

# St. Ignace Recreation Department Prepares Ice Arena for Hockey Season



Terry Smith of the St. Ignace Recreation Department uses red paint Wednesday, October 1, to put the finishing touches on an end zone face-off spot in preparation for the ice hockey season at Little Bear East Arena.

Terry Smith of the St. Ignace Recreation Department has been preparing the ice at Little Bear East Arena for nine years. The first year, the ice was put down with help from Mackinaw City employees, he remembers.

The process begins with three coats of white, water-based paint, which covers a thin layer of ice that blankets the concrete floor.

"People think we paint right on the concrete," he said, "but we don't. It's actually pretty interesting."

Then, string is used as a guide for the correct placement of hockey game lines.

"It's quite an operation to lay it out," said Mr. Smith.

Once the two coats of red and blue game line paint are ready, the arena floor is topped with five layers of water, applied with a hose and wand attachment, and an additional 15 coats of water from a Zamboni machine.

When completed, the ice is about an inch thick. The ice-making process takes four to five days and requires about 18,000 gallons of water.



Hockey game markings are done and ice hardens at Little Bear East Arena Thursday, October 2, in preparation for the upcoming hockey season.

The ice was to be ready for a game Saturday, October 4. The Firehawks Midget AA hockey rink also will be available for open

skating, although the schedule has not been finalized yet.

## Wolf Back on Endangered List; State Management Plan on Hold

By John S. DeMott

The ever shifting status of gray wolf protection has taken another turn.

A federal district judge in Washington, D.C., on Monday, September 29, overturned a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) effort to remove the wolf from the Endangered Species List in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The de-listing by the FWS was designed to give more efficient management of wolf populations to the three states, which are under public pressure to reduce wolf damage. The federal agency and the states believe the wolf population has rebounded to the point that it is becoming a nuisance to farmers, hunters, and rural residents.

But state management now is on hold following a successful suit that challenged the right of the agency to remove only the regional population from the nation-wide endangered species list. In overturning the FWS de-listing, the judge asked the agency to convince him their action is justified and legal under the Endangered Species Act.

Four organizations filed the suit in federal court, the Humane Society of the United States, Help Our Wolves Live, the Animal Protection Institute, and Friends of Animals and Their Environment.

The ruling to put the gray wolf back on the endangered list split even the environmental community. The Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) thought it went too far.

Said MUCC Deputy Executive Director Tony Hansen: "The wolf's listing under the Endangered Species Act has minimized Michigan's ability to adequately manage the growing wolf population's size and distribution, which has led to significant depredation. Hunters, farmers, and dog owners

are concerned because they are witnessing this currently unmanageable wolf population's impact firsthand."

Michigan's complex new wolf management program had just got underway in July, after three years of work that included a dozen public meetings and surveys of some 11,000 people. And just a few days before the order by federal Judge Paul Friedman, the Michigan Senate voted to let farmers kill gray wolves attacking their livestock.

Brian Roell, wolf coordinator for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in Marquette, said he's disheartened.

"We were really disappointed," he said. "You know, you think you do your best, and then the wolf is back on the list."

The ruling, he noted, will erode public support for setting up a plan to manage wolves.

Indeed, poaching — illegal killings — accounted for 34% of wolf deaths between 1999 and 2006, the state has reported.

What the DNR plans to do next is reapply for a federal permit that lets the state officers destroy wolves when summoned by a livestock owner, which the department calls a cumbersome process. The department had such a permit in 2005, but an earlier legal action revoked it.

The wolves had been removed from the federal list in March 2007, but they still were on Michigan's threatened list. The state was in the process of removing the "threatened" designation when Judge Friedman issued his ruling last week.

Last winter's DNR survey recorded 509 wolves in the Upper Peninsula. Wolves have also been reported in the northern Lower Peninsula, but the DNR says no permanent population has been established there.

## Allers, Whipkey Approved on Mackinaw City Planning Board

By John S. DeMott

Ronald Wallin opened the Thursday, October 2, meeting of the Mackinaw City Village Council by noting the local impact he expects to see from the national financial crisis.

"We are facing extremely difficult economic times," the village president began, referring to the credit crunch that Congress was tackling that week. "It's going to have an impact on most people in business.

