

MANISTEE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

550 Maple Street
Manistee, MI 49660

MEETING MINUTES

May 5, 2005

A meeting of the Manistee City Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 5, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Manistee Middle School Library, 550 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Maureen Barry, Sara Bizon, Tamara Buswinka, Greg Ferguson, Ray Fortier, Christa Johnson-Ross, Tony Slawinski, Mark Wittlief

MEMBERS ABSENT: Roger Yoder

OTHERS: Bill Kozak (Moore & Bruggink, Inc.), Steve Cote (Lighthouse Landings), Dana Schindler (2005 Merkey Road), Joseph A.A. Helminski (Twelfth Street), Polly Henry (Lighthouse Landings), Alan Marshall (914 Vine Street), Chuck Smith (Relator), Sid Scrimger (Fire Chief), Bob Hornkohl (City Council), Dave Carlson (DDA), Lee Trucks (DDA), Tom Amor Jr. and Tom Amor Sr. (Amor Sign Studios), Jon Rose (Community Development), and Denise Blakeslee (Administrative Assistant) and Others

Meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Fortier.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A Public Hearing was held in response to an application submitted from HHH Investing Co. for a Special Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development. The proposal is to allow for the construction of 65 ranch style condominiums, 71 row house condominiums, 50 site condominium lots for a total of 186 residential single family units for the property on the Northwest Corner of Merkey and Cherry Roads.

Bill Kozak, Moore & Bruggink Inc. made a presentation to the Planning Commission and the Public in Attendance. Mr. Kozak said that it was a Neo-Traditional Project with a density of 3 to 4 units per acre, alleys behind single family lots, no cars on street and Row Houses with Victorian Theme. There will be Architectural control on project, all units will be single family condominiums with paved streets and alleys. A sidewalk will be placed on Cherry Road, walking paths will be incorporated in the plan, landscape features include trees every 50 feet where applicable and pocket parks have been included in the plan.

Mr. Kozak brought new large scale plans that defined the types of trees proposed. The project includes public water, sewer, storm water retention basin, grading information, people friendly with 186 single family units, 62.5% green space, Ranch Condominiums approximately 1,700 sq ft floor area, Row Houses 720 sq ft floor area with 2 to 3 floors, single family 1,160 sq feet main floor 2 to 3 story construction.

Commissioner Christa Johnson-Ross entered the meeting.

Steve Cote, Lighthouse Landings - Asked what the elevations of the buildings will be, expressed concerns about the wetland areas, inquired as to the price of the units, asked if all units had garages?

Mr. Kozak responses to Mr. Cote's questions included - There were no elevations at this time, spoke of the regulation of the wetland areas, price range begins at \$150,000 on up, all units have garages.

Dana Schindler, 2005 Merkey Road - Left a prepared statement (attached).

Joseph A.A. Helminski, Twelfth Street - Asked if the developer owns the property, will the project be done in phases, how long will it take to complete the project, does the developer have any experience with this type of project, will the project start this year?

Mr. Kozak responses to Mr. Helminski's questions included - The developer is the owner of the property, there are three phases proposed, the market will determine how long it will take to complete development, the owners have experience with other developments but not developments of this nature, depending on permit approvals they may begin this year.

Polly Henry, Lighthouse Landings - Asked if there would be access to Lake Michigan?

Mr. Kozak's response to Ms. Henry's question was that the property does not have lake frontage. The sidewalk along Cherry would provide a means to walk to the lake if desired.

Alan Marshall, 914 Vine Street - Who would purchase these units?

Mr. Kozak's response to Mr. Marshall's question was that the range would be young families to retirees, this was the reason for the housing mix. Considerations for economics were taken into consideration for the design of the project.

Chuck Smith, Realtor - He is in support of the project and spoke of the sprawl that is happening in Manistee County. Mr. Smith feels this design works well.

Steve Cote, Lighthouse Landings - Asked if there were any tax abatements being considered for this project.

Mr. Kozak said that there were no tax abatements being asked for, the developer will be responsible for the costs associated with the development.

There being no further discussion the Public Hearing closed at 7:27 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Planning Commission Meeting of April 7, 2005

MOTION by Tony Slawinski, seconded by Tamara Buswinka that the minutes of the April 7, 2005 Planning Commission Meeting be approved.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

Yes: Barry, Bizon, Buswinka, Ferguson, Fortier, Johnson-Ross, Slawinski, Wittlief
No: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A Public Hearing was held earlier in response to a request from HHH Investing Co. for a Special Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development.

Staff reports were read for the public in attendance and the commissioners.

Fire Chief Sid Scrimger read his report, Community Development Director Jon Rose read a Staff Report and a Plan Review that was prepared by City Engineer Brian Sousa (copies of all reports are attached).

Mr. Kozak responded to the concerns addressed in each report.

Mr. Rose read Ms. Schidler's letter submitted earlier in the evening.

