

B I P O A

I s l a n d C U R R E N T S

Beaver Island Property Owners Association

Fall 2000

Mission Statement

The mission of BIPOA is to:

1. Represent the combined interests of our membership on issues of mutual concern that may affect the fundamental character of Beaver Island.
2. Support the preservation of the natural resources and beauty of Beaver Island and appropriate environmental conservation policies and/or methods.
3. Work with local government units in support of property owners' shared perspectives, concerns and investments.
4. Foster and support economic growth that is consistent with the preservation of the natural beauty of Beaver Island and the quality of life which is the reason for our original and continuing attraction to Beaver Island.

Important Dates

Winter Newsletter

February 15, 2001

Submission Deadline: January 15

Spring Newsletter

May 15, 2001

Submission Deadline: April 15

2001 Annual Meeting

Monday, July 30th, 2001

7:00 PM

Peaine Township Hall

Beaver Island Planning

The following Needs Assessment was compiled by the new Planner for Peaine and St. James Townships after meeting with both townships' boards and their Planning Commission on June 5, 2000.

It was compiled as a preliminary discovery piece and is not to be considered as being adopted by either Township Board. The next phase is to contract with the Planner to update the Master Plan and coordinate the Master Plan with the present Zoning Ordinances. The Townships/Planning Commissions hope that by making this the number one priority, it will strengthen and preserve the Island as we know it.

A variety of community and planning needs were identified during the discussion held on June 5, 2000 and in the course of reviewing the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. Obviously, not all needs can be addressed simultaneously because there isn't enough money or people to address everything at once or, in some cases, for some time. Just getting the highest priority work items in motion will be a challenge. Some of these are clearly Island-wide needs. Some seem specific to one Township but inevitably have implications for the other. Because of its Island essence, it is difficult to say that any need or problem is applicable to only one jurisdiction.

*Continued on Page 8. See **Planning***

A New Name

With this issue of your BIPOA newsletter comes a new name for the publication. Out of many thoughtful and clever name submissions, the BIPOA membership at the annual meeting voted to adopt *Island Currents* as the newsletter's name. Many thanks to all of you who participated in the naming process.

What's in a name? Many times a lot, sometimes only a little. In the case of *Island Currents*, the name seems to fit our organization well. First, of course, we do live on or visit an island. And we know that islands are different. We are an island organization in terms of the geographic isolation of our property. Many times issues that are important on the mainland are of less importance to us and the issues that are important to us oftentimes don't even occur in the minds of mainlanders.

*Continued on Page 2. See **A New Name***

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BIPOA Committees



Rural Health Center
Strategic Planning Task Force
Committee Chair: Maggie Bennett
(231) 448-2836



Trails Committee
Committee Chair: Sharon Vance
(231) 448-2842



Island Clean-Up
Committee Chair: Doug Hartle
(231) 448-2368 or (248) 585-4818



Island Roads
Committee Chair: Paul Niehaus
(231) 448-2367 or (248) 438-6374



Newsletter and Website
Committee Chair: Pam Grassmick
(248) 489-0784 or (231) 448-2314



Membership and Promotion
Committee Chair: Marty Maehr
(734) 994-8904 or (231) 448-2926



Work with Townships' Planner
Committee Chairs
E.B. Lange (231) 448-2568
& Rod Nackerman
(248) 693-9808 or (231) 448-2812

A New Name, from Page 1

Because of this, your BIPOA organization has a unique roll to play on the *Island* with *Island* issues.

We are also an island in terms of people. Sure, many off-island folks come and go. But in the end, we have to look to ourselves to accomplish things, to move the Island forward and yet to preserve it, and to come together as *Islanders* to make Beaver Island the best possible place to live, work, visit, and just enjoy and marvel at the wonders of nature.

So there really is a lot in the name, *Island*.

Second, *Currents* are something that we are all familiar with, especially on an Island. Of course, there are always currents involved in getting to an island (whether by water or air) and they are part of the challenge of being *Islanders*. In fact, being willing to brave those *currents* is part of what makes us *Islanders*.

There are also currents in our daily lives on the Island. The ebb and flow of the seasons brings different sets of experiences to the senses and different sets of issues to the mind. These experiences can be exhilarating or chilling, liberating or stultifying, challenging or overwhelming – depending for the most part on what we make of them. And, since as *Islanders*, we all choose to be on the Island, it makes sense to work together to make our experiences, both body and mind, positive and enriching.

Of course, navigating the issues and currents that arise in an island community such as ours is not always easy. There are often different points of view and changing perspectives, new weather fronts and new information. *Island Currents* serves the very important role of providing a place where you can

learn about the different issues affecting Island property owners, where you can learn about events on the Island, and where you can have a forum for expressing your own views on how we should navigate these issues and currents. We hope that you will make use of this resource and tell your Island friends about it as well.

