

Code: 517007
Subject: Chris Soukoup
Date: June 19,2008
Interviewer: Robin Lashley
Special Notes: Lawyer Ohio Land Acquisitions for West Creek
Minutes:

background info born in Detroit hired as atty. By West Creek Preservation
0 Committee March 2005
Heninger House historic one of the oldest house in Parma he represented owner as
1 city wanted it 3/03 demolition permit
retirement money for client preserve bldg. for community 35 yrs as real estate
2 attorney commercial real estate matters
3 Commercial real estate attorney defines likes conservation and preserving land
now focused on volunteer by preserving land finds rewarding and has knowledge of
4 land preserv. and commercial law
Hudson Land Conservancy area of huge residential growth, looking into private land
5 conservancy to slow down growth
6 founder of Hudson Land Conservancy
Hudson Land C.onservancy Growth, how he got started in land preserv President and
7 trustee of Hudson Land Con.
conservation easement set of deed restrictions which keep land in natural state
8 forever
projects in Hudson mitigation programs conservation easements on the job training
9 for future projects
economic benefit to community. Proper use of land education/ commercial, office,
10 residential, costs & burdens &revenue
11 economic benefit to community More desirable land to developers
cluster development/ green space attracts development/ benefits to developers
12 streams forest meadows carve out
13 and preserve as land is developed
Chicago as urban example with greenspace successfur in incorporating parks in
14 urban landscape
biggest job is the footwork/ conversations with property owners & educating owners
15 credits Hess, Lyncheck, Vaseryli
Chris would then do the "law" work property owners usually want money varies from
16 property to property challenging work
Challenge is the funding restrictions on funding from grants/ must satisfy the funding
17 source
Also wants to satisfy property owner desires. Developers have own concerns about
18 process and usage of the land.
common ground is that all want to preserve land so how do we make sure rules
19 regulations and desires met
eminent domain not popular tactic course of last resort Chris hasn't been involved
20 with this
Timeline of Westcreek. Chris came in March 2005 as attorney for grass roots group.
21 He came in after groundwork laid.
Seven communities involved in Westcreek defers to Vasaryli, Lyncheck or Hess for
22 details about size.Metroparks involvement impact
Has visited the Westcreek site. Role of real estate attorney is to see the land you are
23 talking about.
Favorite place in Westcreek Gorge in Parma secluded, never know you are in an
24 urban setting.

Confluence project is greatest accomplishment huge undertaking multi-million dollar
25 project. Acquire commercial bldgs.
Confluence project will take several years to finish Confluence of Westcreek & Cuy.
26 River help flooding benefit water control
letter agreement that addressed everyone's concerns with community for Westcreek
27 Confluence Project & allowed to go forward
regional benefit of Westcreek: good role model for other communities procedures/
28 track record that others can look to
number of properties acquired with his assistance in 3.5 years with Westcreek 10
29 properties /deeds, audits, basic closings
also deals with taxes, donations, wide range of involvement such as title work,
30 deed restriction language
donation of property and benefits to the land owner. People sometimes donate for the
31 tax benefit involved
benefits from property/preserved land loses value economic benefits for land owner in
32 form of property/income tax reduction
reason for work/ likes land & preserving land for people. Children most important
33 reason. Most important in urban settings.
cites Nature Deficit Disorder remembers childhood in Cleveland Heights chasing
34 grasshoppers and butterflies
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