Discussion by the commission included, should the right of way be 66 feet, what trees would be remaining, who should be responsible for Outlot A, location of playground equipment, type of curb in straight away, would wetlands be filled, should a green belt area be a requirement, should the plan be approved tonight with conditions or table until the next meeting.

MOTION by Greg Ferguson, Seconded by Tamara Buswinka to table the request from HHH Investing Co. for a Special Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development until the June 2, 2005 Planning Commission Meeting.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 6-2.

Yes: Fortier, Buswinka, Bizon, Johnson-Ross, Slawinski, Wittlief
No: Barry, Ferguson

Planning Commissioners discussed holding a Worksession on May 19th at a location to be determined to continue the discussion on the request from HHH Investing Co. The consensus from the Commissioners was that a Worksession should be scheduled for May 19, 2005.

Schedule May Worksession's

Worksession May 26, 2005

Jay Kilpatrick, Williams and Works has requested that were-schedule the May Worksession from Thursday, May 19, 2005 to Thursday, May 26, 2005 to continue work on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite.

MOTION BY Mark Wittlief, Seconded by Christa Johnson-Ross that the May Worksession be re-scheduled to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2005 in the Manistee Middle School Library.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

Yes: Johnson-Ross, Bizon, Wittlief, Slawinski, Buswinka, Ferguson, Barry, Fortier

No: None

Worksession May 19, 2005

Consensus from the Planning Commissioners was that a Worksession should be scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in a location to be determined (Middle School Library - if available) to continue discussion on the request from HHH Investing Co.

MOTION by Mark Wittlief, seconded by Christa Johnson-Ross that a Worksession be scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 19, 2005 at a location to be determined to continue discussion on the request from HHH Investing Co.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

Yes: Fortier, Barry, Ferguson, buswinka, Slawinski, Wittlief, Bizon, Johnson-Ross

No: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

Planning Commissioners were invited to attend the Building Recognition Program Awards Luncheon, on Wednesday, May 11th.

CITIZEN QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

None

WORKSESSION:

Due to the late hour the representatives from the Sign Company asked to be invited to a future worksession to continue discussion on the Re-write of the Sign portion of the Zoning Ordinance.

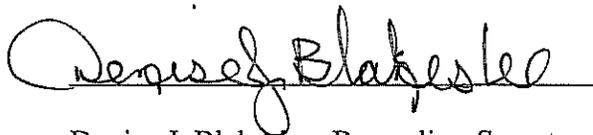
A Worksession will be held on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. to continue discussion on the request from HHH Investing Co. The location will be posted once arrangements have been made.

A Worksession will be on Thursday, May 26, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. in the Middle School Library, 550 Maple Street, Manistee to continue work on the Zoning Ordinance Re-Write.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Maureen Barry, seconded by Greg Ferguson that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

MANISTEE PLANNING COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denise J. Blakeslee". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Denise J. Blakeslee, Recording Secretary



281 First Street • Manistee, Michigan 49660-1755

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Phone 231-723-1549

FAX 231-723-3519

E-Mail city-fire@manistee.com

May 4, 2005

To: Jon Rose
Community Development Officer

Re: Hunting - Manistee PUD

Dear Jon,

In regards to the review of the PUD with proposed location west of Cherry St. and between Twelfth and Merkey, the Fire Department offers the following comments:

Given the degree of detail in the plans we were provided and the time available for review, it was not possible to determine whether all of the requirements of the International Fire Code (IFC) have been addressed. We do expect that the development will comply with all aspects of the IFC unless specifically exempted.

The Cul-de-sacs will be required to meet the 96' diameter dimension as per Appendix D of the IFC.

Per the IFC, all streets that have hydrants on them must be a minimum of 26 feet. This would include two of the three Cul-de-sacs. This does not appear to be the case.

It was difficult to determine the location of all hydrants on the plans provided. Plans that more clearly indicate the location of all fire hydrants need to be reviewed by the fire department and approved prior to construction.

The road in the northeast portion of Phase I would appear to leave a dead end without an approved turn around. This situation should be addressed as part of the approval process.

I look forward to working with your office and the developer to address the fire protection needs for this project.

Sincerely,

Sid Scrimger
Fire Chief

SS:cw

Staff Site Plan Review

HHH Investing Co.
282 Pioneer Club Road
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Project:
Zoning District:
Parcel Code #

Proposed PUD
R-1
51-51-314-255-01

ACTION REQUESTED:

A Special Use Permit is hereby requested for the following purpose: To allow for the construction of 65 ranch style condominiums, 71 row house condominiums, 50 site condominium lots for a total of 186 residential single family units.