So I guess it all goes to show, there really is a lot for all of us in the name *Island Currents*.

On to other business, our annual meeting this past summer was very well attended. It was our first evening annual meeting and it seemed to work well for folks. We did decide to try and schedule the meeting on a Monday evening next summer to try and avoid the many other events that typically occur during the middle and end of the week during the summer months.

We really appreciate the presentations by Bill McDonough and Bill Palladino who represented the Planning Commissions of the two Island townships. They took time out of their incredibly busy summer schedules to give us a look at how the planning process began and how it is proceeding. Both planning commissions have put much time and work into the process (for which we all owe them a lot of thanks, especially since the positions are volunteer). The vision and initial plans that they have put together are impressive. Of course, being an Island community, there are different perspectives on exactly what course the Island should set as we make way towards our shared vision for the Island. But as long as we remember that we are all *Islanders*, we should be able to put the good of all and the Island itself ahead of our individual biases. BIPOA will continue to keep

you updated on this process. We also encourage you to use *Island Currents* to express your viewpoints and perspectives on the issues.

Joe LaToff also gave us an update at the annual meeting on the work of the Rural Health Center and its task force. They have done and are doing a very impressive job. They certainly are another group of volunteers to whom we should all be sure to express our thanks.

A couple of other issues arose at the annual meeting including Vince Bielman's concerns about the state of our roads and Dale Boyles' concerns about future junk car problems. At the following BIPOA board meeting the board took up these concerns and decided to establish two committees to look into these issues. Now that Paul Niehaus, our Vice President, has completed his excellent work on keeping us up to date on the power plant issue, he has agreed to chair a new Island Roads committee and look into how we may solve some of the problems that keep cropping up. Doug Hartle has agreed to chair an Island Clean Up committee to look at all issues, junk cars included, related to keeping the appearance of our Island clean and pleasant (Sharon Vance has graciously agreed to take over Doug's role as chair of the Trails committee to enable Doug to work full time as the Clean Up Committee chair). Doug and his committee will first investigate what other islands have done to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of their communities. Hopefully, we can learn some lessons from them without having to make their mistakes. Then we can figure out how to apply what we learned to fit our needs on Beaver Island.

Since these are both important and continual issues for island

property owners, Paul and Doug will need all the help they can get, so we encourage you to get involved and give them a hand. Just contact them directly or me or any board member to participate. We want and need your help.

BIPOA will continue to work as your Island property owner's information resource on these and all other issues pertaining to our membership. Initially, our role will always be informational, at least until we can gather enough information to allow you, our membership, to make informed judgements. When it is clear that we have reached a consensus among our members about specific issues, we will then act on your behalf and as your voice in the community.

In closing, let me say that you have a great organization and resource in BIPOA. The work of the board and committee members is second to none. They all are involved simply because of their love of the Island. I sincerely thank them for their countless efforts.

Rick Andrew
President, BIPOA

New Members

We wish to welcome our newest members:

Jonathan Ayers
Audrey and Vince Bielman
Ken and Ann Eatherly
Mary Frances Fenton and Susan Wischart
Jeanne Gullahorn
Senator Phil and Denise Hoffman
Michael and Cynthia Lynn
Ken and Deb McDonald
Rich Warren
Lee and Carla Zorn

November 2000 Elections

The following candidates are running for these board positions:

St James Township

Supervisor: **Don Vyse**

He is retired and has served on the Board of Review, Library Board, School Board, Transportation Authority, Twp. Airport Manager, Health Center Task Force, and Commission on Education. He believes every citizen owes their community some type of service that meets the needs of the entire community. He does not believe in acting in self interest or having a personal agenda.

Treasurer: **Jim Wojan**

Clerk: **Jean Palmer**, who has been a resident of Beaver Island for 10 years and has served as the Clerk for 8 years.

Trustee: **Tim McDonough**

Trustee: **Rick Speck**

Also in St. James Township the voters will be asked to renew the Airport Mileage which they share with Peaine Township.

Peaine Township

Supervisor: **John Works**

Don Spencer is running as a write-in candidate for Peaine Township Supervisor

Clerk: **Colleen Martin**

Treasurer: **John McCafferty**

Running for 2 Trustee Positions:

Frank Blatt (Statement: Page 4)
Paul Nelson
Judy Lanier
John McNeil

November 2000 Elections - Candidate Statements

BIPOA requested that all Township candidates submit a position statement on their candidacy by October 1, 2000. Here also is Frank Blatt's reply:

Four years ago, I was elected as one of the Trustees on the Peaine Township Board. At that time, I pledged that your tax dollars would be used wisely and effectively and that I would attempt to do so with courage and integrity. I must admit that during this time, on occasion, it would have been much easier to "go along with the crowd" but that would have conflicted with my pledge to you and to myself.

