



Biography and History of Ina Zeemering & Zeemering Farms

Ina Zeemering began accumulating 135 acres of land in Oceola Township, MI, 30 years ago. To the largely vacant land she added a farmhouse (above), out buildings, horse facilities and 5 new homes; all while creating a sophisticated, successful combination of sustainable businesses, land conservation initiatives and animal-based projects and programs. First developed around the raising, training and breeding of horses, the entire site is also home to miles of trails for horse-riding or nature walking, all guided by the principals of land and nature conservation.

Having started the Zeemering Family Pet & Human Therapy Foundation (Zeemering Foundation) in 2004, Ina and a large number of part-time volunteers and skilled professionals have also successfully created a unique model for the balanced use of this highly desirable property. It currently includes 85-acres on its southern side that are home to a variety of ecologically harmonizing businesses; 25-acres of which have been sold to individuals that helped develop the program, as part of an overall long-term plan.

But, more important to the long-term mission, the property also includes 50 acres of wilderness, wetlands, forests, spring-fed ponds and otherwise undeveloped “natural” land on its northern and western sides. Another adjacent 50 “wild acres” can still be purchased, to create a 100-acre preserve that would be protected from further development. The underlying purpose is to continue evolving a number of self-sustaining uses for the 85 southern acres of the site; while developing a public benefit of the current 50, and ultimately 100-acres that are the most environmentally valuable and sensitive; and maintain that wild acreage in perpetuity.

Ina Zeemering

A graduate of University of Michigan and Detroit College of Law, Ina spent most of her career as a practicing attorney and as a member of the Detroit judiciary. In 1988, Ina moved from Detroit, formed Zeemering Enterprises, and purchased the Farm’s original 40 acres, centered around a beautiful pond and a small horse breeding operation. There she built and resided in a modern farmhouse, surrounded by the exquisite expanses of undeveloped land.

She planned the farmhouse with enough space to later be the home of a future foundation, with additional living quarters for resident “interns”. She also built and renovated the facilities where she began raising and training Arabian horses; which she does to this day. But Ina was also driven by a greater desire: to maintain the natural beauty and value of the undeveloped acres and surrounding lands, and to sustainably develop the more accessible southern portion. With individuals and complementary businesses, she developed local enterprises on-site such as co-housing, beekeeping, bow hunting, and Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy programs.



Zeemering Farms

The Farm and surrounding property was planned with long-term sustainability in mind. Its initial, central 40 acres around the farmhouse, accessed from Mack Rd., holds 4 barns to lodge and train up to 25 horses as well as fenced-in meadows and lush fields for their feeding, training, and exercise. Its two-acre spring-fed pond is home to a wide variety of fish, frogs, turtles and other species, some on the state’s endangered species or “species-watch” lists. A second one-acre pond was built to control drainage from the northern sections, but looks like a natural water feature. Between the two ponds, a great many ducks, geese and other animals, as well as a variety of birds - including sandhill cranes, herons and egrets that breed in the northern natural portion of the property – come to drink and feed from the natural bounty.

Her next major improvement was building three roads on the south side, Zeemering Farms Road, Happy Hollows Drive and Katarina Z Place. Then came an indoor horse training facility with a large indoor arena, offices, an apartment and bunk facilities for a dozen trainees or workers. It was built to facilitate year-round horse training, unusual in the north, as well as for seminars and retreats aimed at animal-based or related non-profit groups. These facilities hosted horse training seminars, developed an EGALA-based Equine Assisted Psycho-Therapy & Training (EAP) program, brought in trainers who ran the facility with varying degrees of success, and housed workers or trainees who helped develop the property and businesses.

In 2014, Ina found the right professional trainer to expand the indoor training facility as a business. Jason Ducharme has become recognized nationally as a highly skilled, award-winning quarter-horse trainer. Ina sold him the facility, with 8.5-acres of property for the horses, and 14 acres for future sustainable expansion or conservation. The property was sold on a land contract and Ina still holds the title to the property, helping her insure continued adherence to the site’s long-range plans.