For the purpose of this proposed Planned Unit Development we will be dividing the review into four sections :

Overall Project Review:

The following concerns/questions were identified during the Overall Project Review:

1. Does the City want to accept responsibility for Outlot "A" (Regional Storm Water Retention Pound and for Public Utility Infrastructure)?
2. The Roads within the project are proposed to be private. They allow for a 60 foot road right-of-way. Should the development be required to have a 66 foot road right-of-way as required under Section 1052.a of the Zoning Ordinance?
3. There are no sidewalks proposed on the plan for the Central Streets Cal-de-sacs. Should sidewalks be required?
4. Should streetlights be required at streets/alley intersections?
5. The landscape Plan does not indicate a caliper/height of propose trees. Should there be a requirement? Should type of trees be specified? For example pine trees can create a visual problem if they are too close to a drive/alley/or intersection.
6. The landscape Plan does not indicate any existing trees that will remain. If any existing trees are maintained, should they be indicated on the plan?
7. What type of landscaping is proposed for the pocket parks? Should playground equipment be specified? Will structures constructed in the park areas impact the density of the project?
8. Signage is indicated at three entrances to the project. Design, size and lighting information is needed.

9. Should a 10 foot green belt area be required around the project as provided for in Section 8804.b.3? If so, it appears that the parking spaces on the north part of the project would encroach into that green belt area. What type of landscaping requirements should apply to the green belt area, if any? If a 10 foot green belt area is required around the project can the walking path be included in the green belt area?
10. Is the "Future Development Area" included in the calculations? If so, how would it change the calculations if it were developed? The Master Plan Future Land Use Plan for that area has a Density Range of: *2 - 3.5 units/acre, with potential allowances for additional density on "large acreage planned sites."*
11. The proposed width of the North entrance (near "Future Development" area) is 22 feet. Since this is an entrance to the project should it be required to be a minimum of 31 feet which they use for the main streets in the rest of the project?
12. Will storage sheds be allowed? If so, how will their placement be regulated? Will they impact the density of the project?
13. Will fences be allowed in the single family site condos? If so, will there be deed restrictions that regulate the placement/height of fences? If Planning Commission allows a reduction in the front yard set back for the project would this effect the placement of fencing?
14. Will decks be allowed in the single family site condos? If so, will that effect the density of the project?
15. How will garbage service be handled within the project? Harbor Village constructed central collection areas for garbage pickup for buildings without garages? Their master association provides a trash bin for owners that leave during the week to eliminate garbage being set out prior to pickup? Should the Developer provide this type of service? If required should the appearance of the structure be approved by Planning Commission?
16. How will maintenance equipment be handled? Will there be a need for a storage building for equipment (i.e. lawnmowers, snow removal etc)?
17. With a project of this size should a sales office/information office be needed?
18. What impact will the topography of the project area have on the heights of proposed buildings? How will the height be measured?
19. There are parking areas within the project. What are the dimensions of these parking areas? Do they comply with our parking requirements?
20. The Planning Commission required Historic Overlay Review Approval for both the Harbor Village and Lighthouse Landings Condominium projects. Should this project also have to receive approval from a Design Review Committee of the Planning Commission (building designs, windows, doors, porches, colors etc.).

21. Should all of the buildings be required to use the same type of numbering e.g. brass numbers 5' in height located over front porch?

Ranch Style Condominiums Review:

	<u>R-1 (non PUD)</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Setbacks			
Front Yard	30 ft	5 feet	
Side Yard	10 ft	15 feet	Should a condition of approval be: No building shall be closer than 15 feet from another building, and there shall be at least 20 feet of building separation on three sides of each building. (Requirement of Harbor Village PUD)
Rear Yard	n/a	n/a	
Height	30 ft	?	Need height elevations
Parking	2 per unit.	?	Plan does not indicate if they are one or two car garages. Some of the approaches are very short. But the plan provides 50 additional parking spaces in the vicinity of these condominiums.
Building Area	1,300 sq ft	1,872 sq ft	

Row House Condominium Review:

	<u>R-1 (non PUD)</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Setbacks			
Front Yard	30 ft	less than 5 feet	
Side Yard	10 ft	10 feet	Should a condition of approval be: No building shall be closer than 15 feet from another building, and there shall be at least 20 feet of building separation on three sides of each building. (Requirement of Harbor Village PUD)
Rear Yard	n/a	n/a	
Height	30 ft	?	Need height elevations
Parking	2 per unit.		Does not indicate if garages are one or two car garages. There are 71 units which would require 142 spaces. There are 128 spaces in addition to the garages, even with a one car garage there appears to be sufficient parking for this area.
Building Area	1,300 sq ft	1,350 sq ft	

Site Condominium Lots for Single Family Units Review:

	<u>R-1 (non PUD)</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Parcel Size	18,000 sq ft	7,000 sq ft	
Street Frontage:	100 ft	50 ft	Indicates smallest lot. Also concerns about how set-backs should be handled for corner lots (two front yards)?
Setbacks			
Front Yard	30 ft	?	Plan does not clearly indicate what the front yard set back is.
Side Yard	10 ft	7feet/11 feet	Planning Commission needs to establish how the set-backs will be applied to this portion of the development. With these lots being sold for the owners to construct homes on these dimensions must be defined.
Rear Yard	10ft /3ft	25 ft	Shown on plan. Will this be a requirement for all building?
Height	30 ft/14 ft	?	Need height elevations for primary structure and accessory structure.
Parking	2 per unit.	2 + garage	
Building Area	1,300 sq ft	1,160 sq ft	This is the foundation/covered porch area as shown on the plan. Should there be a minimum foundation area or living area? (If we want two story homes, any square footage minimums should apply to floor area rather than foundation area.)