"It behooves us and the Planning Commission to pay very close attention to this bailout or whatever you want to call it," Mr. Wallin said. "Most people who are watching this closely know that is barely scratching the surface of how

difficult things are going to be."

There will be an impact on the village, he warned.

"It behooves us to be attuned to what the new breed of tourist wants — what's walkable, bikable, very easy going."

The village depends on tourism for as much as 75% of annual revenues in a period when Michigan tourism is declining because of high gasoline prices and a shaky economy.

With Village Manager Jeff Lawson on vacation for the first few days of October, the council:

- Approved nominations of Paul Allers and Bo Whipkey to the Village Planning Commission.
- Heard comments from Mr.

Turn to page 6: Mackinaw

## State Urges Island To Strengthen National Historic Landmark Status

With Tourism Eroding in Michigan, Island Must Remain Strong Draw

By Ryan Schlehner

If Mayor Margaret Doud wondered whether the public would support the city's efforts in improving Mackinac Island's National Historic Landmark status, the show of more than 100 hands raised in support of the idea at a public hearing at Community Hall Wednesday, September 24, should have convinced her.

That very public will be looked upon by the city to adhere to the process of not only maintaining, but improving, Mackinac Island's status as a National Historic Landmark, which, the city learned earlier this summer, is in jeopardy of being stripped, owing to an absence of standards to preserve structures and a gradual erosion of contributing structures to the Island's historic theme.

The hearing was moved from the council chambers to the larger Community Hall downstairs to accommodate the number of people in attendance, which included residents, business owners, and visitors.

With the public support it received from the hearing, Council, at a meeting that followed the hearing, officially began a process to improve its status by asking the mayor to appoint members to a study committee.

Before holding the public hearing, the city's Ordinance Committee considered adopting a state historic preservation ordinance that would allow the city choices in dealing with plans for new construction and alterations of existing contributing structures. It also would have given the city a choice in appointing a Historic District Commission that would adhere to U.S. Secretary of Interior standards, or implement an emergency moratorium to allow the city time to find a direction in setting building guidelines.

Council decided, instead, to create a study committee to look into all elements of the process, including establishing historic districts on the Island and creating building guidelines that developers and the city's planning commission can follow.

Appointing the five-person study committee is only the first step in a process that may prove to be long and arduous, but necessary to the Island's tourist industry.

The process is something that the community, both residents and business owners, should participate in, but are not required to, said Amy Arnold, preservation planner at the State Historic Preservation Office.

The first 59 structures and features on Mackinac Island were listed on the National Register in 1960, but in 2000, Mackinac State Historic Parks asked for and received the Historic Landmark designation for the entire island, following a comprehensive inventory of all buildings and other resources, including the breakwalls, docks, and historic homes. Some 445 historic buildings, sites, structures, and objects on Mackinac Island contributed to the Historic Landmark designation, while 432 other resources did not.

Mackinac Island is one of

fewer than 3,000 historic landmarks in the nation and one of 34 in Michigan. It is unique in that its designation encompasses the entire island, the state park and city, rather than just a historic district or building.

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission protects its resources and requires leaseholders of the Victorian cottages on the West and East bluffs and across from the Marina to adhere to the Secretary of Interior guidelines for rehabilitation and preservation. But the City of Mackinac Island has no plan in place to protect structures outside of the state park, and since 2000, some of its contributing resources have been demolished or been changed beyond recognition.

The National Park Service, which administers the National Historic Landmark program, has, therefore, put Mackinac Island on "watch," meaning it recognizes that the number of buildings and landmarks that contribute to the landmark status is decreasing while the number of non-contributing resources is increasing. The Island's historic character, its main draw in tourism, is slowly disappearing.

Mackinac Island's status has actually been under scrutiny since 1998, according to Dena Sanford, architectural historian with the National Register Programs of the National Park Service in Omaha, Nebraska. It was triggered, she said, because the city lacks a design review process and is under development pressure for new construction and to change existing buildings.

The sour economy has added to the concern of state and national preservation officers, but Mayor Doud contended that the city did not know the Island's landmark status was in jeopardy of being downgraded to the "threatened" category until earlier this summer, when historic preservation experts and design consultants met with city officials.

The "threatened" category is the lowest category a landmark can have before its status is stripped by the National Park Service.

Mrs. Arnold said the State Historic Preservation Office recently stepped up its interest and began placing some pressure on the city to begin work in preserving the Island's landmark status because of the state's bleak tourism and economic conditions.