A major event of the past two years was the drastic failure of the electric cable and the subsequent agreement with Great Lakes Energy for the installation of a new three-phase cable and generating station. During the GLE presentation to the townships I did some quick arithmetic and pointed out that GLE was planning to gouge Island customers by charging more than 15% interest on its loan to the Island. I am pleased and proud to report that I was the only member of either Township Board to establish this fact and to assist the office of the Attorney General in its investigation of the GLE agreement. The final settlement resulted in a substantial reduction of the monthly fee, ultimately saving Island customers more than \$3,000,000.

As a member of the Township Airport Committee, I continue to support this facility as an important lifeline to the mainland. However, I have devoted considerable time and effort to eliminate the subsidy paid

by the taxpayers for the sale of aviation fuel to private pilots that began two years ago. I have also been the one voice on this Committee seeking, as yet unsuccessful, to establish tie-down fees for overnight parking of private planes. Such fees are assessed by 66% of Michigan's General Utility airports that also provide fuel. I believe, and I think you will agree, that just as other tax supported facilities such as the Transfer Station, Medical Center, Campgrounds, Historical Society, and Municipal Marina augment public funding by charging a users fee, so too should our airport.

I was the only Board member, and am the only candidate for Trustee, who voted against and vehemently opposed the 25% salary increase for members of the Township Board. Already before that increase was passed, the salary of our Township officials, which, at my urging, had been regularly adjusted to reflect the cost-of-living increase, was about double the average in the State of Michigan for townships of comparable size. In light of these facts, I could not in good conscience vote for this unprecedented salary increase. Perhaps I am unique in my belief that the increase in the Township's population and commensurate increase in tax revenue should be used to improve roads, increase dust control, and generally increase funding for public facilities, and – if possible – even lower taxes, rather than augment the take-home pay of your elected officials.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your

representative on the Board. I have remained true to my commitment to you, the voters and taxpayers, and if reelected shall continue to work hard to insure the more effective use of your tax dollars.

Frank Blatt, Trustee
Peaine Township

Heritage Park

The Historical Society has decided to start work in earnest on Heritage Park. The idea is to showcase artifacts relating to the Island's past that are too large for the Print Shop and not appropriate for the Marine Museum. We hope to begin work this fall by installing two specific artifacts, the first generator that provided power to the Island, a large diesel machine that has been sitting at the Park under a tarp for almost twenty years, and the "Advantage Rumeley" thresher donated almost 40 years ago by Katherine Ricksgers, the last to be used on Beaver Island. Our plan calls for stages of improvement, which will eventually produce:

- a relocated driveway;
- ten to twelve outdoor displays, each mounted on a slab and protected by its own roof;
- a railroad exhibit; we discovered that part of the 1910 Beaver Island Lumber Company railroad ran through this property;
- a sawmill from Carpenter's Mill;
- farming and logging equipment, such as a set of "big wheels";
- the placing of a line of old cars along the side

Harbor Light

At the October 4, 2000 St. James Township Board Meeting, Supervisor Don Vyse announced the receipt of a completed Historic Property Lease for the St. James Harbor Light. The lease is for 10 years, renewable for two additional 10 year periods and provides an opportunity for the community to work towards preserving this structure that is so important to the history of the Island.

The U. S. Coast Guard is not abandoning the lighthouse and will continue to operate the light as an aid to navigation. St. James Township will have control of the tower structure and the surrounding land. By entering into the Historic Lease Agreement, the Township will be eligible to apply for grant funding to restore and rehabilitate the structure and the surrounding grounds, though any work first must be approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

The existing historic tower light was first lit in 1870 and automated in 1927. The original and present optic is a Fourth Order Fresnel installed in 1870 and, according to the lease agreement, will still be under the control of the U. S. Coast Guard. The free standing brick tower is 41 feet high. There are no keepers quarters as this structure was dismantled in the past.

A special thanks goes to the office of Congressman Bart Stupak, the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association, and the ninth Coast Guard District Staff for their assistance in acquiring this lease.

If anyone is interested in this historic preservation project, please feel free to contact the St. James Township Supervisor, Box 85, Beaver Island, Michigan 49782.

The Beaver Island Rural Health Center Environmental Risk Committee

Responding to a survey of health care matters on Beaver Island, residents expressed concern about the potential degradation of the Island's environment and the consequent effect on the health and quality of life of our citizens. The Board of the Health Center decided to address this concern by establishing a committee, headed by a board member, to monitor certain elements of the environment and recommend corrective action if warranted.

An obvious health risk could be close to home since each residential or commercial property on the Island has its own water supply as well as its own waste system. These systems are individually operated and maintained, a condition unique to the our remote location. For this reason, water quality is the first priority of the Committee.