Will there be Deed Restrictions placed on this portion of the project that indicates the setback requirements, style of homes, requirement and placement of garage, etc?

May 5, 2005

City of Manistee
425 6th Street
P.O. Box 358
Manistee, Michigan 49660-0358

Attention: Mr. Jon Rose

RE: Hunting-Manistee PUD
Plan Review

Dear Jon:

This letter is being submitted in response to our review of the Hunting-Manistee Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.) site plan. This site plan was submitted the City of Manistee Planning Commission through a Special Use Permit application to gain approval for the P.U.D. The submitted plan consists of four sheets as follows:

- Sheet 1 – Proposed P.U.D. Plan
- Sheet 2 – Proposed Grading and Soil Erosion Control Plan
- Sheet 3 – Proposed Utilities Plan
- Sheet 4 – Proposed Lighting, Landscaping & Signage Plan

Engineering review is separate from the review of other departments such as Fire and Zoning. This review concentrates only on the systems for which the City will be responsible once the project is complete. Specifically, we reviewed the plan for the proposed road system, water distribution system, sanitary sewer and pump station, site access and connection points.

Easements and Access

According to the typical cross sections shown on Sheet 1, the typical proposed road Right-of-Way (R/W) width is 60'. The current Zoning Ordinance Section 1050, states that R/W's for private roads are to be 66' wide. We feel that the City should require the R/W's to stand at 66' for both the Row House R/W (excluding the access roads in the rear of the Row Houses). This provides more clearance and set-aside for future utilities and the ability to adjust the road width, if needed.

The plan lacks easement information. Since the streets are private and the utilities are public, the public utilities need to be located within a public R/W or easement. Note 6 on Sheet 3 states "All public utilities are to be in public easements." Section 9405 Item D of the Zoning Ordinance requires that all easements are dimensioned and shown on the plan.

Access to the site is shown to be off Cherry Street via two access points. The southern-most access point appears to be the "main" entrance due to the improvements proposed there. The northern access point, although not improved to act as a main access point, will serve Phase II of the development and the area marked "future development". This volume of use needs to have a deceleration lane for south-bound traffic.



Interior Road System

Generally, the road system is private, thus not specifically requiring City engineering review. However, we strongly encourage the developer to construct the roads to City specifications in the event the Association asks the City to take the roads over in the future. For the interior road system, we offer the following comments:

- There is a discrepancy between the typical cross section on Sheet 1 and Note 4 on Sheet 2. The typical section calls for 8" of aggregate base, while Note 4 calls for 6" of aggregate base. We believe the typical section is correct and roads will be constructed with 8" of aggregate base; however, it should be clarified.
- The project is being constructed in phases. The plan needs to indicate how to handle the ends of the roads at phase lines.
- The Fire Chief should review the dead-end road lengths and cul-de-sac diameters for conformance with the Fire Code making sure emergency vehicles have room to operate.
- Road grades and vertical curbs could not be verified as they relate to emergency vehicle accessibility.

Storm Water System

In general, the project handles its storm water via underground storm sewers directing the runoff to a proposed retention pond. Note: For the storm water system, we have the following comments:

- No information is given on the plans as to who will own the storm system. Our recommendation is that the storm system and retention basin stay private. Note 4 on Sheet 3 states that the retention pond is to be deeded to the City.
- No calculations were submitted for the retention basin.
- No soils information was submitted. The retention basin area should have detailed soil boring information submitted along with the sizing calculations.
- Grades, pipe sizes and the distance between manholes need to be shown.
- A full maintenance plan should be submitted for the retention basin
- Developer needs to verify distance requirements for storm water detention basins from municipal wells.

Potable Water System

It is the intent that the project is for the water main system to be City-owned and operated. We do recommend that the City take this system over as long as the materials and design criteria meet the City's requirements. We offer the following comments:

- With the submitted plan, it is difficult to verify where the connection points into the existing water system will be. We recommend that connection points be made at the north and south end of the proposed development. Currently, there is only water main on the northern portion of Cherry Street. Adding a connection point for the south end of the development will require some new water main to be installed along Cherry Street to Merkey Road and then west on Merkey Road.



