

**Leelanau County Board of Commissioners**  
**Public Hearing – Tuesday, November 21, 2023**  
*Approved Minutes 1/16/2024*

*Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded (audio and video). The video of the meeting can be found at the following link:*  
<https://leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2593#video>

Public Hearing called to order by Chairman Ty Wessell at 6:00 p.m.

Today's Public Hearing is being held at the Government Center, 8527 E. Government Center Drive, Suttons Bay, Michigan.

Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited, followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call:	District #1	Jamie Kramer	ABSENT
	#2	James O'Rourke	PRESENT
	#3	Doug Rexroat	ABSENT (Prior Notice)
	#4	Ty Wessell	PRESENT
	#5	Kama Ross	PRESENT
	#6	Gwenne Allgaier	PRESENT
	#7	Melinda C. Lautner	PRESENT

Purpose of the Public Hearing:

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear from the Public regarding the potential Adoption of a Brownfield Plan for the Bluebird Redevelopment Project, Leland Township, Leelanau County, Michigan.

Brownfield Director and Planning & Community Development Director Trudy Galla was present before Commissioners. Also present was Theresa Searles, Environmental Engineer, from Fishbeck.

Environment Engineer Searles reviewed the slide presentation for the Bluebird Redevelopment Project Act 281 Brownfield Plan.

The presentation can be found at the following link:

<https://leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2593#handouts>

The Brownfield Plan was explained and would be 3% of the investment and it would be a maximum of \$216,775.00 and invoices will be submitted to the Brownfield Authority based on their true costs. Discussion and information on the Plan, Tax Increment Financing, the multiple benefits to this, and the revitalization.

The Brownfield Plan Adoption Process reviewed, current and final steps, and the public hearing that is currently being held as required by statute. There was discussion / explanation on the resolution that would formally adopt the plan and that would be presented during the Regular Session.

Skip and Lyn Telegard, owners of the Bluebird, were present before Commissioners and explained their vision for the future and what led to this decision. They explained the development that went into this and Brownfield involvement and helping of the environmental issues. The Telegard's hope that Commissioners will support the assistance of the Brownfield Plan.

Commissioner O'Rourke had questions on the tanks from the gas station and Telegard responded. O'Rourke expressed his views on this and he was on the fence on this and has received calls on it. He likes the work.

Public present and need to address the Board with comments and questions.

Chairman Wessell opened the meeting to the floor to receive Public Comment.

**The following individuals spoke from the Public Addressed the Commissioners:**

- Steve Mikowski offered questioned and comments. He is looking for information if the taxpayers have lawfully petitioned the Township or the County for this project to go forward. It was mentioned the determination was done by a Township Assessor and how is that decision arrived at if the individual is an employee of the Township and questions the process to learn that the Assessor is the sole person for that determination. That process eliminates the Township people who want improvements that they may like. Who lobbied to put this into place. Mikowski also asked are their going to be any federal funds, state funds, county funds or township funds used for any of this project at all – Brownfield projects per se. Will the Township or County taxpayers be contributing to the process. What efforts have been made to search out other businesses or organizations that may need assistance and he questioned the selection process for a project. If there are Federal or State funds, they are still taxpayers dollars. He would appreciate some clarity and have attended over 3500 meetings and is not familiar with the process and need and necessity. Mikowski listened to the comments.

Planning and Community Development Director Trudy Galla thanked Mr. Mikowski and responded to his questions. In regards to other businesses, they are required to do community outreach on behalf of the Brownfield Development Authority and she also periodically sends out information to Townships and Villages to see if there are issues that they are aware of and they can then contact the property owner and that starts up the initial contact. That has been done periodically through this process. It is always up to the developer if they want to pursue Brownfield involvement and it has been throughout the process. Federal Funds are the EPA and during the TIF and Capture, to recapture, so they can be used in the future. In regards to a petition by citizens, that is not required. They follow the Brownfield Act and those requirements.

Environmental Engineer Searles added said this process is dictated by Statute, the Assessor making the assessment is allowed in Statute and it has to be very specific, onsite inspections, and evaluation against specific criteria. That is how the process works by Statute. As far as the citizens process, all of the meetings are public. The Brownfield meeting, the Township meetings, and County are required to be in the public with ten days' notice. Galla referenced other projects and information from local Assessors.

Steve Mikowski had further questions specifically within the proposed entity for this process and assistance and answers were provided.

Commissioner Ross said about a year ago she was about the same point as Mr. Mikowski and got interested as there was a landowner in a township and she attended the meetings to learn more and has now heard the presentation 3-4 times and is really proud about the way this project has been handled and is comfortable with and supportive of. She feels that this is a good choice.

Commissioner Allgaier thanked them for doing this.

Chairman Wessell said that Commissioners will have this on the next agenda.

There were no further public comments or questions.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned by Chairman Wessell at 6:40 p.m.

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Ty Wessell, Chairman  
Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

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Michelle L. Crocker, Leelanau County Clerk  
Clerk, Leelanau County Board of Commissioners