Therefore, the principle activities and objectives of the Environmental Risk Committee will be:

- To provide suggestions for the management of individual disposal systems.
 - Finally, we will monitor development in the general community that can impact the overall environment such as roadbuilding, agricultural practices, and commercial building.
- Specific programs are in place to address the first two objectives. Starting in June and through August 2001 nine sites on and around the Island will be tested from one to seven times for water quality. This project will be funded by a foundation grant used to hire one CMU graduate/undergraduate and will be supervised by CMU faculty members. If possible, Beaver Island Community School science students will be included.
- Ultimately, we propose to establish laboratory facilities capable of analyzing the collected water samples on Beaver Island.
- Consultations with various state, local, and private groups that are active in areas related to the mission of the Environmental Risk Committee are continuing so that we are aware of "best practices" being used in the interest of avoiding unnecessary risks to the health of our fellow citizens.
- Thank you to Joe Reed for graciously providing this article for our newsletter. Any further questions concerning the Environmental Risk Committee can be sent to:

Joe Reed
(231) 448-2247
marcorjoe@aol.com

Minutes of the BIPOA Annual Meeting - July 27, 2000

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M. by president, Rick Andrew.

Joe Latoff gave an update on the Rural Health Center. He said that the task force is 18 months old and will make its report to the public on August 19th, 2000. (This date was changed to August 26th.) The priorities seem to be:

- Senior Service - assisted living quarters included in this and the possibility of acquiring the Brothers property for living quarters and relocation of the health center.
- Health Center Building
- Senior Millage
- Outreach coordinator - telemedicine and home health care units.
- Relief care providers are starting on August 16, 2000.
- Joe Reed is chairing the environmental health committee. Discussion followed this report.

The chairmen of each planning commission were introduced and Bill McDonough spoke first, followed by Bill Palladino. They reported that the professional planner had addressed 10 areas for consideration by the Island commissions. They are as follows:

1. Quality of Life
2. Environment
3. Public space protection
4. Balanced Economy
5. Agriculture
6. Development Patterns
7. Controlled Growth
8. Friendly Atmosphere
9. Intergovernmental Cooperation
10. Public Services

It was pointed out that they are going to try to keep both townships working as a joint group.

There was a 10 minute break.

The business meeting was begun with the reading of the minutes by Jan Gerson. They were approved as read.

Rick gave the treasurer's report as Rod was out of the country.

Paul Neihaus gave the report on the new electrical service and the many meetings between Great Lakes Energy and Michigan Attorney general. There were some questions and discussion following his report.

Sharon Vance discussed the trails and specifically some of the issues facing the Kuebler Trail.

Dan Boyles brought up the junk car issue. It was discussed and tabled for the following board meeting.

E.B. Lange (as past president) ran the elections of the board members. There were no nominations from the floor. The present board was elected to serve for the term of one year.

Dan Boyles moved to adjourn and Richard Reis seconded the motion. We were adjourned.

We wish to thank all of our members who turned out for the Annual Meeting. It was wonderful to see the Peaine Township Hall filled. The membership support continues to be tremendous.

The 2001 Annual Meeting date was set for Monday July 20th at 7:00 PM at Peaine Township Hall.

Personal Watercraft, ORVs, Speed Limits

Many Islanders have expressed concerns about the impact of jet-skis and similar recreation and transportation on the Island.

Under a new law, a child between the ages of 12 and 14 may use a personal watercraft if he or she has a boater's safety certificate and is accompanied by a parent or guardian who also has a certificate. The parent must wear a lanyard type kill switch as well. This legislation change hopefully will increase parental supervision and decrease the chance of watercraft accidents by requiring the boater's safety certificate.

Other regulations still in effect from the previous law require watercraft and jet-skis to be at least 200 feet away from the shore while operating in the Great Lakes, not cross closer than 150 feet behind another vessel or closer than 100 feet from docks, rafts, buoys, moored vessels, and swimming areas, and only be operated during daylight hours.

Deputy Michael Russell has sent us this letter to help answer questions many of our members have expressed regarding such things as the legality of jet-skis on inland lakes, off-road vehicles, and speed limits:

In response to your questions for BIPOA, the best resource I can give you for DNR related questions is the DNR Web Site at www.dnr.state.mi.us

Pertaining to ORV's on Public Roads, please check the website under Recreation, then ORV/ATV for specific information. Specifically, ORV's are not allowed on public roads at all, unless they are licensed as a motor vehicle, and most do not qualify.

Jet-ski information can be found on the DNR website in the Boating Section. Jet-skis can operate on our

inland lakes, as long as they follow the State rules. The townships cannot set rules for these lakes. Banning jet-skis from these lakes, or any other rule change for specific areas, requires a public hearing through the DNR, and must be requested by the local governing body. Jet-skis must stay 200 feet from shore while in the Great Lakes, except at no-wake speed to get to shore.