In 2002, she worked with Consumers Power to extend an underground natural gas line on the southwest side of the property, and took the opportunity to create “splits” along the gas line and the roads she’d built, along with the electrical, natural gas and drainage infrastructure. This work allowed her to develop up to 12 homes, again, on the south side of the property. Over 20 years she has financed and, overseen the construction of 5 high-quality homes, selling-off 2 of them on Happy Hollows Rd.; retaining 3 as current rental units, and for future co-housing.

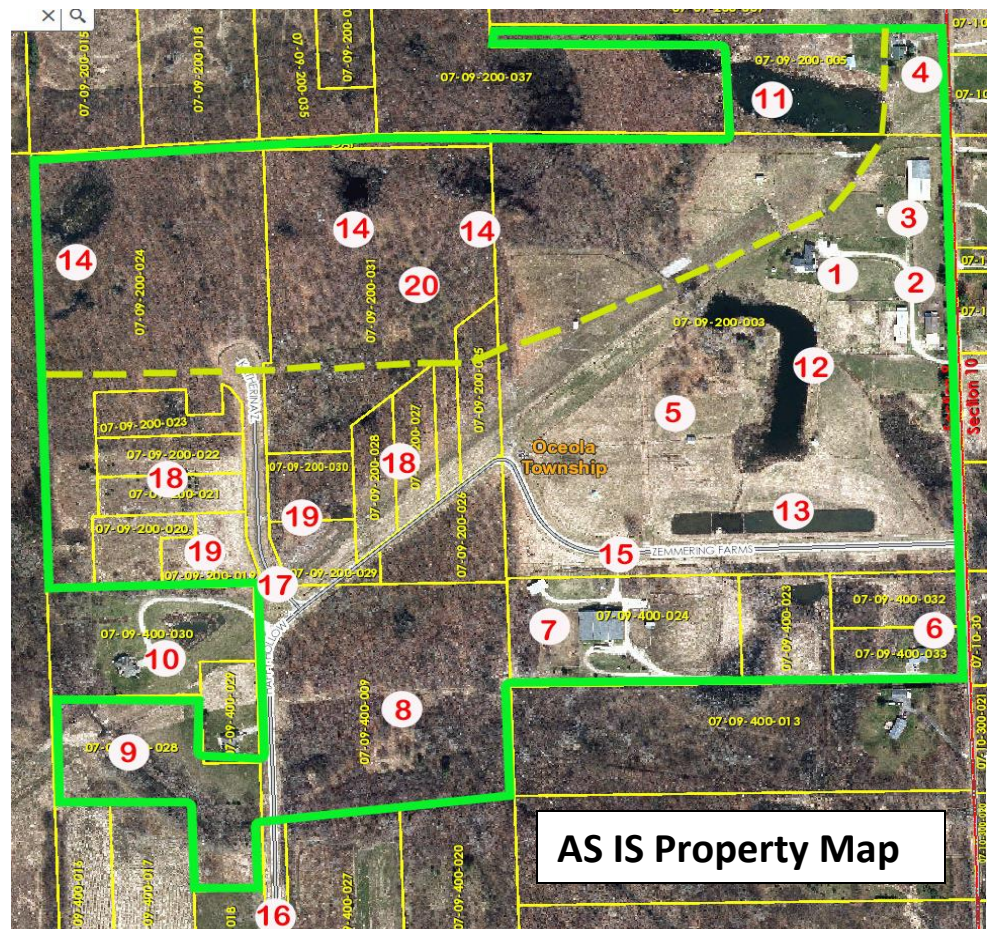
Each home was uniquely built with an intention of creating a co-housing complex, with various “at-risk” residents in mind. Each is single-level construction with handicapped access and high-ceilinged, well-windowed basements, designed as quarters for live-in assistants. These are currently standard rentals, but the plan is to develop a co-housing community, similar in concept to Ann Arbor Co-Housing. Planning from the start for sustainable development, most of the woodwork in these thoughtfully-designed homes is beautiful wood from walnut and other valuable trees cut-down for the gas line.



