

# Residents Speak Out About Island's Future Growth

"Don't make us look like Manhattan," said Kathy Arbib during a public hearing Monday, August 29, organized by the Master Plan Committee. She and others voiced opinions on the direction they want the city to take in planning future growth and development on Mackinac Island.

"It's not the development, it's the density," she said.

Other ideas expressed at the meeting were the need to preserve the horse culture and the ability of the city to meet water and sewer requirements for growth.

"Your presence tonight is crucial," said Master Plan Committee Chairman Mike Hart to about 50 residents in attendance. The committee is in the process of revising the Island's master plan, last updated in 1999. The plan is used as a vision for how the city will look 20 years in the future and as a tool for amending

the zoning ordinance to reach that vision.

"The Master Plan will provide a firm foundation for revising and updating the ordinances," said Connie Dimond of JJR in Ann Arbor, who is assisting the committee with the master plan revision. During the meeting, she kept a visual record of comments on a board in the front of the room for all to see. She also explained the planning process, which can be challenging because of the seasonal nature of the resort community.

She said that the committee will come up with three scenarios of the Island's future and, by spring, will present one preferred alternative based on comments from all of the hearings and on the survey that has been circulated.

Those interested in speaking signed up as they entered the meeting hall and were given two minutes to voice their opinion. Additional time for comments was given at the end.

"When do we say enough?" Susan Lenfestey asked, referring to the increasing number of lots she sees for sale on the Island. "I think we're there."

She also said the city must be consistent in its enforcement of ordinances and not show favoritism.

"I don't know if density is good or bad," said Michael Stack, an attorney for Mission Point Resort, responding to density comments. "There is something that can be charming about density as long as it's done right."

Jack Armstrong agreed, explaining that a better program



**Just under 50 residents gathered at the Community Hall to voice their opinions on the future growth and development of Mackinac Island.**

is to provide open spaces. Rather than offer larger lots, he said, establish smaller lots and then provide open areas in subdivisions. This is a practice done in other developments.

Mackinac Island Horsemen's Association members took to the microphone to address their concerns over the Island's slowly eroding horse culture. Applause met Leanne Brodeur's comments that an inventory taken a few years back found 58 horse stables, compared to approximately 24 in use today.

"We're not promoting horses," she noted, "which is what the Island is all about."

Trish Martin agreed. She said tourism is the Island's industry and she noted the important role horses play in tourism. Ms. Martin quoted Dr. Bill Chambers, saying, "If we lose the horse culture, we'll just be another Island."

Current zoning restrictions on barns make it difficult for residents to build them added Lin Sheppard and Candi Dunnigan.

Addressing the city's limited ability to provide water and sewer to new or expanded development, now restricted to about 15 new households a year, Ms. Dimond said, "There's about six years worth of capacity left, but it's not quite that simple, because if you want to make the decision ultimately to expand capacity, you can't decide in a crisis situation. You need to start doing some planning in advance of a crisis so that you have figured

the protection of the Mackinac Island State Park, reducing the number of motor vehicle permits issued on the Island, especially those for use at the State Dock near British Landing, curbing development, preserving what already is on Island, and providing more services for tourists, including more public restrooms. Residents also asked the committee to consider limiting the number of bicycles brought by tourists and adding entertainment on the shoreline. An increase in advertising and a better Web site may help to increase tourism, citizens noted.

Additional surveys are available at city offices in the Community Hall. Responses are due back to Kelly Bean by Thursday, September 15.

## Little Stone Church Gets New Look

Little Stone Church got new doors Tuesday, August 16, replacing the original, 101-year-old, which had bad locks.

An order for the new doors was placed during the winter, but sealing the doors a special way as to protect them from changes in the weather took time, said Buzz Waggoner, who is moderator at Little Stone Church.

Contractor Barry BeDour was responsible for the installation of the new doors, which came equipped with a new handle and lock set.



**After 101 years, Little Stone Church gets new doors.**

## Corrigan Property Dispute Ends; School Handbook To Be Revised

**By Jessica Delaney**

A dispute centering on ownership of property between the Mackinac Island Public Schools, the City of Mackinac Island, and Tom Corrigan has finally drawn to a close. There was a problem regarding property lying between Mr. Corrigan's estate and the school. It was discovered that Mr. Corrigan actually had a claim to ownership on land that reached a few feet inside of the school building. Quit claim deeds have been filed, however, to solve the problem, and the school will retain its property up to an existing fence which separates the school and Mr. Corrigan's property.

Discussion of revising the school handbook intrigued board members. Superintendent Jack Dehring claimed that several parts of the handbook have been confusing for some parents and that rewriting will make them more easily understood.

"We're just trying to clarify some language that can be hard to understand," said Mr. Dehring. "It's mostly minor wording changes about attendance policy."

Mr. Dehring also wants to change graduation requirements.

Currently, the handbook reads that students are required to take industrial arts as well as computer science. In the past, however, neither subject has been offered. Mr. Dehring suggested that the handbook state that these classes were recommended, but not required.

Also, the State of Michigan is exploring changing the requirements that students take a certain number of credits in math, science, social science, and English. Mr. Dehring suggested that there be a requirement of four credits in each of the core classes, and that two writing classes be required as part of the English requirement.

Currently, students are required to have 25 credits for graduation. Over a course of four years, a student traditionally takes 28 credits, meaning that three classes can be failed. Mr. Dehring would like to increase the total number of credits to 26.

None of the suggested changes to graduation requirements would be effective for the class of 2006, although the superintendent would like to see the class of 2007 having the new rules toward graduation. The board will continue discussion and vote on the changes at a later date.

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