- The proposed water main is shown as 12" diameter. The large size is a concern with respect to the size of the proposed development. Too large of a main decreases water turnover in the main and increases water stagnation issues. Backup calculations as to the method used to determine the line size needs to be submitted.
- Service leads need to be installed at the time of water main construction. The lead needs to be installed to the R/W line and for each unit.
- Pipe material is not specified.
- All water mains need to have a minimum of 6' of cover.
- Hydrants need to be located at all low and high points of the system.
- Hydrant flow calculations need to be submitted showing the development can handle proper fire flows while supporting a minimum pressure of 25 psig in the system.
- The developer will be responsible for completing the Part 41 MDEQ water main construction permit on behalf of the City

Sanitary Sewer System

Like the water main system, the sanitary sewer system will also become a public system at the completion of the project and after final acceptance of the City. The proposed system is a combination of gravity collection system and then a lift station and force main to pump this sewage to the City's system. The connection point for the proposed force main is at Elm and 12th Streets. We offer the following comments:

- Pipe sizes, grades, manhole spacing or material specifications were not listed on the plans.
- Calculations outlining how the pipe sizes and grades are determined need to be submitted for review.
- All sanitary sewer leads need to be installed at the time of main construction.
- No details were submitted for the proposed lift station or force main.
- The developer will be responsible for completing the Part 41 MDEQ sanitary sewer construction permit on behalf of the City.
- Where the proposed force main crosses Cherry Street, should be directionally drilled under Cherry Street and not open-cut.
- The City should investigate the possibility of requiring an escrow account to fund the sanitary pump station operation and maintenance.

General Grading

A site grading plan is outlined on Sheet 2. There is very limited information for the grading of the total site other than offering finish floor elevations and general road centerline elevations. Our comments are as follows:

- All of the site condominium lots show a finish floor elevation for the entire site rather than the building envelope. Many of the finish floor elevations are 10-13 feet higher than existing ground. This type of elevation change needs to be shown in a more detailed grading plan with proposed contours.
- Storm water runoff is to be contained on the property and not allowed to encroach onto adjoining parcels.



Wade Titm

Construction phase

During construction of the systems, the City will be taking over (water and sewer). We recommend the City's Engineer be onsite during the construction to verify that proper construction methods are used and to ensure the system is constructed, as specified. In order to complete this, it is recommended that the developer be required to deposit money into an escrow account to cover the cost of this inspection.

In general, the comments outlined above and the information requested is supplied in a set of final construction plans and specifications. At this stage, it is generally premature to request a full set of construction plans; however, the Planning Commission need to have the pertinent information to make a well informed decision on the plan. Should the Planning Commission choose to approve the application prior to this information being submitted, such approval should be conditioned upon the information being submitted and approved by City staff prior to construction.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please call at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

WADE-TRIM, INC.



Brian C. Sousa, PE

BCS:lkd

MAN 1063-04C-001

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**MANISTEE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING – May 5, 2005**

Re: HHH Investment Co.
Planned Unit Development
(Northwest Corner of Merkey and Cherry Roads)

Submission of Dana Schindler
2005 Merkey Rd., Manistee MI 49660
(231) 723-9766

Roger Yoder, Chairman
City Planning Commission
Manistee, Michigan 49660

Please consider the following in your decision regarding the 55 acre PUD project proposed for the northwest corner of Merkey and Cherry Roads on the boundary between the City of Manistee and the Charter Township of Filer.

While mixed-use communities, as in the current proposal, are promoted in an effort to curtail sprawl and create walkable communities, four factors might be considered in making such a designation adjacent to the existing residential areas.

- 1). Will the commercial proposals (in this case a convenience store, restaurant and medical office), truly promote a walkable community with sufficient clientele that supports economically self-sustaining businesses? Or, in order for the businesses to survive, will it be necessary to import clientele from outside the project increasing neighborhood traffic and thereby: a). defeat or minimize the privacy benefit of the walkable community and b). actually promote sprawl of the Manistee/Filer commercial districts into a residential area?
- 2). Will the mixed use proposal be located in an area that is compatible with commercial/residential, or has the existing development of the City and border community of Filer Township attracted residents that rely on the established pattern of less density and less traffic?

The area proposed for development which borders Filer has acted as a buffer between the city's dense residential area and the township's larger acreage, which continues to attract residents who have purposely selected a more rural environment with abundant wildlife away from traffic imposed by residential/commercial development. Is upzoning compatible with the existing use or does it short-change those residents who have specifically chosen a quiet area

Has consideration been taken and recognition given to that part of the existing resident population which is the wetland and grassland wildlife? Direct encounter with mammals and reptiles, meeting them eye to eye on their own ground, evokes wonder and respect. Without such encounters we risk losing that part of ourselves which most deeply resonates with nature. If our greatest loss with the animals has been to lose touch with the reality of their existence, our second loss has been to banish them from our minds. We assume they have nothing to teach us about our existence and we no longer know how to listen to their wisdom. Have the development plans ethically and responsibly incorporated the protection and preservation of these existing residents?

