 53.5 acres. He said this is based on the recommendation of the Planning Commission, Administration, and his own best judgment.

Comm. Valente stated that this building has been sitting there doing no good, and when someone comes forward with a proposal, we turn them down. He said he would like to see something go ahead and feels we should sell them the building and 11 acres. He said we are stopping progress.

Chairperson Lowe stated that he thinks the \$30,000.00 offer is too low and said they should proceed cautiously, he understands there has not been an appraisal of this property by the City of Marquette and this area is the only undeveloped property in the City of Marquette. He said he has to be convinced that the opportunities for the County's best interest would be to sell it.

Comm. DeFant reviewed the Service Center buildings use and the need for a place for County offices if Simmons should take over the entire building and also other office space that needs addressing. She commented on Marquette County being selected for a Juvenile Detention Facility and that the Brookridge site was the top suggestion for this. She said she gives credit to the Wellness Center idea, but that they do have other responsibilities.

At this time David Berns, Director, Dept. of Social Services, read a communication directed to the County Board regarding the status of the Juvenile Detention Facility in the Upper Peninsula. The letter states that Marquette is still the logical site, but there are no immediate plans for such a facility but that it would be nice to keep the options

open. Mr. Berns said they are not locked into any particular site. He spoke on behalf of Dr. Johnson, Director of the Health Dept., and Dr. Birch, Director, Mental Health, regarding Brookridge, that they are looking towards a County type Wellness Center, whether County or private.

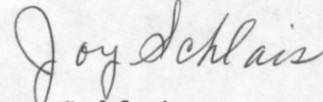
Randolph Osstyn, Attorney, stated that all this talk is irrelevant, that the appropriate question is whether they are going to sell Brookridge or not. If not, there is no need to go on.

Comm. Berglund said that he would like to see Brookridge preserved privately, he said it is done better that way. He said the County made a decision, that the best use for that property was to sell it on the open market, they certainly can change, but that must have been the view because it has been listed, and with no response from anyone else. He doesn't see it likely that Brookridge will be preserved with public funds, that it will have to be with private funds and that we are just delaying it. He then called for the question. A vote was then taken on the motion to recommend to the County Board that they retain the entire 53.5 acres of Brookridge property in County ownership and it carried. Comm. Berglund and Comm. Valente voted nay.

No one present wished to speak under public comment.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Joy Schlais
Deputy County Clerk

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Committee of the Whole Meeting
Monday, November 18, 1985, 4:00 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex
Marquette, Michigan 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT.
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES. (NONE)
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Discussion on Brookridge.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
9. PUBLIC COMMENT.
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
11. ADJOURNMENT.