

City Council Eyes Motor Homes Used as Residences, Tennis Court Maintenance

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does not list a motor home as a legal principal dwelling, said ZBA member Deb Evashevski, and that law should be enforced.

There may be confusion, because the Planning Commission found references that allow property owners to "camp out," whether there is a principal dwelling unit or not, so long as the owner has an intention to build.

The issue was brought up last year by two residents who argued that their seasonal neighbor "camps out" on his vacant lot, zoned R-1, in his motor home during the summer months and then leaves, without the intention of building a principal home. They argued it devalues their property because of its unsightliness.

"It sounds petty, but we pay taxes for city services and here's a man who's not paying taxes," said David Walker, one of the initial complainants.

Mr. Walker argued that Council agreed to give the man a citation if he returned with his motor home and did not obtain a building permit. He said the man was up for only a week this summer so far and has yet to return.

City Attorney Prentiss M. Brown said it is up to Council either to enforce the ordinance as it written now or amend the ordinance to clear up any confusion about motor homes in residential areas.

"You have to be careful," advised Mrs. Evashevski. "I think you'll get yourself in a lot of trouble if you try to list the things you don't want in the zoning ordinance. You should decide what you do want to allow."

She feels the city can enforce

the existing ordinance.

"It's a matter of enforcing what we have now," she said. "There's no need to amend the ordinance. There's no need to re-invent the wheel. Let him (the motor home owner) test our ordinance. We have the right to say what we want in our community."

Neither Council, Mr. Dodson, nor City Police Chief Tim Matelski knew what Council had decided in past meetings, so members agreed to table the issue until their next regular meeting, which will allow them to review minutes.

A new Ad Hoc Committee appointed by Mayor Paul Grondin will raise money to improve the city's tennis courts, however, Councilman Willie LaLonde argued that there are more popular and important recreational facilities and programs that merit more attention.

Jessica Massaway, a LaSalle High School student, approached Council earlier on the idea of creating fundraisers to at least fill cracks on the tennis court.

Members of the committee include Mayor Grondin, Mr. Dodson, Miss Massaway, Council members Susan Tamlyn-Massaway (Miss Massaway's mother) and Tom Della-Moretta, and, requested by Miss Massaway, Kyle Smock, Sam Radtke, and Stacey Schnitke.

Councilman LaLonde noted a Downtown Development Authority survey compiled this year shows tennis at the bottom of a list of recreational facilities that residents and students want to see improved. The city's pool and skate park are two areas receiving higher priorities, he said.

"Are we doing any justice to the

plan by creating a committee for something that was at the bottom of the survey?" asked Mr. LaLonde. "I think we're already deviating from the recreation plan we just passed."

Both Mayor Grondin and Councilwoman Massaway disagreed.

"The reason for this is that the tennis courts need to be fixed soon, before anyone gets hurt," said Mr. Grondin. "The courts have been hot and heavy lately with people using them."

"This is smaller a issue that can be resolved sooner than the pool or skate park," said Mrs. Tamlyn-Massaway.

Mayor Grondin said the committee will seek grants and plan fundraisers to reduce the use of tax money.

"We going to try to use as little of the taxpayer's money as possible," he said.

Phil Ruegg, accompanied by his son, asked Council to support a new paintball course in St. Ignace. Mr. Ruegg is a member of the newly-founded St. Ignace Paintball Association, which is seeking to lease city property on Clay Hill to install a paintball course.

Council agreed to study the proposal. The city's Real Estate Committee already has reviewed the idea, said Mr. Dodson, and recommended that Council support it.

One of the bigger obstacles is securing liability insurance, said Mr. Ruegg, but it could be a new attraction for St. Ignace. "There's still a lot of details to work out," he added, "but it could bring more people to this town. The closest course like this is near Mancelona or Charlevoix. We can bring people here for a change."

Council is continuing to seek ideas about designs for a new city flag, which Mr. Dodson hopes to have in time for the upcoming Michigan Municipal League conference at Marquette September 27-29. A parade of city flags highlights the opening ceremony at the conference, and the organization has been encouraging member municipalities to enter their own flags as a form of recognition.

Council made no decision on the issue, but Mr. Brown suggested the flag should incorporate not only the Mackinac Bridge, but other elements, such as its Native American culture and French exploration.

Mr. Brown said of the three Straits area communities, St. Ignace, Mackinac Island, and Mackinaw City, St. Ignace is the

only one with a French history. Mackinac Island and Mackinaw City, he said, have British roots.

"If you can involve all three of those concepts, I think that would be very good," he said of the city flag.

Mr. Dodson said he will create a flag in time for the conference, but it can be changed later, if people don't like it.

