

Mary's Bistro Request Raises Question for Planners: Is it a Deck, or a Dock?

By Karen Gould

A proposed permanent awning for Mary's Bistro on Mackinac Island, approved by the Planning Commission in December, now has board members questioning their decision and the process they used to make it.

The board agreed Tuesday, January 9, to table the issue until it receives legal advice, and will put owner Victor Callewaert's request on the February agenda.

Mr. Callewaert and city attorney Tom Evashevski were not at the meeting.

The summer restaurant has a canvas awning over its lakeside deck, and Mr. Callewaert proposes a permanent overhang.

Planners are not sure whether the outside eating area is on a deck or a dock. If it is on a dock, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) may need to be involved, since they regulate structures on bottomlands. Commissioners also questioned potential use of plastic curtains that can be lowered during inclement weather. If glass, screens, sun drapes, or other items are used on sides of a structure, it is considered an enclosed structure under the city's zoning ordinance. The ordinance, however, does not address areas that are enclosed only part of the time.

The city approved the building permit in December, pending architectural review, but during that review, city architect Rick Neumann of Petoskey raised the issue of side curtains. Now, commissioners believe they should have waited for the architectural review and any required DEQ permits before approving a city permit.



A proposed permanent structure to replace the temporary awning over the outdoor eating area of Mary's Bistro has Mackinac Island Planning Commissioners asking whether the location qualifies as a deck or a dock. The Iroquois Hotel stands in the background and pictured in the foreground is the boat dock for Star Line Ferry.

A request for a lot split by Isaac Bunker for his Harrisonville property will be returned to the City Council, which had sent the item to the Planning Commission for comment.

Commissioner Mary Dufina said the decision on the matter would rest with Council, saying, "There is no procedure for a lot split. It's been done willy-nilly for years."

The lot contains a four-unit apartment building and single-family home. The city's zoning ordinance allows three dwelling units on that size lot, although a variance held by Mr. Bunker allow up to five dwelling units. A setback variance also exists on the property, with the rear setback less than the required 25 feet.

If the lot is split, the two resulting lots each would be smaller than the minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet and

would require variances for front, rear, and side setbacks.

Mr. Bunker told the Planning Commission he wants the lot split so he can separate the tax bill.

In another matter, commissioners approved an amendment to a zoning application that was approved in November for the Iroquois Hotel's winter construction project. The amendment calls for a new design to an exhaust pipe coming from the kitchen area. The bare pipe runs up the west side of the building. The change would include using two pipes and enclosing them to improve the appearance of the hotel.

Commissioners approved the project pending architectural review.

Renovation work is underway on the kitchen and handicap-accessible restrooms are being added to the entrance of the Carriage House dining room.

Mar Pulte received architectural approval for renovations to her Lesley Court condominium, although commissioners decided to table the request until confirmation could be received that the appearance of sliding doors meets architectural standards used on the Island. The project includes the addition of more windows and sliding glass doors. The doors must be hinged doors or have the appearance of being hinged, like French doors.

The Planning Commission next meets Tuesday, February, 13, at 2 p.m. on the second floor of Community Hall.



Seen from the water's edge, the metal supports at Mary's Bistro remain, while the canvas awning has been removed for the winter. Pictured on the right is the boat dock for Star Line Ferry.

Arctic Blast Hits Straits Area

Island Ferry Makes Final Run of Season Feb. 3



Bruce LaPine and other passengers watch as Arnold Transit's MV *Huron* breaks through the ice on its way to Mackinac Island Wednesday, January 31. Ferry service to the Island ended for the season three days later as ice thickened on Lake Huron.

By Karen Gould

Arctic air marched into the region over the weekend, bringing strong northwest winds, below zero double-digit wind chill factors, and single digit temperatures, although little snowfall. With the onslaught of the bitter cold temperatures, ice on Lake Huron thickened, bringing a halt to freight and ferry boat service to Mackinac Island. High profile vehicles crossing the Mackinac Island were escorted for more than 14 hours Sunday, February 4, with winds there reaching 50 miles per hour.

Sunday morning, the air temperature on Mackinac Island dropped to four degrees below zero, according to Michael

Cellitti, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Gaylord. Sault Ste. Marie temperatures fell to nine degrees below zero, and the Soo area received approximately 10 inches of snow over the weekend, he said.

Although temperatures are expected to remain well below average through this weekend, they are far from the coldest readings for the area. Sault Ste. Marie recorded 37 degrees below zero February 10, 1899, and again February 8, 1934.

U.S. Coast Guard Station St. Ignace reported Lake Huron water temperature at 32 degrees Monday, February 5.

Arnold Line's 51-year-old steel-hulled passenger boat *Huron* made her last trip from the Island Saturday afternoon, February 3, leaving her Island dock at 4:30 p.m. She now sits frozen in the ice at the dock in St. Ignace.

"It's stuck," said Nona Tacey of Arnold Line.

St. Ignace Dockmaster Jim Bentgen said the boat was rerouted Saturday around the back side of the Island owing to thick ice, adding about 20 minutes to the 35-minute trip.

"We could not get through," he said. "There was about a mile of really thick ice."

Arnold Line's freight boat *Corsair* made her last run to and from the Island Friday, February 2.

Shepler's freight boat *Sacre Bleu* made her last trip to Mackinac Island Monday,

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