Well Windowed **Basement**

The 3 homes and 7 remaining building sites will target a growing population of aging women, and possibly men down the road, to live comfortably in shared housing; with co-op responsibilities, live-in assistance, and opportunities for useful work that helps extend their expected Social Security, Medicare or other retirement funds. Ina also purchased and renovated a farmhouse at the far southeast corner for the highly skilled finish carpenter, who worked on the homes she built. For his long-term security, she sold him the house and two acres next to the training facility on a land contract on which she holds title.

- FEATURES:**
1. Central Farmhouse (Foundation House)
 2. Horse Barns
 3. Foundation Barn
 4. Northeast Farmhouse & Converted Barn
 5. Horse Pastures
 6. Southeast Farmhouse
 7. Indoor Training Facility
 8. ITF's 14 acre preserve.
 9. Southwest 5 acres.
 10. 2 Sold Homes
- Ponds/Wetlands**
11. Northern Pond
 12. 2 Acre Pond
 13. 1 Acre Pond
 14. Wetlands Ponds (3)
- Roads**
15. Zeemering Farms Road
 16. Happy Hollows Drive
 17. Katarina Z Place
 18. 10 Co-Housing “Splits”
 19. 3 Co-Housing Rentals
 20. 50 Acre Preserve





The Zeemering Foundation

The Zeemering Foundation provides a place for people and animals to come together for their mutual health and growth; and to preserve the pastures, ponds, wetlands, forests and farmland that enrich our lives and help heal the planet. For 30 years at Zeemering Farms, Arabian and quarter horses, and canines – among hundreds of animal, bird, fish and plant species – have lived, played, bred, trained and worked alongside people. Together, programs have been built where animals and humans enjoy and learn from each other, and help restore each other.

The foundation is centrally located to nine counties, including Livingston, Ingham, Washtenaw, Oakland, Genesee, Shiawassee, Jackson and Saginaw; an area that serves 5.3 million Michiganders, 4 million of whom live within a half hour's drive from the farm. Foundation programs have regularly affected people, especially young people, from diverse areas as far away as Detroit, Lansing, Flint, Saginaw, Pontiac and Ann Arbor.

In 2004, Ina and project volunteers formed the Foundation, a 501(c) 3, non-profit, set up to provide educational opportunities for those working with horses, canines and other animal populations and offer therapies and other assistance to human companions and the public. As importantly, the Foundation has also been planning the future of the remaining 50 natural acres, crossed with hiking and horse trails, and 3 ponds where many species live and breed; with plans to add up to 50 surrounding acres, to be preserved in perpetuity. The foundation also oversees the preserving of endangered species, as well as sustainable culling of the animal populations with limited bow hunts. The Foundation passed its IRS review in 2008.

The Foundation has had an interesting and diverse history. While its annual budgets have shown relatively small amounts of cash contributions and expenses, it has had an exceptionally large “in-kind” volunteer component. This has grown and changed over time as various projects were undertaken, programs evolved, and various people brought their skills to the foundation. A partial list of foundation activities, targeting those most relevant to the current program are:

Equine Assisted Psycho-therapy (EAP) & Training programs are scientifically proven to assist children and young adults with autism in developing and integrating their inner and outer physical, mental and emotional capacities. EAGALA (Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Assoc.), certifies licensed therapists and “Equine Specialists”. Veteran’s involvement with the farm’s EAP program began with two Iraq war veterans suffering from PTSD who had a 4-month residency at the farm. Besides taking part in EAP, they worked with horses, learned farm management, and demonstrated that EAP is very effective for PTSD victims. Vets now regularly take part in the Farm’s EAP programs; and the heads of Ann Arbor VA Housing and VA Hospital have visited the Farm, and a current goal is to negotiate residential work programs for veterans.

Promoting Use of the Foundation House by non-profit groups that need training or “retreat” facilities; holding annual community events, such as pot-luck picnics and “roasts” for friends, local residents, and the members of non-profits and groups involved in Foundation activities.

“Day-Trips” for Inner City Youth, especially from Flint, Saginaw and Detroit. These have been coordinated with lawyer-based associations with which Ina worked as well as Detroit churches. The trips include “meeting” horses, fishing, or watching and sensing birds or other animals.