The speed limit on East Side Drive is 55 mph. The Department of State Police is responsible to set limits. Unless posted specifically, and not considered a residential or business district, the speed limit is 55. While there are many homes on the East Side Drive, the roadway does not qualify as residential due to the distance the homes are from the road. It has been my experience that the State Police will not post limits on gravel roads. Peaine Township Trustee Paul Nelson has also investigated this with the State Police.

If anyone has questions about the laws of the State of Michigan, they may find the Internet of their local library a good resource. They may also call me, if they like, from 9 AM to 5 PM at (231) 448-2700.

- Sincerely, Deputy Michael Russell

Your Thoughts

The goal of the BIPOA newsletter and website is to promote greater communication between all Island property owners. We welcome all opinions, interest stories, informative articles or issues that you feel would be of general interest. Please submit all articles or comments to: Pam Grassmick either via fax # 248-489-1263 or at our website: beaverisland.net/bipoa

Read into the Congressional Record

"Mr. Speaker, I and my colleagues often come to the well of the House of Representatives to engage in great policy debates, believing in our hearts, in moments of great oratory, that the fates of nations hang on our words at that moment.

But very quietly, in remarkable acts of private outreach, out of sight of CSPAN cameras, the people of Beaver Island, Michigan are forging close links between communities in two nations. These sister city connections bind communities together, open lines of communication, and provide the opportunity to strengthen ties of historical and ancestral significance.

Such a link has existed for decades between the city of Petoskey, near Beaver Island, and the city of Makino in Japan, and as the Petoskey News Review noted in an editorial earlier this year, this bond has contributed a wealth of understanding.

Beaver Island's link to the island of Arranmore in County Donegal, Ireland, which will be celebrated on October 7th, is different from many other sister city ties. Many of the four hundred-fifty year-round residents of Beaver Island, a five mile by thirteen mile island at the northern end of Lake Michigan, trace their roots to Arranmore, a seven square mile island in the Atlantic Ocean off the northwest coast of Ireland. These links go back to that great horror and watershed in Irish history, the Potato Famine, which in 1847 caused many Irish families to flee starvation and pestilence in their homeland and take up residence in America. Many died on the crossing, and many more found privation as they crowded into Irish ghettos in Eastern cities.

Some families however, who had made their livelihoods by fishing in Ireland found they could make a similar living along the shores of the

Great Lakes, and eventually several Irish clans found a place very much like home, with great fishing, great beauty, a temperate climate, and cheap land: Beaver Island.

Accounts report that herring, perch, suckers, sturgeon, lake trout, but most of all whitefish, provided the basis of a vibrant fishing economy that had outlets in Chicago and New York. Undone by the Lamprey eel, this industry collapsed earlier this century, but has returned to the Irish in the form of tourist visits and sport fishing, spurred on with that world renowned Irish hospitality and charm. A new modern ferry, the Emerald Isle, links Beaver Island with the mainland of Michigan.

Seven generations of those early immigrants, who had to leave their homeland, now take up the desire to, in a small part, honor and praise their ancestors by establishing this sister island connection, which will now link Beaver Island to the original Emerald Isle, the country of Ireland itself.

An excerpt from a poem by a Beaver island resident perhaps best reflects the local view that Beaver Island and Arranmore have always meant to be linked.

*When God created Ireland,
He held back a tiny part.
He picked it up so gently,
And He pressed it to His heart.
He knew in all his wisdom
Of the fate that lie ahead,
So instead of just making one land,
He'd make two instead.*

So Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my House colleagues to celebrate with me the new and wonderful bond between the families in my District and the people of Arranmore Island, Ireland. As we all recognize our roots and our ties to distant kin, we grow to celebrate our place in the family of man."

- U.S. Congressman, Bart Stupak

Planning, from Page 1

The assessment comprises a general statement of problems and needs, not an exhaustive or detailed study. It essentially represents a listing of the needs that are currently known to exist as derived from meetings, individual discussions, and the review of a limited amount of background information. The problems and needs that were identified, in order of priority, are as follows:

Master Plan / Zoning Ordinance Inconsistencies

In reviewing the two documents, it becomes evident that land use policy as embodied in the Master Plan and regulations as embodied in the Zoning Ordinance are not always consistent. While the Master Plan calls for minimum residential low-density lot sizes of five acres, the minimum Agricultural District lot size is 10 acres. These designations appear to cover the same territory. If there is an interest in promoting agricultural activities, agricultural lot sizes are too small. They should be closer to a 50-acre minimum lot size, an obviously difficult undertaking. Legislation to value land as agricultural for tax purposes will help, if enacted. Even then, the desire to convert land to residential development will be overpowering in a place like Beaver Island.

Furthermore, based on the June 5, 2000 discussions, the directions indicated do not correlate well with the present Master Plan. The plan will need to be updated to reflect the goals discussed on June 5.

