

## RV Park Update 12-20-2023

Morton Township Property Owners:

In case you have not heard, there is a proposal to develop an RV Park at the corner of St. Ives Drive and 105<sup>th</sup> - across from the Lake Mecosta public access. The proposed location consists of 5 parcels of land, totaling 45 acres. Four parcels are currently zoned Agricultural, one parcel zoned Residential. The RV Park would offer sites for lease to people with motor homes, campers, 5th-wheels, tents, travel trailers, etc. The consultants offering this proposal are asking for a density of 12-15 sites/acre, an increase from the 3 sites/acre in the Township Zoning ordinance for campgrounds. Even setting aside part of that land for amenities like the pool, clubhouse and such, and an area for a septic system, a conservative guess (and it is a guess until a site plan is submitted) would assume the location could have at least 300 sites!

We can't stop development – St. Ives and Tullymore didn't exist 30 years ago. New homeowners have replaced or rebuilt old cottages and built new homes and cottages. Each new build is constructed within the Township building ordinances and County Health Department standards. These “developments” have enhanced our area and are assets to our community.

However, our community is facing a new development, originally asking for exemptions from the Township before an application has even been submitted.

The request by Freshwater Hospitality Consulting Inc. for a variance in number of sites for a campground in order to build an RV Park on the corner of 105<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Lake Drive is something that is of great concern. The effects of such a development on the Tri-Lakes, Canadian Lakes, School Section Lake, and the Little Muskegon River area are huge! It will bring overcrowding on the lakes, overcrowding at the public access and boat ramp, and a large increase in traffic (vehicular, pedestrian, ATV, golf carts, bicycles, etc.). Other concerns are water pollution, increased lighting issues, increased noise levels and a major strain on limited volunteer public resources. The location of this proposed development is only 700 feet from the Tri-Lakes Public Access site, and within the aquifer that feeds those lakes and provides drinking water. Providing how the sewage is handled, potential contamination of the aquifer from this type of development could have major impacts on the lakes and the river! The proposed RV Park is also directly across the street from the Valley Court area of Canadian Lakes, which will not only drastically change the essential character of the area (residential), but it will also significantly increase traffic congestion on a daily basis.

Another major concern from an economic standpoint is the impact on property values of existing Morton Township residents. The news of the development has current residents concerned about the decline of their property values. Current residents may consider selling their property to avoid the influx of seasonal residents, who are not subject to and exempt from contributing to the Township tax base.

Concerned citizens of Morton Township are not opposed to progress. On the contrary, it can be beneficial for a community *when it is aligned with the Township Goals and Master Plan*. Ideally, any development in the community would be consistent with zoning of adjacent areas, would characterize a rural and agricultural lifestyle, and would incorporate citizens who become tax-paying members of our community and who have a vested interest in protecting the natural resources found here.

The proposed development offers little to no benefit to the residents of Morton Township, especially the residents of the area immediately adjacent to the proposed development, and it poses potential risks to the environment, lakes and streams, property values, and current way of life for existing residents.

Please join with fellow residents in close monitoring of this proposal. You can do that by:

- Continue to visit this website for updates on all the happenings regarding this proposal. We will provide links to official Township documents as well.
- Express your concern to the Morton Township Board and Planning Commission via email at [planningcommission@mortontownship.org](mailto:planningcommission@mortontownship.org). Please do not do this once, but keep doing so as this proposal works through the process.
- Update your neighbors. The timing of this proposal is strategic in that many of the property owners are no longer in the area or coming to their properties in the winter.