

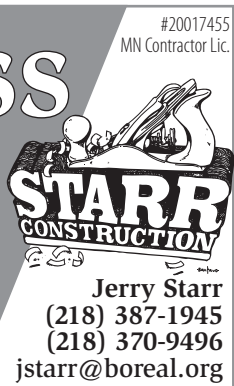
Historical Reflections



Kendall and Marcia Lacey, owners of the Chicago Bay Hideaway guesthouse, also own the structure next to them, known as "the old hotel" in Hovland. Over the years people with a connection to the old building have stopped by and visited with the Laceys. Sometimes visitors bring old photos like this one. Does anyone know when this picture was taken?

Do you have an old picture or a story from years gone by that you would like to share with Cook County News-Herald readers? Give us a call, or stop by our Grand Marais office. We'd love to hear your Historical Reflections. Call (218) 387-9100; e-mail starnews@boreal.org; or stop by our office at 15 First Avenue West.

Seamless Rain Gutters



BAY GLASS, INC.

Lutsen, MN

Windshields & Heavy Equipment • Shower Doors & Enclosures (Custom & Standard) • Mirrors & Glass cut to any size • Commercial Storefronts & Entrances • Glass for Railings • Fireplace Glass Insulated Glass • Safety Glass

"For All Your Glass Needs"

Call for estimates:
218-663-7555 or
cell 651-492-4155
30 Years Experience
Ask for Tom Gearin



Septic ordinance on hold – counties protest MPCA rule changes

Jane Howard

While Cook County Planning & Zoning staff have been revising a septic ordinance draft to reflect public opinions expressed in a November 2009 public hearing, nothing further will be done at this time to implement it.

Planning & Zoning Director Tim Nelson told the county board Tuesday, January 19, 2010 that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is making changes to the rules it is requiring each county to include in its septic ordinance. At least 10 counties are opposing the MPCA's new standards, Nelson said. Those standards would require many counties to hire additional staff to carry out enforcement.

A resolution by Polk County to not adopt the MPCA's new rules states that they will increase costs for designing and installing septic systems, obtaining permits, and undergoing inspections, "all of which are borne by the resident or business."

The revisions will also "substantially increase...staff time, resources, and funding requirements to implement, administer and enforce," the document states.

"...Polk County opposes broad mandates placed upon all counties to address special needs and/or situations affecting only a few. How to address these issues is a matter best

left to the individual county to resolve, with technical assistance provided by the state....

"Polk County encourages the state to increase its protection of water quality and the environment through a more aggressive, effective and efficient enforcement of the existing rules rather than exacerbating the problem through the creation of more complex and unenforceable rules...."

"Polk County shall continue to enforce the current rules related to septic systems until ... 1) the revisions are amended to address these issues, or 2) the MPCA notifies the county of its intention to assume septic system site evaluation, design review, permitting, inspection, public assistance, and enforcement duties...."

A letter to MPCA Commissioner Paul Eger from Polk County Environmental Services Administrator Jon Steiner states, "It has been stated the goal of the rule revision was to fix problems with the existing rule, clarification of current standards, and to protect the environment. However, it is Polk County's opinion that the revision has impacts far beyond those goals."

"...In the current economic environment [in which] we all find ourselves trying to survive, adding a new mandate should only be done in extreme circumstances where failure to do so would result in irreparable

harm or a threat to...public health and safety."

Steiner argues that much of what the MPCA is trying to accomplish could be done with more aggressive enforcement of current rules. "...Polk County feels that the best and most logical approach to protecting the environment is implementing and enforcing the existing regulations effectively, not creating new regulations to mask the ineffective application and enforcement of the existing rules."

Cook County Commissioner Fritz Sobanja said to his fellow board members, "Everybody's short on funds. What are we going to do?"

Should you force people to spend money to repair or upgrade their systems, Commissioner Jim Johnson asked, or should you encourage them through education?

Sobanja agreed to draft a resolution similar to Polk County's. In the meantime, Nelson met with MPCA staff to discuss the minimum requirements of the new rules and the responses of other counties.

Nelson asked the board for their continued support of his advocacy at the legislative level on behalf of the county. He is the past president of the Minnesota Association of County Planning & Zoning Administrators and is completing his last year as chair of its legislative committee.

In a January 19 memo to the

county board, Nelson wrote, "...I have been asked over the years by AMC [Association of Minnesota Counties] staff to testify before senate and house committees on certain pieces of legislation that directly impacted Minnesota counties with regards to land use issues. I am grateful for the support that I received from the Cook County Board of Commissioners over the years in allowing me the latitude to visit the capital when asked.

"I believe it is very important that the unique physical and social characteristics of Cook County continue to be represented in all forms in the development of potential state-wide policies, rules, and statutes."

"Our voice needs to be heard," Nelson told the board. "It's often overlooked down at the state level."

Commissioner Hall said, "It's important to be at the table."

