

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
ESCANABA, MICHIGAN  
OCTOBER 10, 2013**

A meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission was held on Thursday, October 10, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in Room C101 at City Hall, 410 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI 49829.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Warstler, Vice Chairperson Patrick Connor, Secretary Roy Webber, Commissioners Kel Smyth and Brian Black

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Manager Jim O'Toole and Confidential Secretary Amy Peltin

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Todd Milkiewicz and Commissioner Christine Williams

Chairperson Warstler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Confidential Secretary Amy Peltin conducted the roll call.

**Approval/Correction of the September 12, 2013, Special Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Chairperson Warstler, seconded by Commissioner Black, to approve the September 12, 2013, Meeting Minutes. Ayes were unanimous.

**Approval/Adjustments to the Agenda**

A motion was made by Chairperson Tom Warstler, seconded by Vice Chairperson Connor, to approve the meeting agenda. Ayes were unanimous.

**Conflict of Interest Declarations**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Update - Migratory Bird Enhancement Initiative/Phragmites Eradication Program-Ludington Park and Other City Spaces.**

Joe Kaplan stated this year most of their planting activities as far as habitat enhancement were in conjunction with the Esky 150 Tree Project. He estimates they planted about 40 large landscape trees in Veteran's Park and Aronson Island and close to 150 shrubs and are pretty close to finishing the project. Mr. Kaplan stated they have treated almost everything on City property for

Phragmites. They have about 30 stands of non-native type of invasive phragmites from Ludington Park down towards Portage Creek. They are working with an applicator using glyphosate, which is an aquatic formulation invented by Monsanto otherwise known as Round Up, until their patent expired in 2000. The actual name of the product being used has a surfactant to help it adhere to the plant. The plant is sprayed and it draws the chemical down into the rhizomes, which is about 80% of the plant, which is underground, with a kill rate of about 80-90% this year. Mr. Kaplan stated they will retreat next two years or until it is gone. Most of the area treated is the peninsula in Veteran's Park and took about 1½ days to spray as well as conducted floristic pre-surveys so a comparison can be done to the plant qualities before and after treatment as some of the sites had a good under storage of native plants and they tried to target the phragmites with hopes to minimize native plant loss. They have one more day with the applicator and will treat along Lake Shore Drive. All the work being done is covered under a national Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant that was awarded to Comcoast Research and Conservation Non-Profit, which Joe Kaplan is the Director. DTE Energy provided most of the landscape trees as match for this grant. They have also partnered with the City and Bill Farrell, which has been fantastic with coming through with leaf mulch and wood chips, which is a big important part of the planting to control weeds. City Manager O'Toole asked if they had seen any new increase in birds. Mr. Kaplan stated they replaced all the Purple Marten houses and they filled up with Starlings. They are working on designing new Purple Marten houses with smaller holes to exclude Starlings. Starlings continue to be a huge problem and is most likely the reason for the decline in Purple Marten in the last 20 years around the U.P. We have one of the last colonies being maintained in the U.P. They did have a high survival rate this year. City Manager O'Toole stated he saw an increase in Mink on the island. Mr. Kaplan has also noticed and does not feel the Mink would affect the migratory birds; however, more studies will need to be done in the future.

Glenn Vanderwater wanted to thank Bay College and Brian Black with the wild flower gardens being planted on Aronson Island. The wild flowers are planted around the lilac and they are doing quite well and have shown an increase in insects on Aronson Island which help pollenate. The wild flowers have also been used at Esky Grow located right behind the Farmer's Market. He encourages everyone to take time and check out the wild flower gardens and vegetable gardens, which are grown for the local community. He is hoping to quantify how many pounds of vegetables and products produced that is donated to the local shelters, St. Vincent De Paul and Salvation Army. It continues to expand and bring people in to do more gardening and has been quite successful.

Joe Kaplan and Glenn Vanderwater would also like to give special thanks to Dave Gaffner as he helped them order everything from Menards and also to Marilyn Kinsey-Brown and the City of Escanaba for all their help with this project.

Commissioner Black thanked Joe Kaplan and Glenn Vanderwater for the amazing work they are doing.

### **Project Updates:**

- A. Zoning Board of Appeals Hearings/Decisions – There was no meeting held last month.
- B. Delta County Planning Commission Update – Meeting was held on October 7, 2013. A zoning change was approved submitted by Matt & Jennifer Cretens to change 10546 Hwy M-35 from R2 to Commercial 1. There was a flyover demonstration and a presentation of digital mapping for zoning for Delta County, which will be ready by

December 2013 so they can actually track what is on your property also zoning uses to make sure everything is up to date.

- C. Ordinance Policy Review/Development – There are no updates.
- D. Zoning/Land Use Permit Update – 56 permits issued with a declared value of \$9.1 million dollars.

E. Various

Central U.P. Micropolitan Economic Development Project – Jim O’Toole was in Lansing yesterday to testify before the Commerce Committee and it went very well and is expected to get voted out next week. He also received some huge support from Representatives out of the City of Detroit.

SAW Grant – The City of Escanaba will be applying for a SAW Grant, which is an infrastructure grant to come up with an asset management plan for our sanitary/storm system. It will be a digital computerized system where we can plug in repairs to see if the repair will work on a model and cost out in an attempt to try to solve the problem on Ludington Street with flooding. It will cost approximately \$1,000,000 with 90% being covered by the SAW Grant. It is a physical plan that will be loaded into our GIS.

Bells Brewery - Ground breaking at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow for anyone who would like to attend.

### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

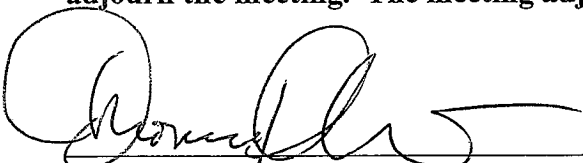
None.

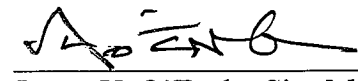
### COMMISON/STAFF COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

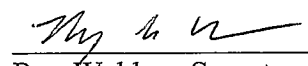
City Manager O’Toole stated there will not be a November 14, 2013 meeting due to deer season opener. Chairperson Warstler also would like to remind everyone to get out and vote on November 5, 2013.

### ADJOURMENT

**A motion was made by Chairperson Warstler, seconded by Commissioner Black, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. Ayes were unanimous.**

  
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Thomas Warstler, Chairperson  
Escanaba Planning Commission

  
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James V. O’Toole, City Manager  
City of Escanaba

  
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Roy Webber, Secretary  
Escanaba Planning Commission