Interns: The farmhouse (Foundation House) brings in apprentices, trainees and workers who live and work there - some paying rent, others paid for their work. All learned over months or years the skills needed to build, run and maintain the farm; including learning construction and administrative skills. Interns have gone on to careers influenced by their time on the farm.

Developing Co-housing based on research done by Ina and volunteers that found few groups working on programs for sustainable future care of a fast-growing aging population; focused on supporting the quality of life this group expects. The Foundation addresses this by both providing such quality of life, and supporting and advocating for policy development.

Zeemering Foundation Scholarship Fund



As part of its future efforts, the Foundation has begun to plan for a yearly scholarship program. Each year the Foundation will award at least one full time scholarship to a student-intern whose goals are to work in any of the areas of study the Foundation prioritizes. This consists of paid courses at MSU, UM or other local universities or community colleges and a paid internship including room and board at Zeemering Farms and the Preserve; assisting in “day to day” operations, and learning the management skills required for the growth of sustainable business, and land and animal management practices.

Scholarship Fund sources include the total net revenues from the Co-Housing, as well as a portion of the net revenues from the Aquaponic Greenhouse (below) and contributions to the Foundation. It’s expected that the Foundation will also work with MSU and UM’s Ross School of Business and School of Natural Resources to recruit candidates. and to develop new programs that could include other student internships or internship groups. Some raised funds will be put into the universities’ various future tuition plans, for future scholarships.

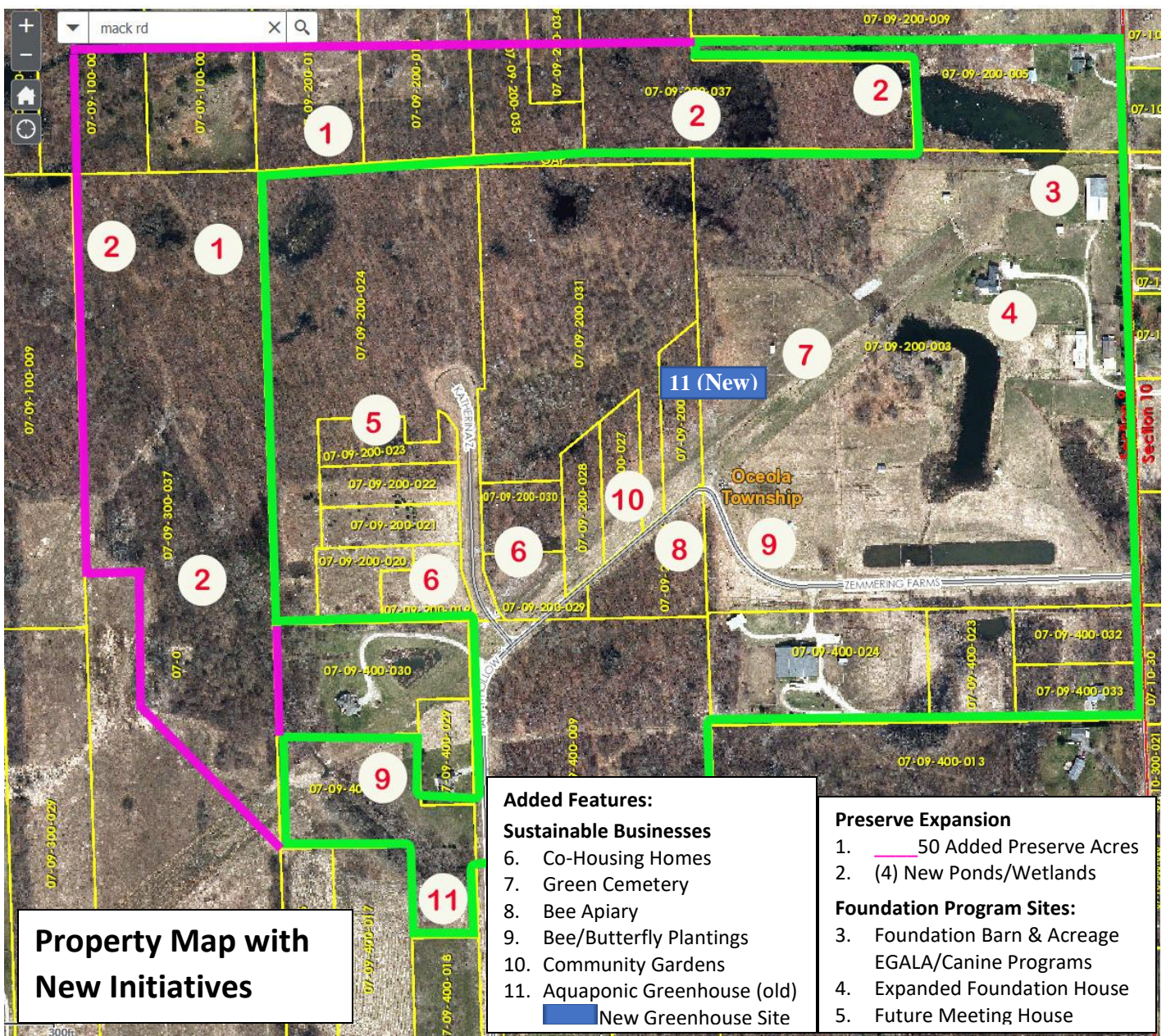
Summary of Continuing & Planned Initiatives (See accompanying site map)