Closing Holes in the Zoning Ordinance

One of the highest priority needs of the Island is the filling of loop-

holes in the present zoning ordinance. While the Planning Commissions have taken this on as a priority task, this work needs to be done as soon as possible before developers and land owners push the envelope further. There is also the need to modify the Master Plan to be supportive of the Zoning Ordinance or vice versa.

Harbor Area Public Utility Needs

Work has already been commenced by the Beaver Island Environmental Monitoring Group to assess the need for a public sewer and/or water improvements in the Harbor area of St. James Township. While there is the suspicion that people are at risk due to the contamination of upper aquifer wells by septic systems, there is, as yet, no agency willing to reach such a conclusion. One of the most critical needs, almost exclusively related to St. James Township, is the immediate assessment of the severity of the contamination risk to the residents' water supply and the Island economy. This need likely supercedes all others because of the potential health risk and the generally long timeline for remediation if contamination is found to exist.

A variety of ultimate solutions should be considered including, but not limited to, public sewer and water systems, a septic maintenance district that maintains existing septic systems and/or the development of a public water system. The septic maintenance approach has been discussed in the past, but was not implemented.

Need for Expanded Medical Facilities

The need to expand or build a new medical facility on the Island

has already been identified and the process is in motion to seek grants for this improvement.

Community House

Community house has been an issue because a downtown location has been established where parking may be deficient. Funding is currently being sought via grants to assist with the development of this project.

Assisted Living Housing

A need for assisted living housing to serve Island residents has been identified. Funding for this project is being sought from grants.

Trail Improvements/State Support

While the Island has a wealth of trails, particularly in the State Forest, some of them cross private property and their future is uncertain at best. Since one of the Island's greatest assets are the State Forest trails, there is a need to work with the State to insure that the trails are firmly established and will not be compromised by private barriers. There are also trails elsewhere (including Kuebler Trail) that are essential parts of the Island trail network. These are not connected to St. James, which makes it imperative that users drive to the trail system. MDOT did not fund a bikeway as an integral part of the Kings Highway improvements, further isolating Island trails from resident and tourist users.

Road Improvements

There has been some discussion about the paving of more heavily traveled roads on the Island. Even the Master Plan calls for such improvements to, at a minimum, connect St. James to the Township Airport. This is an issue that goes to

the very heart of the essential character of the Island and whether paving and, therefore, the absence of dust, are consistent with maintaining the present quality of life (remote, slower pace, etc.). To what degree will paved roads accelerate the rate of growth? The other side of the coin is the County's desire to have wider and safer roads. Will wider, paved roads be compatible with the essential character of the Island? It is difficult to judge whether paved roads are a priority need based on the reactions perceived from Planning Commissioners to date.

Parking Deficiencies / St. James

Parking in the harbor area is at a premium during the summer tourist season. This problem will be exacerbated with the addition of Community House. A parking study during the height of the tourist season is needed to find solutions to the St. James parking problem.

Strategic Planning / Prioritizing Township Needs

Selected by the Planning Commissions as a high priority, strategic planning is an excellent way to identify critical issues; formulate objectives, strategies, action steps, priorities, timelines, and costs; and assign responsibilities for execution. The Planning Commissions also recommended Island-wide visioning as part of the strategic planning process.

Island - Wide Visioning

While lots of visioning has been done related to specific topics like education, Island-wide visioning that considers all of the essential aspects of the community has not yet been initiated. This could be done as a component of either the strategic

plan or the updating of the Master Plan, or it could be done as an initiative in its own right. Recently, the Beaver Island Rural Health Clinic received a \$20,000 grant from the Northern Michigan Hospital Foundation to conduct an Island-wide visioning process. This grant endorses a broad visioning approach rather than a narrow health care focus.

Administrative Needs

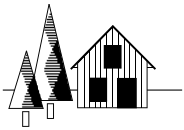
Due to the nature of very small non-chartered townships, there isn't a lot of money available to administer the affairs of the township on a day-to-day basis. While the clerk, treasurer, and zoning administrator have well defined statutory duties, there is no one to oversee the general operations of the township other than the Supervisor who, in Peaine Township, holds another full time job and is paid very little for his Township duties, which duties may frequently interfere with his full time job. The result is that either the Supervisor donates lots of time to the Township without proper compensation or volunteers are used to carry out the business of the Township or many critical duties simply aren't done because no one has the time to do them. As might be expected, not many people are either willing or able to donate large amounts of time and effort to aiding in the running of the Township so a few are required to do an extraordinary amount of volunteer work. Many more are unwilling to take on such volunteer responsibilities. For example, the Peaine Township Planning Commission Chair is required to do an extraordinary amount of volunteer work just to stay ahead of Critical Dune applications. Will the next Chair be willing to commit so much

time to the affairs of the Township?