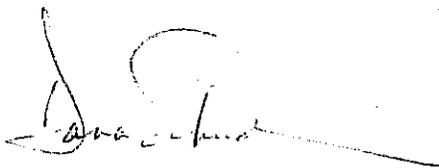
3). While perhaps a seeming insignificant wetland* in the relative scheme of things, State legislative effort is underway to restore legal protection to these so-called "isolated wetlands" as we are all aware, the wetlands act as a filter for protecting area aquifers and providing habitat for flora and fauna that perform a complex nutrient and energy cycle. Has development and growth on this acreage been planned to protect these wetlands? In an effort to maintain a sustainable community rather than replace these wetlands and grassland flora and fauna with little ponds, what balance could the Manistee Planning Commission propose that would keep in tact the ecological integrity, beauty and the power of this area, as *wetland*?

Please be assured these comments are not questioning or challenging the development. It isn't a question of growth or no growth; it's a question of managing the growth and recognizing the value of these wetland pockets. With less density than currently proposed – for example dropping it to the 2 units/acre as noted in Manistee's Master Plan for Low Density Residential, would the economic value to the city be hindered or complemented by survival of the wetland and wildlife habitat – comprising those very virtues that attract folks to relocate in northern Michigan?

4). One further consideration I would beg the Commission to review during its planning phase would be outdoor lighting. Please note the attached literature from the Dark Skies Association. While neither the City nor Filer Township has implemented a "dark sky ordinance", few street lights exist south of 12th Street, west of Maple or north of 12th Street west of Cherry. Many residents climb to the one remaining sand dune accessible from First Street Beach to view the stars and dark sky. Unless the new development is obligated to protect the dark sky and the same is required of homeowners, lighting for 186 new units may soon create a glow that destroys one of the city's supreme assets.

Has the commission considered placing a condition on the development that would require utilization of street light fixtures of the shoe-box type that cast light downward and prevent glare, as well as implementing home regulation that prevents personal glaring spotlights?

Your consideration is appreciated,



Dana Schindler

A Beautiful Night Sky



A Heritage Worth Preserving.

* Scrub-shrub Wetland: These wetlands, with dense growth and shallow water, are important songbird feeding and nesting areas. Scrub-shrub wetlands are also important as breeding area for amphibians due to the presence of standing water in the spring and absence of fish as predators. Alder thickets, pussy willow, red-osier dogwood, and elderberry are typical shrubs found in this type of wetland. Marsh marigold, sensitive fern and American black currant provide food and cover for wildlife, including ruffed grouse and American woodcock. (DEQ Wetland Protection Fact sheet)

MUNSTER NEWS ADVERTISER
AUGUST 2001

Light pollution affects star gazing visibility

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The flood of artificial light that washes the stars from the sky has left one in five human beings unable to see the Milky Way at night, according to a new study of the global effects of light pollution.

The study is the first to document the extent to which humans have wrapped the inhabited world in a luminous fog, shutting out much of the heavens — including the very galaxy we call home — from view.

Once the sun goes down and the lights come on, as many as one in four people around the globe basks in a perpetual twilight, under skies brighter than on nights when the moon is full.

"The thing that struck me is there are large numbers of people who really have lost the panorama of the night sky — that's no longer available to them because there is so much of this sky brightness," said Chris Elvidge, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration physical scientist and one of the study's three co-authors.

The study matched global population density information with Department of Defense satellite images, captured over 20 nights in 1996 and 1997, of the upward flux of light scattered from artificial sources around the globe. The Air Force Defense Meteorological Satellite Program satellites were designed to observe clouds illuminated by moonlight. On moonless nights, however, they also pick out the distinct pinpricks of stars and smears of light cast off



This undated black and white handout composite satellite image shows the nighttime glow of artificial lights across the United States.

by the world's cities and towns. Elvidge's co-authors, Pierantonio Cinzano and Fabio Falchi, both of the department of astronomy of the Università di Padova, Italy, then estimated how much light would be reflected back onto the Earth. For the world's nations, they then estimated the percentage of the population of each that lives under skies marred by that glow.

Their work, "The First World Atlas of the Artificial Night Sky Brightness," will appear in a forthcoming issue of the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Light pollution has long been recognized as a problem in the United States, Europe and Japan. Elvidge said the broader look shows that no country in the world is untouched. About two-thirds of the global population lives under skies polluted by artificial light.

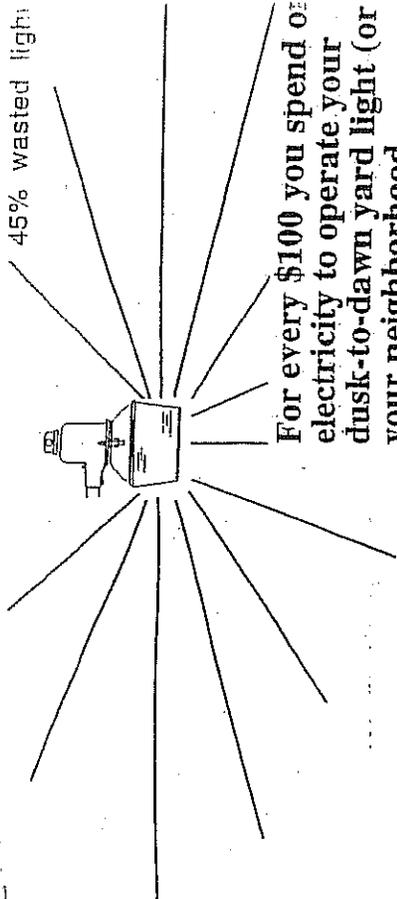
"That's not surprising. It's just very frustrating," said Elizabeth Alvarez, associate director of the International Dark-Sky Association, a Tucson, Ariz., group that works to keep the night sky dark.