In related news, Nelson reported that Jerry Gervais has been appointed to the Planning Commission. After originally having no prospects for a commissioner to fill the seat vacated by Sam Parker, who has completed the maximum number of terms allowed, four applications came in from residents around the county. Gervais lives in Tofte.

Council clarifies sidewalk snow removal policy

» Continued from...page A7

a Bobcat skid steer, snowblowers and shovels. Due to time considerations, the size and limited maneuverability of the equipment, and obstructions such as utility poles and parked vehicles, he said it is impossible to make every sidewalk snow-free, or to get to all sidewalks.

City Administrator Mike Roth pointed out that technically, it is the property owners' responsibility to clean off the sidewalks. But because the city workers have been doing the job for so long, there is confusion among the public regarding who is supposed to do what. Council agreed, and decided to draft and send a letter to downtown business owners outlining the city's snow removal process, and telling them that it is their responsibility if they wish to maintain a "higher level" of clean-up.

"It's just not feasible for the city crew to do hand-clearing and touch-up (with shovels), but that may be the only way to do it in many places," said Roth. And even though the city does much of the work, "there is still a need for property owners' involvement," he added.

Mayor Sue Hakes agreed, and urged business owners to work with the city and try to remove as much snow and ice from their sidewalks as possible. She also cautioned that although the city does most of the initial snow removal now, the city is not required to do it, and maybe won't always be able to because of budgetary concerns.

"We're not looking for trouble here — we just want the sidewalks to be cleared off and safe for everybody," she said.

The mayor also asked residents who are concerned about "trouble spots" or unsafe areas to call City Hall and report the conditions. People should not contact former street maintenance supervisor Bob Mattson with their problems, she said. "Bob has retired after many years on the job, but he's still getting calls," Hakes said.

In other business:

► It was announced that the Cook County Local Energy Project (CCLEP) will not be going forward with a \$100,000 grant request from the State Office of Energy Assistance to be used for various upgrades in city buildings. The city did not have time to meet the Jan. 25 deadline without holding a special meeting before the deadline, but Roth said there will likely be other opportunities.

Council did supply a letter of support for another CCLEP project grant through the state Pollution Control Agency that was requested at its prior meeting.

► Councilor Bill Lenz reported that the Community Center Committee has been meeting with all users and potential users of the facility in an effort to gauge what would be appropriate for the new building. Lenz said his committee also hopes to speak with those groups not using the Community Center, and to ask them, "Why not?"

► Councilor Tim Kennedy reported on a recent "Safe Routes To School" walk in which participants looked at the availability and condition of sidewalks, mainly between the school on County Road 7 and downtown. "We're starting to see a good system, and it's safer for the kids to walk on," he said. An area of particular concern, he said, is the section between the Old Gunflint Trail and Birchwood Apartments, where there are currently no sidewalks along County Road 7. "We're hoping to see more cooperation between the city and the county with providing more sidewalks and better links," he said.

► Councilor and Economic Development Authority (EDA) board member Jan Sivertson reported that, finally, "the check is here!" She was referring to the \$100,000 the EDA borrowed from the city to alleviate cash flow problems last year. The EDA still owes the city interest on the loan.

Sivertson also reported that the EDA has formed a sub-committee to plan its financial future. Hakes and Kennedy volunteered and were appointed to serve as the city's delegates.

► Asked by the mayor, Roth gave an update on the Shoreline Motel sign.

Roth said he had spoken with hotel manager Mark Sandbo at council's direction, and was provided a copy of the contract with the company producing the new sign, however, there is no timetable or schedule for installation of the new sign. According to Roth, the Grand Marais Hotel Company did employ a firm to remove the unsafe metal panels, but for some unknown reason several of the more-attached pieces were left in place. It is those few remaining panels that are now flapping ominously in the wind, and that concerns council.

The city's attorney, Chris Hood, said the city, which has already sent the sign owner a letter threatening legal action if the situation isn't corrected within 30 days, can remove the unsafe portions of the structure and assess the owner without his consent to recover the cost if he refuses to pay.

► Roth reported that there are still no applicants for a vacant position on the park board. Interested residents are asked to contact City Hall for more information.

Now Towing Junkers for FREE throughout the winter

TIRE & AUTO LODGE
387-1161

NEW SERVICE FOR COOK COUNTY

NOW DELIVERING gasoline and home heating fuel to Cook County residents and businesses.

► EXTREMELY COMPETITIVE PRICES!!

► CALL TODAY TO START SAVING ON HOME HEATING FUEL.

SUPERIOR FUEL COMPANY

1-877-388-1744 • www.SuperiorFuelCompany.com

Surprise your sweetheart

with a Valentine message in the Cook County News-Herald!

Place an ad in the News-Herald's Valentine issue February 13, 2010

\$6.00	Simple line ad 20 words or less
\$6.75	1.75" w x 1" h display ad
\$13.50	1.75" w x 2" h display ad
\$27.00	3.5" w x 2" h display ad

Deadline: February 8

Call it in! (218) 387-9100
Fax it in! (218) 387-9500
E-mail it in! ccnh@boreal.org

COOK COUNTY NEWS-Herald