

Mackinac Island's Historic Landmark Status Has Been on 'Watch' Level for Several Years

Landmark: From page 3

The Island also continues to uphold an 1898 law that banned the horseless carriage from the Island because they spooked the horses. Except in winter, when snowmobiles are allowed, people today either walk, ride bicycles, or ride in carriages.

Island's history is enjoyed by thousands of visitors each year.

"Its whole history is there and visible," she told the *Town Crier*. "It's a vibrant community. I had a great time just people watching before the meeting while I was there."

Island's Landmark Status on 'Watch'

Since 1935, the National Park

Service has identified and recognized the nationally significant places that best represent America's history through its culture, buildings, and geography. Landmarks are chosen through a process that, according to its Web site, "is rigorous, consensus-based, and involves exhaustive research and extensive consultation with the public," and are rec-

ognized by the U.S. Secretary of Interior as sites that are nationally significant to American history.

Only 3% of the listings on the National Register (sites worthy of preservation) are National Historic Landmarks and, on average, only about 20 new sites are granted National Historic Landmark status each year.

The National Park Service scrutinizes the landmark's maintenance of its historic theme on three levels, non-threatened, watch, and emergency.

Mackinac Island is on "watch" status, where it has been for several years, said Ms. Sanford.

It is under watch because the community is blended with structures and areas that contribute and do not contribute to its landmark status, and with little or no guidelines in place for restoration or remodeling of historic structures, the status for "watch" landmarks could teeter either way.

Non-threatened status means the landmark has little to no depreciation of its historic value and has a guideline system in place to preserve its historic theme and structures, while emergency status is just the opposite, where a landmark is subject to losing its National Historic Landmark status owing to a decreased focus on its historical theme and decrease in the number of authentic structures.

"What Dena [Sanford] was explaining to us was that the Island is in watch status because we are 50-50 with contributing buildings and non-contributing buildings of our historic theme," said Mr. Neumann. "The Island might be quite unique in that it deals with both commercial and residential districts.

"Restoration or remodeling under historic preservation guidelines can be more expensive, but the other thing people must understand is their livelihood on the Island depends on visitors," he continued. "We've got to be careful not to depreciate that, and that's going to have to start with an educational process, helping people understand that protecting the Island's historic theme protects their livelihood."

Planning Commissioner Lee Finkel is in favor of protecting the Island's historic heritage, but he wants to avoid setting standards for restoration and remodeling too high.

"If you set the bar too high, people won't do anything," said Mr. Finkel. "Proper preparation [for restoration] is considerably expensive, so we have to ask ourselves, is this more of a theoretical place to be or can we really get there?"

Mackinac Island may be unique in its variety of historic features and because the entire island is recognized, not just certain areas or structures. But the process for preserving its historic assets is the same for many National Historic Landmarks, said Ms. Sanford.

"Mackinac Island is like a lot of National Historic Landmark communities, where it is faced with a variety of desires with changing development," Mrs. Sanford said. "But basically, If the Island can ensure its theme will not change, and keep its historic structures in place, it would definitely help with its status."

What To Do Now

What kind of work Island planners have ahead of them depends on what part of history they want the Island to depict, said Ms. Sanford.

"They can divide the Island into sections, between geographical locations and types of buildings, for example," she suggested. "But they will need to form a research group with whatever scheme they come up with."

Mr. Finkel believes the committee should start simply.

"We're hoping to create a punch list and get a clear vision of where we want to be," he told the *Town Crier*.

Once the Island's busy summer season ends, an ad-hoc committee of city planners, historic architects, and possibly state park representatives will begin discussion building and improvement guidelines for existing and new buildings, said Mr. Neumann.

"I hope we keep this momentum up and get a committee together to think through a series of steps to create these guidelines," he said. "The current ordinance is not adequate to protect the Island's historic presence, but it's better than five years ago, since we've added architectural review with incoming developments. Now we need to take another step and develop and design guidelines for historic

preservation."