The map below lays out current operations, future development and conservation plans for all 185 acres. Of this, 50-acres of forest, wetlands and ponds are yet to be purchased. Of the

current 135 acres; 50 will also be part of the 100-acre preserve. The remaining 85-acres on the east and south sides of the property are reserved for sustainable businesses that include:

- 20-acres of sustainably developed businesses sold to individual owners (on land contracts), and whose activities support the project.
- 65-acres owned by Zeemering Enterprises along 3 roads at the south end of the property for the Co-Housing and complementary businesses that support and are supported by the program and site. Of this, 5 acres and a training barn have been donated to the Foundation, as a center for programs that involve the interactions of animals and people

Also planned for undeveloped portions of these remaining southern and western 40-acres of the property are several additional life-sustaining enterprises that will maintain the ecological integrity of the site as well as provide full and part time work. These include:



Horse Facilities: The barns and fenced meadows will continue to be used to breed and train Arabian horses, educate trainers and allow expansion of Equine Assisted Psycho-therapy (EAP) and similar programs.

- Volunteers assist with public EAP demonstrations; a minimum of 4-6 volunteers at every demonstration. Volunteers also work on an annual Stallion Expo held by the MI Horse Council for the past 20 years.
- The Foundation would tie the horse program expansion and the program development to a series of annual scholarships, which could include full time and part-time “live-in” students or trainers.
- “Day-Trips” for inner-city youth. Detroit churches have 10-20 youth at time, learn how to fish or take part in other programs that include horse riding, fishing or limited bow hunting.



The Indoor Training Facility is expected to expand and grow, due to the operator’s national honors and reputation. It will continue to have access to the other meadows, fields and riding areas on the property, and some hires would be

graduates of Foundation programs, or come from co-housing residents.

Co-Housing Homes are a well-established cooperative living program, where individuals or families live privately, with limited communal responsibilities that keep the cost of living very low.

- It will be part of a trust set up to put rental revenues into the Foundation’s scholarship programs.
- Rents will be very reasonable, with very low utility costs and shared costs for live-in assistants.
- Co-housing management oversees any scheduled work – designed to be part-time – with business activities; the gardens, the apiary, the greenhouse, the fish farm, or other co-housing programs.
- The foundation has already set up various township and county services for the current residents, which include transportation, medical and emergency services that will be expanded.
- Final pre-zoned homes will be built as needed, with assistance of Ann Arbor Co-housing.
- A small 2-acre site recently purchased, at the northeast corner of the property, on Mack Rd. has a house and accompanying barn, also now renovated as housing. These will likely be the initial sites to begin the co-housing operation, as soon as 2020.
- In all, up to 11 homes – built, or to be built – can legally hold up to six un-related people, so there could be as many 40 to 60 people in a sustainable “co-housing” community.