Far from the city lights at night, about 2,000 stars are typi-

cally visible. In major cities, that number shrinks to a few dozen at most.

"For a large percentage of people — they're no longer able to see what their ancestors saw on a nice, clear night," said Elvidge, who works in NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center in Boulder, Colo.

While astronomers can retreat to remote mountain tops to stargaze, most city dwellers do not have that luxury, said John Mosley, an astronomer at the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles. The impact is incalculable, he said.



For every \$100 you spend on electricity to operate your dusk-to-dawn yard light (or your neighborhood streetlights), \$45 is wasted on light that never reaches the ground. Is lighting the night sky a good use of your utility dollars?

THINK DARKSKIES

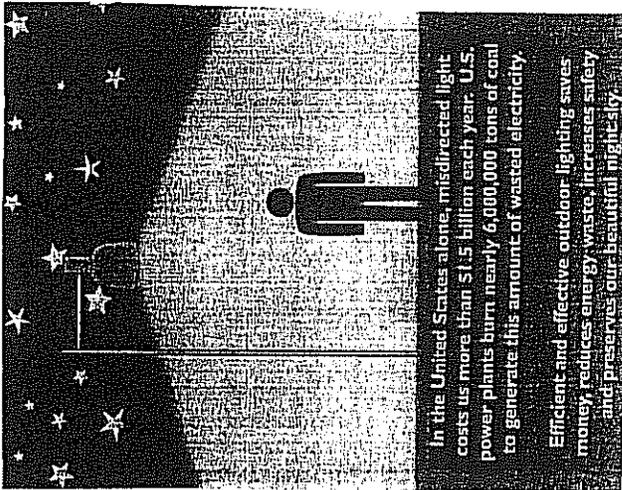
Use Efficient & Effective Outdoor Lighting

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In the United States alone, misdirected light costs us more than \$1.5 billion each year. U.S. power plants burn nearly 6,000,000 tons of coal to generate this amount of wasted electricity.

Efficient and effective outdoor lighting saves money, reduces energy waste, increases safety and preserves our beautiful night sky.

Stargazers hope to dim light pollution

By BRIAN MULHERIN
Daily News Staff Writer

Dark is a relative term. And it's relatively lighter than it used to be, according to Ludington astronomer Ed Dennison.

International Dark Skies week starts today and runs through next Tuesday. The event, founded by a high school astronomer, asks people to turn off unnecessary outdoor lighting during evening hours to raise awareness about the increasing amount of light pollution around the world.

Some might think the event is aimed at glowing metropolises like Detroit and Grand Rapids.

Dennison said it's aimed at everyone.

"One of the things that I'm well aware of is that during a lot of the summer time, you can't really clearly make out the Milky Way on a cloudless night," said Dennison, a former NASA telescope specialist. "You can see in general where the Milky Way is, but you can't make out the structure of it."

Dennison said, in general, Ludington is better off than much of the state. Photographs taken from space at night do show the corridor from Ludington to Scottville, though. Other visible dots represent surrounding communities.

"Manistee shows up even brighter than Ludington," Dennison said. "They're doing more pollution than we are."

Local astronomer Daryl Crowley is confined to his backyard when using his telescope because of mercury-vapor lights nearby that make it impossible to use in the rest of his yard.

"Getting light in your eye just kills you," Crowley said. "It dilates your pupils. If I'm within a straight line of that mercury-vapor light, I can't see anything. I cannot view from the front yard."

Crowley bought a home two miles north of Ludington, and one of the first things he did was turn off the mercury vapor light in his yard.

Light pollution generally comes in two forms, according to the International Dark-Sky Association. The first is glare. Glare comes from fixtures that allow light to move up and to the sides rather than directing it at the ground.