Fortunately, he said, there have been recent examples of building owners in the commercial district making the extra effort to preserve the Island's historic theme, including Grand Hotel's restoration of the second story balcony on the Windsor Hotel boarding house and the remodeling of the Mustang Lounge.

"To me, both owners made the correct approach," said Mr. Neumann.

Mustang Lounge, restored and expanded last winter, combined preservation of original timbers with the addition of new housing above the bar, but in such a way as to imply the apartments are behind the older building.

"They created the apartments to contrast the business purposely so people would see the difference," Mr. Neumann explained.

New or remodeled buildings should follow the Island's historic theme, but should not try to trick anyone into thinking it is an authentic structure, Mr. Neumann said.

"We don't want to fake history," he said. "It depreciates the value of the historic buildings around them. We want to have new buildings fit in, but we also don't want to try and fake out people. We want visitors to look at a new building and know it is new, but see that it is also in unison with its surroundings."

These guidelines and revised zoning ordinance may resolve some of the dilemmas faced by the Planning Commission with regard to the use of artificial trim and siding, which building owners contend are less expensive and longer lasting.

"Our historic heritage is our bread and butter," said Mr. Neumann. "We may need places like Mackinac State Historic Parks and Mackinac Island Community Foundation to help fund our educational process in protecting our National Historic Landmark. Nobody wants to deface historic buildings, but many people just don't know what to do. That's where education and awareness comes in, through things like workshops, annual seminars, and brochures.

"This meeting was a wake-up call for us," he continued. "Our building stock is pretty good. We can't let any more buildings slip into non-contributing" status. Those are the buildings that don't have historic significance.

There are at least two federal grants available to National Historic Landmark constituents, said Ms. Sanford. Preserve America's Treasures and Save America's Treasures are both available to local governments, which can assist businesses and residents in restoration projects of their historic buildings.

The Preserve America's Treasures is a matching grant program that began in 2005 and is intended to complement the bricks and mortar grants available under the Save America's Treasures program.

Individual grants range from \$20,000 to \$150,000.

Preserving historic structures also qualify for significant tax deductions.

Tom Casperson Shares His Campaign Points

Casperson: From page 3

represents Michigan's Second Congressional District, an area spanning a portion of western Lower Michigan.

Gas prices are strangling Michigan residents, he said, especially northern Michigan citizens. "Four dollars per gallon is a hardship for a lot of people, and the further north you get, the more rural you get and the more miles that people drive."

He also addressed the costs of home heating, which "are going to be much more expensive here than they were last year," he said.

Not only is the Upper Peninsula affected more than Lower Michigan by high gas prices, owing, in part, to the lack of public transportation options, home heating is a second major problem for northern residents, he said.

Oil drilling could help solve these problems, Mr. Casperson said, but to get public support, the perception of oil drilling operations as "evil" should be eliminated.

He likened anti-drilling sentiments to anti-logging sentiments. He cited his family's business, Casperson and Son Trucking, a log trucking operation.

"My background is in timber," he said. "I'm third generation. I've lived through this mantra of 'we're evil because we extract resources.' One of the reasons I ran for public office is because I listened to certain people who would demonize us and

make us out to be monsters trying to destroy the environment."

He said the timber industry, like others, creates products relied upon by the same people who oppose timber cutting.

"What's happened, in my opinion, especially in the last 30 years, [is that] elected officials have become very popular trying to outdo everybody and be the greenest guy on the planet."

"That...is now bringing this country to its knees," he said. "I'm not against [protecting resources], I just think some common sense should be used."

A second issue high on his agenda is the size and expenditures of government.

"Government is in the way. [It] is not out there to help our business people," he said, referring both to state and federal government.

Mr. Casperson objects strongly to political campaigns that focus on opposing the operations of large corporations as a way to help common people.

Mr. Casperson said he wants to curb what he called government "lording" over businesses.

One way less government would help Michigan would be to reduce what he feels is excessive regulation of the timber industry.

According to Mr. Casperson, Bart Stupak claims that large timber sales are not taking place because President George Bush cut the U.S. Forest Service staff.

