

St. Ignace City Council Denies Waterfront Condo Request, Bounces Sign Ordinance Back to DDA

*Continued from page 1

pursue it, but I don't agree with the spot. The view is pretty important. I share the sentiments of a lot of the people who attended the public hearing."

The Planning Commission's recommendation followed a January 17 public hearing at which citizens said the project would obstruct public view of the waterfront.

Mayor Grondin asked Mr. Hargraves if he would consider a different location, and Mr. Hargraves said, for now, he is "going to regroup" after spending the last six months and \$12,000 on this idea.

"I was hoping it would be a great thing, but what I heard at the public hearing, people just don't want anything there," he said.

The condominiums would have been 34 feet high, but the city's building ordinance limits buildings to 20 foot high on the waterfront. Mr. Hargraves said the 20-foot restriction is too low to allow development on the valuable waterfront and noted that the 40-foot allowance on the other side of State Street would also obstruct the water

view in some areas.

Planning Commission Chairman Art Underwood attended Monday's meeting and said the commission would be discussing zoning for the whole waterfront at future meetings. He said the sentiment of the community during the public hearing was strongly in support of protecting the water view.

Citizens at the public hearing said the value of the property should be shared by all citizens, not just 10 families who would live in the condos.

The sign ordinance continues to bounce around City Hall and now, at Council's request, will head to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) for specific language recommendations.

Councilman Tom Della-Moretta cast the only vote against the decision. He called the ordinance an "over restrictive document," saying it limits the size and number of signs, which makes it difficult for a business to do business. He said the ordinance should be more open to common-sense interpretation, rather than specific.

The part of the ordinance receiving most attention is on the use of

banners and wall signs.

City Attorney Prentiss "Moie" Brown, Jr. said the ordinance needs to address the penalty for those who violate the regulation. He recommended Council consider it a misdemeanor or a civil infraction

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- Todd Hargraves, developer

and will review language for the next meeting.

Councilmen Don Gustafson questioned the enforcement of political campaign signs that limit their placement to 30 days prior to an election, which has never been enforced. Council discussed changing that to 60 days.

DDA director Deb Evashevski said the DDA was concerned that there was no time limit for banner display and thought they should be limited 30 days or less.

"We didn't want four 32-square-foot banners hanging from buildings all year around in the central and general business district," she said.

Council approved Mr.

Gustafson's motion to ask the DDA to draft language they recommend for the ordinance and submit it at the next council meeting for its consideration.

With little discussion, Council accepted the Fort de Buade Museum Committee recommendation to proceed toward the purchase of the Fort de Buade Museum, using a grant from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Mr. Dodson said the city will wait while the tribe deliberates the funding. (See story on page 1.)

An update on the water and sewer financing was received from Department of Public Works Director Les Therrian, and Mr. Dodson said that numbers are "not too far off from the water and sewer report from 2005," and that no action needs to be taken at this time to correct a deficit in the capital depreciation fund.

Water treatment expenses were \$1,950,420 while revenues were 2,257,067. Both were lower than anticipated by 3.4 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, in part, Mr. Therrian said, to a later-than-expected completion of the St. Ignace Township water project.

Wastewater expenses were \$1,353,821, shy \$9,879 or 0.7 percent of projections, while revenues were \$1,477,979, which were \$13,200 more than expected.

Mayor Grondin appointed council members Susan Tamlyn-

Massaway, Tom Della-Moretta, and Merv Wyse to a tree committee with Mr. Dodson and St. Ignace resident Paula McNamara. Ms. McNamara has asked council members to join the Arbor Foundation for \$15 and contribute the little trees they will receive to a planting project at the pond by Little Bear East. She said formation of a committee, and applications for membership from council members, would be the first steps toward earning the designation "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Other requirements are a tree care ordinance, a tree planting budget of at least two dollars per capita, which would be approximately \$5,000, and an Arbor Day observance. The designation would qualify the city for grants, said Mr. Dodson.

Mayor Grondin announced that Mr. Brown has been the city attorney for 50 years, having served since April 22, 1957. He also presented Council with a list of attorneys who have served the city since 1883, and noted that Mr. Brown or a family member had held the post for 77 of those 124 years.

Wendy Sexton, a coordinator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, gave a presentation to Council on grants and loans that are available for government and nonprofit groups that provide a service, including churches. She said the entire Upper Peninsula is considered rural based on population totals.

"Our goal is to help rural communities be successful and survive," she said.

The agency provides funding and technical assistance for housing and affordable housing, community programs such as water and sewer and facilities, and economic and business development for job creation.

"We are weak right now on the east side of the U.P.," she said. "When we take a look at the funding projects, recently we have not done a lot on this end, and that brothers us."

Two programs help families with home repairs and with affordable home ownership, she said.

Bids were open for a new truck and plow for the Department of Public Works and the staff will review the bids for selection at the next council meeting. Bids were received from Wernig and Jones of Cheboygan for \$39,706.23, O'Connor's Chrysler, Dodge, and Jeep of Pickford for \$37,304, Rivertown Motors of Cheboygan for \$42,370.54, and Mackinac Sales of St. Ignace for \$33,865.

Council passed a resolution for a special event to allow the St. Ignace Hockey Association and the St. Ignace Visitor's Bureau have a U.P. Pond Hockey Tournament, Saturday, February 24, and Sunday, February 25.

Council approved a license for the taxi cab operating in St. Ignace.

Mr. Dodson said the new ambulance has arrived and final detail work was being completed before it is put in operation.

Council also went into executive session for approximately 20 minutes to discuss union contract negotiations.

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The Queen [PG-13]
Fri. 7:00 & 9:15, Sat. & Sun. 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:15, Mon., Tues., Wed. 7:00, Thurs. 7:00 & 9:15

Norbit [PG-13]
Fri. 6:45 & 9:15, Sat. & Sun. 1:00, 3:15, 6:45 & 9:15, Mon., Tues., Wed. 6:45, Thurs. 6:45 & 9:15

The Messengers [PG-13]
Fri. 7:00 & 9:00, Sat. & Sun. 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:00, Mon., Tues., Wed. 7:00, Thurs. 7:00 & 9:00

Because I Said So [PG-13]
Fri. 7:00 & 9:15, Sat. & Sun. 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:15, Mon., Tues., Wed. 7:00, Thurs. 7:00 & 9:15

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Blood Diamond [R]
7:00 Nightly also Sat. & Sun. 2:15

Dreamgirls [PG-13]
Fri. 7:00 & 9:15, Mon., Tue., Wed., Thurs. 7:00, Sat. 2:00, 4:15, 7:00 & 9:15, Sun. 2:00, 4:15 & 7:00

We Are Marshall [PG]
Fri. 6:45 & 9:15, Mon., Tue., Wed., Thurs. 7:00, Sat. 1:45, 4:00, 6:45 & 9:15, Sun. 1:45, 4:00 & 6:45

Catch and Release [PG-13]
Fri. 7:00 & 9:00, Mon., Tue., Wed., Thurs. 7:00, Sat. 2:00, 4:00, 7:00 & 9:00, Sun. 2:00, 4:15, 7:00

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