- Special attention will be paid to veterans and veterans' issues, and some cohousing residents will be involved in EAP therapies. The Foundation will work with existing veteran's organizations to further develop these plans.
- As stated earlier, building the Co-Housing is actually a first active step in a major Foundation initiative to advocate for policy that deals with the need for sustainable future care of a fast-growing aging population; focused on supporting the quality of life this group expects.



Creating the 70-120 Acre “Preserve”



The “Preserve” can develop in several directions, some of which depend on the willingness of the Township to work with Ina and the Foundation. The current plans call for:

A. **Exploring State Funds:** submitting requests in association with Oceola Township and Livingston County to the MDNR’s MNRTF or LWCF trust funds, through the annual state grant process to either:

- Buy the acres for a public “trust” for limited use by public groups such as Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, or the general public for activities within the scope of trust provisions, such as nature study, walking, riding or limited fishing or bow

hunting, related to planned culling that is a necessary part of sustainable land management. or developing amenities such as fishing piers, walking trails, educational materials or exhibits and appropriate public access

B. **Other Options** for funds for the Preserve include non-profit funds. A list of foundations, companies, individual donors and other state and federal sources is being developed.

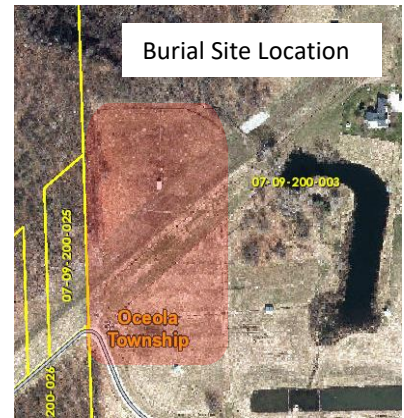


A Conservation Cemetery



A further plan to fund and maintain the Preserve is to establish a Conservation Cemetery. These “Green Cemeteries”, growing promote green burial practices (that use no embalming or non-biodegradable burial items). The burial is a literal return to the earth that nourishes the soil. The gravesites are not marked with gravestones, but are instead “marked” by a planting and GPS co-ordinates, that are shown on a display so that the visitors can find their loved one amidst the seemingly “undisturbed” field, pasture or forest.

Green Cemeteries in other states have often gone a step further, by committing burial fees to pay for land acquisition, protection, preservation, restoration and management. This will also be a feature of the Farm's Green Cemetery, over time the first 1,000 burials, would raise over \$1Million.



While green burial is legal in Michigan, there are only a handful of hybrid cemeteries that allow both traditional and green burial practices.

There are no purely conservation cemeteries in Michigan. The farm's cemetery would be modeled after the Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery, the first one of its type in the US, established in Gainesville, FL. The Foundation will

work with Prairie Creek on its plans. (<https://www.prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org/>)

Limited Fishing and Bow & Hunting (in season) culls surplus animal populations or predators. Annual "licenses", awarded by the Foundation, help cull a large deer population and other animals. Fishing includes blue gills, bass, catfish and pike, and a population of large turtles.



Canine Search Training.

A final important use for the 100 acres of woods, ponds and wetlands will be teaching canines to find people and corpses. In this training, living people as well as cadavers are hidden on remote parts of the site in different environments, such as in a pond or under fallen trees, to train a dog's senses and responses. Other canine therapy programs may be developed.

Additional Information is still being researched on state, county and township conservation plans and on the various species in need of protection, and other specific benefits

Adding Up to 50-Acres of Natural Woods, Wetlands and Ponds



Top the north of the 135 acres, are 20 acres of forest and wetlands; the back 3 to 5-acres of 6 different properties. None of it is "functioning" land for those owners, and Ina has met with most of them about future purchase. These 20 acres also represents a buffer against the future development of these sites on Clyde Rd., a major road, with its own exit 4 miles away off M23. As important is 30 acres just west of the 135-acres; owned by a tree farm whose operation

is at the far south end of the site on Curdy Rd. It is not suitable for tree farm expansion, due to its wetland status, and the owner would also cooperate in sustainable practices.