Each council member was given a city manager evaluation sheet by Mayor Grondin to be filled out and turned in by the next regular meeting in two weeks. This will be the first time Council has evaluated its city manager. The exercise is part of an agreement made when Mr. Dodson was hired January 1.

The city's Negotiations Committee will review the evaluations and meet with Mr. Dodson, then make a report for the September 5 meeting.

Mr. Dodson has the option to close his meeting with the Negotiations Committee to the public.

He has a two-year contract with the city, which expires in September 2007. Council, at that time can renew the contract for another two years, choose not to renew it, or take no action, which automatically renews it.

Mayor Grondin said the evaluations will be available to the public as soon as the process is completed.

Mr. Dodson informed Council that the city's sewer system deficit is now at \$193,667 and the water system's deficit is \$189,459.

Council will direct Eugene Elmer, the city treasurer and marina manager, to update Council every other meeting on the marina's budget. The reports were requested by resident Steve DuFresne, a candidate for Council.

Council held a brief public hearing for the DDA's "grant close out" for Pavillion Mall improvements and parking lot upgrade behind the mall. The only comment was from DDA Director Deb Evashevski, who said the project spent an extra \$5,000 to add more curbing to the parking lot, which was covered by DDA funds.

The project was partially funded through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and a Community Block Development Grant, which required a public hearing before closing out the project's account.

The grant helped fund the public restrooms in the mall and reconstruction of the parking lot.

Council will remove former

City Manager Gary Heckman's name from any contacts involving the construction of the city's new bus terminal.

Requests for an architect has already been submitted to the

St. Ignace Twp. Board Takes Step To Solve Sewer Problem

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Township residents now pay \$18.50 for the service.

"This will eliminate the possibility of odors in Evergreen Shores," said Mr. Keranen.

"We're not out to spend more money, but we're out to get something done," said Mr. Nelson. "People have put up with enough of this."

The new bypass will not affect road surfaces, said Mr. Keranen. Construction work will take place along the shoulders, and the bypass will run along Mackinac Trail from north of Superior to the I-75 business loop to north Mackinac Trail and end at Lift Station #2.

Construction permits will be needed from the Michigan Department of Transportation, the county, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Also the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will have to review the construction application and will be concerned with preservation of any Indian artifacts that may be unearthed.

"SHPO has a strong interest in this area, so I think they're going to require an archeologist," said Mr. Keranen.

The 100-day timeline for the project presented by U.P. Engineers has a completion date of Thursday, November 9, with the construction completed by mid-October.

"This is an aggressive schedule, but we think it is doable," said Mr. Keranen.

The board had hoped to wait for the tribal housing complex to get hooked up to city water before spending more money on the odor problem. Well water that is being added to the sewer system from the homes is high in sulfates, which engineers believe has had an impact on the sewer's chemistry and smell.

If tribal housing hooks up before work begins on the \$200,000 project, engineers will monitor the chemistry of the system to see if the odors still might be eliminated without the township incurring the additional cost.

U.P. Engineers also gave the board three other options to consider, although the option the board

Michigan Department of Transportation, said Mr. Dodson. The city is now waiting for a design, after which a contractor can be hired and construction can commence.

took came with the engineer's recommendation.

"This is the best option to ensure that there will be no more odor issues in Evergreen Shores related to the tribal area and the force main," wrote Mr. Keranen in his letter to the board that explained all the options and gave a job timeline.

One of the other options also included bypassing the gravity sewer system to Lift Station #2, although with a small diameter force main. The project cost was estimated to be \$86,000. A second option was the same, but with a large diameter force main and carried a cost of \$140,000. The third option was to begin a chemical injection program and would include the construction of a building for \$60,000.

Mr. Keranen also said that Rural Development may not have the funds available for the loan until its new fiscal year, which begins October 1. He explained that Rural Development had advised him the township may have to get a bank loan to cover the project until the department receives its funding from the state.

Les Therrian, director of the St. Ignace Department of Public Works, who also attended the meeting, said that letters from township attorney Prentiss "Giz" Brown III have not been mailed to those who have not paid to hook up to the new system, but are expected to be sent. The letter advises residents that they are in violation of a township ordinance. The deadline to pay to be hooked up was July 1.

Mr. Therrian said that of the 128 homes to tie into the system, 100 have paid to connect, and 66 of those are connected.

The township board next meets Thursday, August 10, at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall on Gorman Road.

'Fantastiks' Play Coming To DeTour

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Arts Council will present a play called "The Fantasticks" at Sacred Heart Church Hall in DeTour Village from August 17 to August 19.

The play will begin at 7:30 p.m. each night. The play is presented through a special arrangement with the Music Theatre International.

Tickets can be purchased at River Threads in DeTour, near the post office. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens (older than 50), and \$8 for children ages 12 and younger.

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