If a township is not growing, having no one to do essential tasks represents a problem at worst. If a township is growing or experiencing an extraordinary amount of pressures as Beaver Island's Townships are, the problem becomes a crisis. As the list of needs suggest, there is a huge amount of work to be done with no one having time to administer it. If anything is accomplished at all, it will be a miracle because it will depend almost entirely on volunteers who have other things to do.

Examples of administrative tasks that need more than volunteer attention include: the monitoring of planning and other legislative initiatives in Lansing, initiating efforts to insure the long term preservation of the small islands, working with the state on issues related to land swaps and trail needs, grants administration, providing staff support to the Planning Commissions, shepherding the effort to obtain assisted living housing, and overseeing the development of Community House, to name a few.

This discussion should not in any way be construed as a criticism of those who administer the affairs of the two Beaver Island Townships. They are doing an exemplary job in the face of growth and increasing service demands. The problem is that growth is accelerating and the pressures that growth brings require a more proactive approach to township administration. The alternative are to reduce the work load by externalizing tasks (critical dunes regulation for example) *or* to take drastic measures to deliberately slow growth (more likely) *or* to simply accept that there will be periodic crises that will need to be *Continued on Page 10, See Planning*



B I P O A
Membership Application
 Beaver Island Property Owners Association

New Member Renewal Update Address

* 2000-2001 Dues: \$20.00 *

Your Name: _____
 Island Address: _____
 (Address Line 2): _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone: () _____ Fax: () _____
 E-mail Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different than above)

Your Name: _____
 Address: _____
 (Address Line 2): _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone: () _____ Fax: () _____
 E-mail Address: _____

- I would be interested in serving on a committee.
- I would like to help with the annual meeting.
- I would like to help with special projects:

Please Mail with your Membership Dues of \$20.00 to:

Mr. Rod Nackerman
 Summer: 27245 Darkeytown Road
 Beaver Island, MI 49782
 Winter: 2514 Cole Road
 Lake Orion, MI 48362

Planning, from Page 9

addressed in some other way (through litigation, for example), *or* to discourage proposals that are initiated by Island residents, even though there may be a need, and, therefore, not have to administer them, *or* to figure out ways to become more efficient and better pool resources between the Townships *or* to generate more revenue from those who do developments on the Island (zoning permits, critical dunes permits, etc.) to cover the costs of plans review and administration. The solution probably includes a combination of all of these measures.

Also important is the occasional problem where structures including homes and fences are not built to the zoning code or they are constructed across property lines. These are always difficult to correct after the fact. They require more effort by the Zoning Administrator and the Townships with no means of compensation. Additional inspections would go a long way to correct these problems before they happen, but the current low zoning permit fees do not allow for rechecks. Establishing a sliding scale fee schedule based on the value of the improvement would provide the funding for reinspections, saving the Township much grief and covering the additional costs of inspections. This same practice would have application to critical dunes permits and other major development proposals. The Townships could adopt a fee schedule and ordinance provisions that would allow for the recovery of the costs for plans review from applicants, making it possible to pay someone to do plan reviews rather than depend entirely on volunteers. There would be no cost to the Townships. Getting a handle on improving the administration of the Island's governments without substantially increasing taxes is one of the most critical needs. Without it, the quality of life on the Island will be eroded.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

While there are growing administrative demands on each of the two townships, intergovernmental cooperation is at a very high level, as it must be for an island community that has to share so many facilities and services to make them affordable. The Townships share a common zoning ordinance, master plan, and zoning administrator. They co-own the yacht dock and the Library and Township Airport properties. They jointly provide or fund the Transfer Station, fire, and police services, though Peaine Township administers



the Transfer Station service for both. Police services are provided by the County Sheriff’s Department with the costs of housing, utilities, etc. being shared by the Townships. There is no other direct contribution made to the County for this service. Both Townships provide an annual stipend and milage for the Health Center. In addition, they have a joint Airport Committee and a shared Road Committee to deal with common transportation issues. The purpose of this discussion is not to provide an exhaustive listing of where and how the two Townships cooperate, but, instead to indicate that there is already an extraordinary amount of cooperation occurring that makes a higher level of public services possible for Island residents than might be warranted by the relatively small Island population.

Governance

Two Townships vs. One

Though it has been discussed in the past, nobody knows for sure whether it would be advantageous for Peaine and St. James Townships to consolidate. While on the surface, it may appear that such a marriage would benefit Beaver Island, the facts may prove otherwise. At this time, the facts upon which such a decision might be based do not exist.