Increasing the overall protected acreage is not just a matter of increasing the size of the preserved area from 50 acres to 100-acres, even though it would add miles of additional horse and hiking trails. Nor is it just protecting the current natural land from new development on neighboring properties. It is also about conjoining a set of similar properties that make up the whole of an available natural site.



Much as a commercial developer consolidates a site that is appropriate for their project, Zeemering Enterprises sees these expanded borders as the best way to protect an entire natural area, as a public benefit. Besides the tree farm, neighbors whose land will be purchased include a breeder of Bengal cats. Others are farmers who will work with the Foundation to improve their sustainable practices.

Current & Future Commercial Operations expect to be developed and operated by funds from non-profit funders and/or potential commercial investors, creating possible for-profit/non-profit partnerships. All future commercial operations will be developed in harmony with the land and with an eye towards sustainability. Profits and net revenues could be distributed in several different ways, based on who actually funds or finances the primary endeavor, the aquaponics greenhouse (below). While new activities may be developed, current operations would be:



The Meeting House: built at the lower west side of the Preserve, just north of the co-housing. It would be a larger facility with a main lodge room, kitchen, bathrooms, and camping for up to 30 people. It would target non-profit groups such as the Foundation's non-profit funders, or groups such as the Audubon Society or Ducks Unlimited - especially those working toward sustainability issues – for retreats, or other group activities.

They would have access to all the property's other amenities from horseback riding to honey.

It will be as "off-grid" as possible; using modern renewable energy resources, including a south facing Solar PV/Solar Thermal (Hot Water) roof, Geothermal HVAC, energy efficient lighting and integrated controls to minimize energy use. But it will also accommodate visitor's expectations with a large hearth/ fireplace and well windowed rooms. The basement will also be windowed, with direct outside access, with an apartment for a live-in Facility Manager. It will be used:

- As a meeting house for non-profits such as Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, EGALA, support groups or foundations, for annual retreats, member weekends, or special meetings.
- For weekend events: Quilting/Weaving, Art/Nature Retreats, Outdoor Weddings, etc.

- One weekend in each season, the site will host American Indian Services (for the 5 counties of SE MI), for a season-oriented nature education program for native youth and teachers.
- Weekend workshops have been conducted at the Farmhouse for abused women. These will be continued here. And EAP programs also address abused women's confidence and spirit.
- To host school groups to experience and learn from "Day Trips" with Foundation-developed on-site materials, and interactive course-materials to integrate the trip into curriculum.
- **Policy Weekends: The Foundation will host/sponsor quarterly policy retreats on its main policy focus: sustainable future care of a fast-growing aging population.**
- Until the Meeting House is built, Foundation House will serve as the host for these events.

The Bee Apiary: Developed by an Ann Arbor-based non-profit, Brent's Bees. It would continue



to operate the apiary as it expands, and as plantings around the property and even on participating nearby properties are begun. It currently pays a small rent, which would eventually be transferred to the trust operating the commercial entity associated with the co-housing.

The apiary will likely use the work of the co-housing residents to fulfill the largely part-time work of servicing and collecting honey and honey products from the apiary, as well as possible product processing, such as jarring honey, or creating bee's wax products.

The south end of the site, shared with the greenhouse, will be a natural grass planting for bees. It both bolsters the apiary and assists in the ongoing growth of techniques to help forestall and overcome the national and international epidemic of dying bee colonies, so vital to pollinating many crops. It's important to note that no pesticides have been used on the land in the past 35 years and therefore is an extremely safe environment for bees. Milkweed will also be grown for butterflies; more of the area's living population that has been lost.