"This is bigger than just the Island," she said in an interview with *Mackinac Island Town Crier*. "People have to realize that this is more responsibility than just a person's business or home on the Island.

"Tourism is eroding in the entire state, and Mackinac Island is Michigan's jewel," she added. "If Mackinac Island's tourism is hurting, you know that the state in general is hurting. Mackinac Island has to be a leading example of great places to go in Michigan for tourists."

Removing historic landmark status from the Island, she warned, could be a blow to Michigan from which the state may have a hard time recovering.

Ms. Arnold suggested that Mackinac Island's status is so important that she encourages community leaders to talk with state legislators for support that could go above and beyond state and national standards, and to involve entities like the Society of

Commercial Archaeology, an organization devoted to preserving commercial signs and architecture.

One concern that Pat Pulte brought up at the hearing is someone giving up property rights to adhere to preservation standards.

Mr. Pulte, owner of Murray Hotel and Inn on Mackinac, believes he would set aside his property rights to protect the Island's historic theme, which he considers more important overall.

He encouraged the city to implement high building standards, enforce them, and even suggested the city put in place a building moratorium similar to what it did when it reached its sewer capacity only a few years ago. The moratorium, he said, would allow the city time to implement a complete plan of building standards.

"Weighing the public's interest versus a person's property rights is the number one issue with historic preservation," said Ms. Arnold, and individual property owners don't have to accept the designation for their property. But those who adhere to the national standards, she said, are eligible for tax credit and federal and state financial assistance in rehabilitating a structure.

Owners of historic structures that need to install a new heating system would also be eligible for funding, added Ms. Arnold, but there is no governmental financial assistance for repainting historic structures, one issue that affects many Island property owners annually.

Certain annual costs associated with historic preservation will have to be absorbed, however, as that is just what comes with owning a historic structure on Mackinac Island, said Frank Pompa, who is rehabilitating his Pte. Aux Pins estate near British Landing.

"If you own a historic building on Mackinac, you must keep it up. If you don't want to do that, then

don't own a historic building on the Island. Sell it," said Mr. Pompa to the audience.

He said that along with losing its National Historic Landmark status, the Island will lose the benefit of promoting itself as a historic vacation destination.

He also noted that Mackinac Island has been nominated as one of the most endangered historic communities in America for 2009 at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a private, nonprofit advocacy and resource organization.

He encouraged the city to adopt the national preservation standards.

"It's human nature to want to modernize," said Mr. Pompa. "And I know it can be hard to keep up with these standards, but we have to draw the line in the sand."

David Levy, who purchased a home on the East Bluff in 2000, opted to restore the structure to its original 1895 design, rather than a subsequent remodel to another era, and worked closely with Mackinac State Historic Parks to follow the Secretary of the Interior standards.

He said he was inspired because historic architecture is important to the visitors here.

"I hope everyone sees it the same way," Mr. Levy told *Mackinac Island Town Crier*. "There's a unique flavor on this Island that I encourage everyone to protect. I couldn't be happier with my house."

Visitor Kathleen Carter said at the hearing that the reason she and many others come to Mackinac is to step back in time. But the importance of retaining that historic sense, Mrs. Arnold said, may not be widely understood on the Island.

"When owners of historic structures begin using modern materials and people come here, they're going to see that. They're going to begin asking, 'What would make me come to the Island, especially for \$25 a boat ticket?'"

Resident Matt Myers argued that cooperation is also needed from other state agencies when they develop and expand facilities on Mackinac Island. He pointing to the remodeled marina, which he said "fell through the cracks" during the city's review process. Some residents objected to the Michigan Waterways Commission's use of artificial stone and wood used for the fence that runs along Main Street the entire width of the facility.

Mr. Myers said the there should be better communication between state agencies and the city and that they should be supportive in the Island's efforts to restore its landmark status, such as the community is expected to.

Cottager Lorna Straus said she believes the State Historic Preservation Office would have intervened, but she said it was not informed of the marina plans.

Cottager Candi Dunnigan said the community has proven it can come together in the past, pointing out it successfully prevented state-proposed expansion of the state marina and the airport.

"Now it's crunch time again," she said, "and we cannot lose this status because once we lose this, we can't regain it."