Bringing the question of consolidation to a decision point is extraor-

dinarily easy. It only requires the filing of a petition with the County Board of Commissioners signed by a number of registered voters who are residents of the area to be consolidated equal to at least 5% of the total population of each of the affected Townships. If the County Board finds the petition to be proper, it shall submit the proposition to a vote of the electors of the two Townships and specify an election date. Residents will decide the outcome. This process can be initiated with or without a study. The purpose of the study, however, will be to provide residents with the objective information or facts needed upon which to base their vote. A study of the pros and cons of consolidation was identified as a priority by the Joint Planning Commissions on June 5, 2000 and a proposal has been prepared by Gosling Czubak to undertake such a study. Consolidation is one way to maximize efficiency and pool resources but it may not be enough.

Monitoring Planning and Other Initiatives

There is concern that the state legislature may concoct planning and other legislation that could have an impact on Beaver Island. Because the Island is remote, somebody needs to monitor possible changes on a continuing basis and look out for the

interests of Island residents and businesses. This is best done by someone on staff but could be farmed out to a consultant.

Small Island Protection

There is the feeling that trusting the state to protect the smaller islands (High, Hog, and Garden) as permanent open space isn’t enough. The feeling is that these islands should be given natural areas designation to insure their protection. Certainly, the risks associated with no such designation and the need for designation should be investigated.

Greater Local Involvement in the Disposition of State Lands

State owned lands in the State Forest area are periodically traded for private lands when the State believes there is benefit to the forest. Unfortunately, Peaine Township is not informed when trades take place. The unintended results of a swap could be the obstruction of public access. Local decision makers need to have the opportunity to comment on every such swap. This would require that somebody be assigned the responsibility for communicating with the state on an ongoing basis. It will also require the establishment of a mutually acceptable procedure to review land trades with ample notice being given to the Township prior to finalizing the trade.

Beaver Island Needs Assessment: Three Year Plan of Action

Priority	Costs	Timeline	Responsibility
Closing Holes in Zoning Ordinance	0	Summer 2000	Planning Commissions
Island-wide Visioning	20,000	Summer 2000-Winter 2001	Multi-Agency
Governance (2 Townships vs. 1)	5,000-10,000	Summer/Fall 2000	Township Boards
Administration	4,000-5,000	Fall 2000-Winter 2001	Township Boards
Strategic Planning	10,000-12,000	Fall 2000-Spring 2001	Planning Commissions
Assessment of Harbor Utility Needs	Unknown	Spring 2000-Spring 2002	Island Environmental Monitoring Group
Update Master Plan to Reflect Goals	5,000-10,000	Spring 2001-Spring 2002	Planning Commissions

Postulated Goals Statement

The following statement of goals was derived from the Joint Peaine/St. James Township Planning Commission Meeting of June 5, 2000. Is this what we heard you say?

1. **Quality of Life.** To protect and enhance the present quality of life on Beaver Island (small community atmosphere, remote, mysterious, charming, slower paced, natural beauty, everyone knows everyone, clean, safe).

2. **Environment.** To protect and conserve the unique natural environment of the Island including views, woodlands, dunes, wetlands, shorelines, lakes, and wildlife.

3. **Public Open Space Protection.** To insure the protection of the small islands as permanent open space and monitor the trading and sale of State lands to private interests.

4. **Balanced Economy.** To develop a year-round economy that represents a balance between technology (home-based) and service-based industries and provides jobs and opportunities for future generations of Islanders that are reflective of the evolving 21st century economy.

5. **Agriculture.** To achieve a greater degree of self-sufficiency by reestablishing and promoting opportunities for Island-based agriculture.

6. **Development Patterns.** To promote development and patterns of land use that *look* and *feel* as if they fit with the Island's remote character and its cultural and historical richness rather than mainland-type attractions.

7. **Controlled Growth.** To maintain a substantial rate of growth such that the Island's character is not compromised by unyielding development.

8. **Friendly Atmosphere.** To maintain the friendly atmosphere of the Island where residents recognize and minister to one another.

9. **Intergovernmental Cooperation.** To cooperate with other governmental agencies (state, county, township, and school district) in the interests of service efficiencies, financial responsibility, environmental protection, and the preservation of the Island's quality of life.

10. **Public Services.** To provide improved public services and infrastructure based primarily on need and the interests of the public health, welfare, and safety.

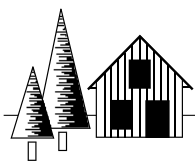
If these goals genuinely reflect the current thinking of Island residents and businesspeople, the Master Plan will eventually need to be updated to reflect these directions.

Moving? Please Keep Us Updated

Anytime that you do not receive your BIPOA newsletter, there is a reason. The most common are that either you moved and did not notify us, or that your dues were not paid and

we had to remove your name from the mailing list. We have received several newsletters back over the past year with no forwarding address. If you would clip off your name from the

address area and return it to us when you are moving, we will attempt to get the newsletter off to you promptly. You may also e-mail us via the BIPOA website - www.beaverisland.net/bipoa.



B I P O A

Beaver Island Property Owners Association
30330 East Side Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782