The Community Gardens: much of its produce will be used by co-housing residents, so this may not be "commercial" at all. But it's expected that some produce will be sold at local farm markets or through the same 'buyers" as the greenhouse. The gardens site (right) is close to the bee apiary, with full south, east and west facing sun, as it's along the north side of the gas right of way. As with all 185



acres, no pesticides, or chemical fertilizers were ever used. While it will still have to go through a 3-year process to be officially labeled "organic", all produce will be organic from Day 1

A 30,000SF Multi-level Aquaponics Greenhouse & Fish Farm: Hydroponic or aquaponics



greenhouses grow plants in water, year-round. Unlike urban greenhouses that rely exclusively on LED-based “grow lighting”, these will have full daylong south, east and west sun, with added grow-lighting as needed in the fall, winter and spring, and solar electrical support. Besides providing fruits and vegetables year-round, this is a commercial endeavor, primarily

looking to sell its produce all year long to various retail outlets and “buyers”.

The difference between hydroponics and aquaponics is that – while both grow plants in water - aquaponic greenhouses are fed nutrient-rich water from another source within the system, in this case a 6,000 lb./wk. fish-farm. The plan is to grow two very tolerant fish that are also easily sold, tilapia and sea bass. Nutrient-rich water from the fish tanks has urine and other impurities removed, and are then pumped to the greenhouse, which cleans the water while feeding the plants - then returning it to the fish. It’s a well-studied, self-sustaining ecosystem, with both halves largely fed by fish food. The greenhouse is currently planned for the 3-acre plot at the southern tip of the property; with direct access to Curdy Rd. from Happy Hollow Rd.

There are educational and training programs that surround the facility, as it is a quickly growing business model destined to be necessary for future food production. There will be significant work available for local high school students and Co-Housing residents. It takes 1 to 2 part-time people to oversee the operation of the fish farm, and 4 greenhouse part time workers for each 200 pounds/week of fish “section” of Greenhouse/Fish Farm developed.

Trucking of fish and produce could be the work of the operation or a “buyer”. There will be a significant amount of work attending “farmers markets”, and making side products such as fish chowder, or the sale of organic mulch and compost. A separate business model is being designed for the aquaponics operation

Co-Housing Resident Enterprises will develop over time, based on resident skills and interests. These may include artwork, crafts, or making clothing or other items for sale. Sales can be made through farmers’ markets, the internet or other means.

Weekly Socials will be scheduled for the same day every week, indoors or outdoors, rain or shine. And it will share many of the benefits of the collective property, from cabbage to chowder. It’s designed to be an “end of the work week” celebration; that new, old and prospective supporters are invited to attend.



The Foundation House (formerly the farmhouse) was built not as a traditional farm house, but instead was set up to house the offices of the Foundation, and as very comfortable housing for past, present and future interns or for scholarship students. Even now, with its large wrap-around porch and views overlooking the pond and the first 40-acres purchased, it has been comfortably used by groups and parties of up to 100 people.



Ina still lives at the house 8 months of the year, but the farmhouse and its remaining land are to be donated to the Foundation upon her death. While the ultimate plan calls for building the Meeting House, the house will serve its functions for now.



In Summary: The 135 acres, purchased and sustainably developed or preserved over the past 30 years by Ina Zeemering and the Zeemering Foundation, has been a growing resource for a wide variety of residents across much of southeast Michigan. Until recently, most of the work



has been a “well-kept secret” as far as the general public is concerned. But it’s had an impact on many hundreds of lives in and around the region, whether it’s: the inner city kids who experienced their first day in the country; the hundreds of people involved in raising and breeding horses; the fishermen and woman, and bow hunters; independent entrepreneurs such as the bee apiary and training facility owners, or the fallen wood harvesters; or even just the many people who simply “come out to the farm for a day to get away from it all”. Initially – 30 years ago - this was one person’s “field of dreams”, but Ina has now made a substantial portion of that dream come true.

Now, with the help of the Foundation she began with the many volunteers and supporters who helped build it, the final plans are in progress. Adding the remaining 50-acres that complete and protect the conservable wild areas, and finalizing the plans already begun for co-housing and new sustainable businesses will both expand on the dream and reap the benefits from it. It’s ready for those new people and groups who will come to enjoy, use, and learn from what’s been built and saved, and help develop the rest of the dream.