In truth, Mr. Casperson said,

"The National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), passed in the 1970s to oversee major projects that affect the environment, now over-regulates modern timber sales. NEPA today has micro-managed every inch of soil out there, right down to the microorganisms on the ground."

"Thirty or 40 years ago, one forester for the forest service would put a timber sale up," a process that worked, he said. He added that he has spoken with foresters who set up sales decades ago, and who now reference flourishing forests where the sales were conducted.

"Today, it takes eight people to put a timber sale up. Two are foresters and six are biologists," a process Mr. Casperson said is too expensive.

According to him, Mr. Stupak's approach to forestry is counterproductive.

"He wants to put more money into [NEPA] because he thinks that is the right approach," Mr. Casperson said. "I believe they have gone overboard...walking around looking for amoebae on the ground so that they can find something to block timber sales. I just believe we've gone too far...We need to streamline that operation, look at past practices, and say 'where's the harm?'"

He wants to curb unnecessary spending by oversized government.

"We need to reform government to spend within its means," he said.

It's your choice

Linda and Charlie use our ATM's because they're conveniently located where they shop.

Sherry uses our MasterMoney DEBIT CARDS because she can get in and out fast at the gas station.

Gary writes a CHECK for pet supplies for Bob - Bob's his dog.

Mike whips out his CREDIT CARD when he needs motorcycle parts.

Whether for convenience, speed, habit or need,

YOU can enjoy any of the services we offer because we're local. We're your neighbors. No matter who YOU are or what YOU do with us, It's all about YOU.



It's all about YOU

Open your account today by stopping at one of our 7 local banking offices!

"We're Right Here at Home"

Branch Offices at:
NORTH BAY & MORAN TOWNSHIP, ST. IGNACE
CEDARVILLE - MACKINAC ISLAND
NAUBINWAY - NEWBERRY

Member FDIC

132 N. State St. • Ph. (906) 643-6800
P.O. Box 187 • St. Ignace, MI 49781

Visit us online at www.fnbsi.com

Trust the Eastern Upper Peninsula's oldest community bank, celebrating 120 years of continuous service to the area.



Member FDIC

Belonga
PLUMBING & HEATING

LICENSED
• Plumbing
• Heating
• Cooling Contractor

115 Elliot Street
St. Ignace
(906) 643-9595
Monday - Friday 8 to 5

More than 60 years combined experience
COMMERCIAL - RESIDENTIAL
Master Plumber License #6078

Discounted telephone service available

The Michigan Public Service Commission designated CenturyTel as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier or ETC within its service area for universal service purposes. The goal of universal service is to provide all Michigan citizens access to essential telecommunications services.

CenturyTel provides single party residential and business services from \$16.33 to \$25.75 per month for residential customers and \$20.61 to \$28.94 per month for business customers. This includes access to long distance carriers, Emergency Services, Operator Services, Directory Assistance and Toll Blocking. Use of these services may result in added charges. Specific rates for your areas can be provided upon request.

CenturyTel offers qualified customers Lifeline and Link-Up Service if you meet certain low-income eligibility requirements. Lifeline Service includes a monthly discount up to \$11.25 for basic phone charges (including a \$6.50 waiver of the Federal Subscriber Line Charge), as well as toll blocking at no charge and a waiver of the deposit if toll blocking is selected by qualifying customers. Link-Up Service provides a discount on installation charges and charges to move service. Residents of Tribal Lands can also qualify for the additional Federal portion of the Lifeline program.

If you live in a CenturyTel service area, please call 1-800-201-4099 or visit www.centurytel.com/lifeline with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline/Link-Up programs.

CENTURYTEL personal touch ■ advanced communications

www.centurytel.com

lifelineMI NON SAU

40 MILLION DRIVERS PARK HERE.

See me and find out why State Farm® is such a great place to park.



Mark D. Elmblad, Agent
8 N. State Street
Saint Ignace, MI 49781
Bus: 906-643-9866
mark.elmblad.cv2f@statefarm.com

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR, STATE FARM IS THERE™

statefarm.com®

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, State Farm Indemnity Company - Bloomington, IL