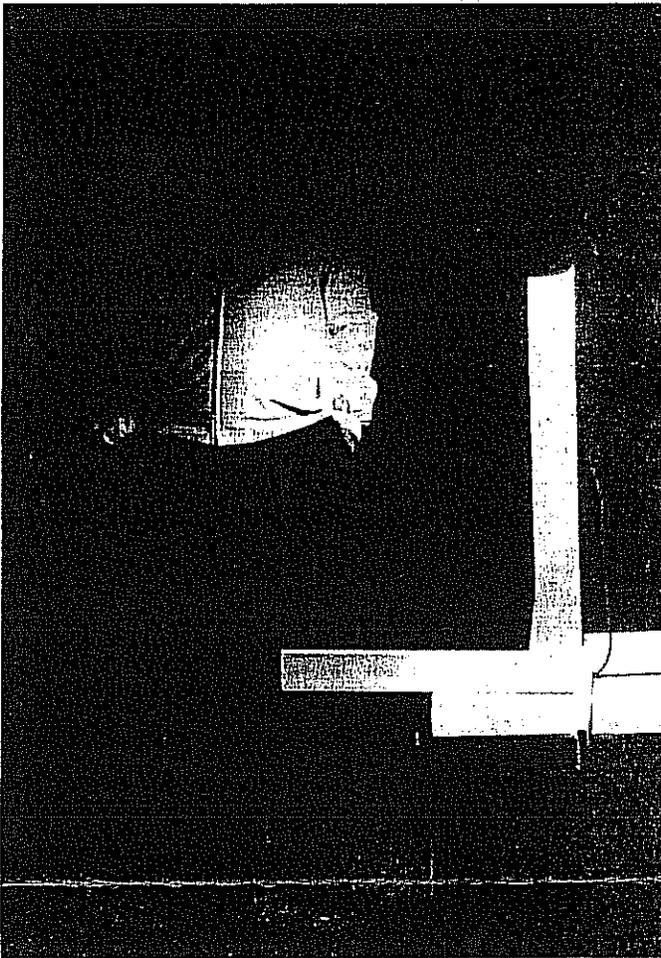
"This comes from a variety of things," Dennison said. "The classic things that it comes from are lights that are put up that don't follow the general rule of illuminating 15 degrees below the horizon. The light shouldn't shine above a line that shines 15 degrees below the horizon."

When glare crosses property lines, it's referred to by astronomers as "light trespass."

The second type of light pollution is called skyglow, according to Sky and Telescope Magazine. Skyglow is the product of ambient lights in metropolitan areas, including streetlights reflecting into the sky, lighting the atmosphere and making it difficult to view many constellations beyond the Big Dipper.

"We're pretty dark where we are, but a lot of times a light haze comes in from the lake and that haze is illuminated by all the lighting," Dennison said.

Dennison said large parking lots like those at Memorial Medical Center should have fixtures that direct light downward instead of outward, which the hospital does. But Dennison said even having the proper fixture isn't enough if



DARK SKY — Ed Dennison stands beneath a light fixture he found at a Muskegon building supply company Monday night near his Hamlin Lake home. Dennison said the light does a very good job of providing even light coverage, on the ground where it's important, without shining up in the sky.

there's too much light coming from it.

"I think people should be aware of the fact that the light they're sending horizontally contributes to the loss of dark sky," Dennison said.

What's the solution? For some, it may be alterations to existing fixtures. For others, possibly new fixtures or motion detectors that only turn the lights on when something moves.

Astronomy Web sites list several manufacturers of what is now called "good neighbor" or "friendly neighbor" outdoor lighting.

"I know for our carriage lights, I cut out some stiff aluminum baffles to put on the facets that face our driveway. That helps," Dennison said.

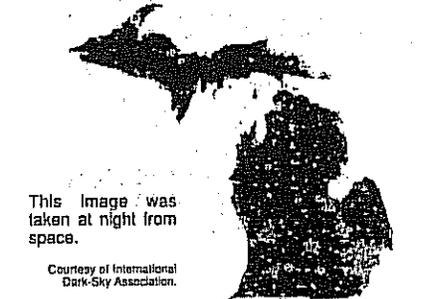
"A friend of ours has recessed lights in the soffit (in front of the front door) that shine down only.

Another solution for sconce-style lights is to paint the glass panels with a heat-resistant spray-paint. The white glass allows light through, but diffuses it, reducing glare significantly.

But not everyone will want to alter the glass and metal sculptures that hold their outdoor lights.

"The first thing is for people to be aware of this problem when they're first installing the light," Dennison said.

Dennison said he hopes builders will take notice of the newer sky-



This image was taken at night from space.

Courtesy of International Dark-Sky Association.

friendly light fixtures, because they control so much of what fixtures go onto houses.

"The critical time is when they're building something new," Dennison said.

Crowley and Dennison both said studies have shown most security lighting to be less-than-helpful.

Dennison said most wall-mounted lights produce so much glare that a person standing directly under the fixture becomes invisible to observers. He has done demonstrations of how much more effective lighting can be if it's directed at the ground rather than at the eye-level of the people it's supposed to help.

"There have been studies that have shown people feel more

secure where the light is uniform," Dennison said. "It's not the intensity; it's the uniformity of light. Where you have bright lights and deep shadows, people feel very insecure because someone could be hiding in those shadows."

Said Crowley, "If you've got a mercury-vapor light outside when you're away, you're ninking it easier on people because now they won't trip when they're hauling your canoe away."

Dark Skies week:
www.darksky.org
Good neighbor lighting:
www.darksky.org/handouts/anol.html

Glare-reducing fixtures:
skvanditelescope.com/printable/resources/darksky/article_91.asp