

Harbor Springs City Council Minutes
August 4, 2005

Mayor Jardine called the eighteenth meeting, a special meeting, of the Harbor Springs City Council to order at 7:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers at 160 Zoll Street, Harbor Springs, Michigan.

1. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum

Present: Jean Jardine, Jim Grogan, Michael Heinz and Pringle Pfeifer

Absent: Laura Kors

Also Present: City Attorney James Ramer, City Manager Fred Geuder, and Ron McRae, City Clerk/Comptroller/Treasurer

2. Public Hearing on the Proposed Walstrom Marine Dock Expansion Project

Mayor Jardine informed those present that that the public hearing was being held to receive public comment from individuals to get their views on the Walstrom Marine proposed dock expansion project. Jardine said that Council will not be discussing this issue this evening, but would likely consider the issue at their September 19, 2005 meeting or in October. Council members will consider all comments made by individuals.

Mayor Jardine also stated that after Council determines their recommendation, what happens after is up to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The recommendation and all of the comments would be forwarded to those two agencies.

Mayor Jardine opened the public hearing for public comment at 7:03 p.m.

Jane Darling, 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 1, stated that the Harbor Commission neglected concerns from the Marina Village residents in making their decision to approve their recommendation to City Council to proceed with the proposed dock expansion project. Darling also stated she opposed the project.

Alan Pfaff, Jr., 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 8, opposes the project. Pfaff further stated that the Harbor Plan discusses seventeen points of why unrestricted development of the Harbor should not be permitted. Lastly, Pfaff invited everyone to visit his condominium and look at the view to get an idea of how the proposed dock expansion project would negatively affect the view from his condominium.

Charles Winston, 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 2, stated that based on the location of the orange buoy, the proposed dock expansion project will extend an additional two hundred feet out into the bay.

Robert Smith, 421 Glenn Drive, would like to support the residents and property owners at Marina Village. He opposes the project.

Richard Baldwin, Jr., 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 7, opposes the project. Baldwin stated that there was a private beach to the west of the Marina Village Condominiums that was taken over by Walstrom Marine. Walstrom Marine then developed additional private docks. Now Walstrom Marine wants to develop the Harbor. Baldwin urged Council to vote against the proposed dock expansion project.

_____, Wequetonsing and Birchwood, opposes the project because of environmental concerns.

Marty Sutter, 329 E. Bay Street, supports the project. Sutter stated that he uses Little Traverse Bay and feels that Walstrom Marine Inc. watches out for the environment and is responsible towards their activities in Little Traverse Bay. He does not believe that property values at Marina Village will decrease if this project is approved.

Nancy Busch, 10 Beach Drive, does not support the project. She stated that she understands the concerns of the Marina Village residents concerns over the loss of their view. She also stated that she believes that the community will lose by the approval of the project due to the increased boat traffic.

Jay Hannah, 528 East Bay Street, Unit No. 26, is against the project. He asked Council if they believe the project will adversely affect the community and further asked if they have studied this issue? Mayor Jardine stated that tonight's meeting was to do nothing more than receive public input. There would be no discussion by Council members on their views.

Laura Hunt, 2655 Pennsylvania Avenue, is against the project. She stated the aesthetic value of the waterfront would be adversely affected and the safety of people who use Zoll Street Beach would be in jeopardy.

Ted Barnes, 526 East Bay Street, Unit No. 15, shared his concerns with Council and asked them to carefully weigh the loss of vista, as well as safety and environmental concerns.

Tom Smith, 549 East Third Street, read some passages from a law passed in 1955 concerning the State of Michigan's control over the Great Lakes and the fact that the bottomlands were to be held in trust for public use.

Martha Ford, 745 Ottawa Street, stated that she was a true native of Harbor Springs, Josephine Ford Park was named after her mother, a former mayor. She stated that she opposed the project. The concerns she gave were safety, parking and loss of views.

Terry Cornell, 551 East Bay Street, supports the project. He stated that almost all boats that would use the proposed dock slips would not exceed a height of twelve feet above the water line. All of the Marina Village Condominiums are at least fifteen feet above the waterline. Further, he said the fear of declining property values below the bluff in Harbor Springs is unheard of.

Turner Peters, 526 East Bay Street, Unit No.10, stated that he just sold a boat in Florida that was approximately thirty feet long and was fourteen feet above the waterline, without having the canvas up.

Janet LePage, 564 East Main Street, is opposed to the project because of environmental, safety and noise concerns. She also questioned the permeability of floating docks.

Charles Winston, 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 2, stated that Council received approximately eighty letters and only fourteen were in favor of the project. Winston stated that Council members should remember that.

Sarah Rowland, 526 East Bay Street, Unit No. 20, believes that City Council and the Planning Commission have been good custodians in maintaining a high quality of life in Harbor Springs. Hopefully, they will continue to do so by turning down the project.

Marilyn White, 526 East Bay Street, Unit No. 17, stated that she has been discussing this issue around town. She has been informed by many of those that she has been talking to that Council is simply going through a formality. They have already made their minds up and that the project is a done deal.

Susan Street, 524 East Bay Street, Unit No. 9, stated she had heard the same thing. She further stated that she opposes the project because of the noise pollution that the expanded number of dock spaces will bring.

Barbara Dean, 526 East Bay Street, Unit No. 11, opposes the project primarily because of safety issues.

Martha Ford, 745 Ottawa Street, asked if the expanded amount of dock spaces would cause the number boats to prevent large ships from using out harbor as a "safe haven" during bad storms?

Cindy Ford, 7217 Pleasantview Road, opposes the project because there are already too many boats in the Harbor. She related that she was driving by Ford Park with a friend and the friend's response was that the harbor wasn't pretty anymore because of all the boats.

With no further comments, Mayor Jardine closed the public hearing at 7:37 p.m.

3. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Jardine adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Approved: August 15, 2005

Ronald B. McRae, City Clerk

Jean Jardine, Mayor