Recently, questions have been raised about a proposed project by a property owner to develop parcels along the shoreline of Lake Charlevoix within Hayes Township. These questions have primarily concerned the viability and status of the application process for a zoning permit. Hayes Township is providing this update on this situation to clarify the status of the permit application.

An application for approval of the project was originally made to the Township in 2019. After reviewing the application, it was determined that a zoning permit could only be issued by the Zoning Administrator after the review and approval of a Shoreland Protection Strip restoration plan. The plan was reviewed in 2019 by the Township’s Shoreland Protection Subcommittee, the landscape architect and Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. After these consultations, and associated discussions, considerations and comments, the proposed plan was voted to be approved by the Hayes Township Planning Commission, allowing the Zoning Administrator to issue a permit contingent upon and effective upon receiving approval by the State of Michigan’s Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the conditions approved by the Planning Commission.

To date, the project has received approval from the EGLE and the application is under review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. At this time there is no further action the Township can take regarding the project as, without U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval, the permit is still in the application process.

Hayes Township works to enhance the protection of the lakes in the Township through a review process utilizing the expertise available in our area. A focus of the review process is to encourage conservation, planning and cooperation of property owners in water quality efforts. In this case, that cooperation reaped commitments to significant shoreland restoration in comparison to that existing prior to implementing the Shoreland Review Subcommittee review and recommendation.

The Planning Commission is confident in the decision it has made in this case and will continue to take all factors into consideration to protect our valuable lakes and the Township as a whole on all development requests.