

**UPDATED FINAL: October 5, 2013**

## **Update from Acme's Shoreline Advisory Committee Regarding Acme's Bayside Park Expansion – Phases 1, 2, and 3**

### **Mission of the Shoreline Advisory Committee**

The Shoreline Advisory Committee was initially formed as an advisory to the Acme Township Board on matters relating to the acquisition, scenic restoration, and public usability of the irreplaceable shoreline in Acme Township for current and future generations. To date, the committee has been focused primarily on land acquisition.

### **Bayside Park Expansion Project Summary**

This is a multi-phased and multi-year effort that includes the acquisition of land from willing sellers, the deconstruction of aging and blighted structures, the development of new park amenities such as parking lots, landscaping, picnic areas, and the creation of a permanent endowment for the Bayside Park. The park, located along US-31 and the Grand Traverse Bay, will be owned and managed by Acme Township. The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) is negotiating the land's protection with willing landowners and raising funds necessary to complete the project elements. Working with willing landowners, almost 6 acres of land with 1,300 feet of shoreline were purchased at fair market value during the first two phases of this long-term effort to protect and open up a mile of shoreline in Acme Township. Building on this momentum, Acme Township and GTRLC are working to complete Phase 3 of Acme's Bayside Park project.

*Excerpted from "Acme Township's Bayside Park Phase 3 Project Update, August, 2013, GTRLC"*

### **Summarized Accomplishments To-Date**

- Phase 1 **Completed**

Acme Township now owns the cleared land south of the original Bayside Park previously occupied by Shoreside Inn, Willow Beach, and Knollwood Motel cabins. The Knollwood's main house, the Hoxsie House, is maintained by Acme Heritage Society (AHS) at no taxpayer expense. AHS will be relocating the house no later than June, 2014.

- Phase 2 **Completed**

The Township now owns the former Mountain Jack's restaurant property, a 147-ft. vacant parcel just to the north of East Bay Harbor Corporation (EBHC) marina's parking area, and the former Sun 'N' Sand Motel property.

- Phase 3

Includes land acquisition, building deconstruction, park improvements, and creation of a permanent endowment for park maintenance at a projected total cost of \$1,484,330.

**Completed** Beach Club Motel and 15-ft. parcel to its north have been purchased. The GTRLC managed the successful, on time and on budget demolition of Mountain Jack's, Sun 'N' Sand, and Beach Club properties – and 87.44% of demolished material was recycled. All land was contoured and seeded per the Township's direction. Additionally, a new retaining wall with railings was installed on the land overlooking EBHC's marina. Although the Coldwell Banker Schmidt building at the US-31 / M-72 intersection was initially planned for acquisition during Phase 3, Acme's Township Board voted in 2013 not to purchase the building. The building has since been demolished by its owner and the vacant land is for sale.

**In Process** Park improvements and the creation of a permanent endowment for park maintenance are underway. There is **\$263,000** yet to be raised to complete Phase 3 by December 31, 2013.

## **Acme Has Received \$5.27 Million In Grants and \$1.7 Million In Gifts for Phases 1 and 2**

- The total cost of Phase 1 and 2 was approximately \$7.3 million.
- Acme Township received \$5.27 million in competitive grants from Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for Phase 1 and 2 combined.
- Private foundations and individual donors have contributed over \$1.7 million in gifts to support Phases 1 and 2.
- Acme Township has contributed \$347,000 – or 4.75% of the total \$7.3 million – to this project: \$150,000 to Phase 1; \$35,000 to Phase 2; \$80,000 toward deconstruction of Phase 1 properties; and \$82,000 in costs of issuance and interest for grant anticipation capital improvement bonds.
- Acme's Township Board has consistently considered and voted on all land acquisition and funding related to this project. While the current Board supports obtaining DNR grant funding, contributions from foundations and private donors, and volunteers' time to advance and successfully close Phase 3, it has not contributed any Township dollars to support property purchases for Phase 3.
- Acme's current Board has been very supportive of developing a plan for our parks. The Board asked Acme's Parks & Recreation advisory committee to work with John Iacoangeli, Principal at Beckett & Raeder and contracted Planner for Acme Township, to develop a community-supported plan that will efficiently phase in improvements for the newly-acquired shoreline park areas.

To this end, the Board has funded survey work and a conceptual park plan for the park area starting at the Hoxsie House and continuing north to and including the existing Bayside Park. Additionally, the Board has approved survey work and the development of a concept plan for the area from Bunker Hill Road north to the land previously occupied by Mountain Jack's.

- The Township supports this project because it will help to energize the Acme community by planning for and creating: public beaches, open space, and recreational areas that welcome residents, businesses, and tourists – thereby encouraging private investment and tax base growth.

## **Background Details**

### **1. When was Acme's Bayside Park originally started?**

Over 30 years ago, a group of very dedicated citizens rallied support for a millage to purchase the original Bayside Park property. With support from Acme's then supervisor, Jim Maitland, and the Board, the subject was placed on the ballot and passed. The seeds of what is now the expanded park project were planted with this first initiative – over three decades ago – to create a swimming beach for the residents of Acme Township.

### **2. How was the current Bayside Park expansion (shoreline project) started in Acme Township?**

In 2006, an inspired group of local residents envisioned a mile of open shoreline from MDOT Park at Five Mile Road north to the US-31 and M-72 intersection. The group was motivated by the opportunity to return this shoreline corridor to open space with expansive beaches, viewscapes, and public access.

After approaching and receiving support from then township supervisor, Bill Kurtz, the Acme Board voted later that year to form a citizen advisory committee. Supported by the past Acme Board led by Wayne Kladder, supervisor, the committee has worked to identify strategies and collaborations to move the project forward.

### **3. What is the mission of the Shoreline Advisory Committee?**

The Shoreline Advisory Committee was initially formed as an advisory to the Acme Township Board on matters relating to the acquisition, scenic restoration, and public usability of the irreplaceable shoreline in Acme Township for current and future generations. To date, the committee has been asked to focus primarily on land acquisition.

### **4. What is the vision for this shoreline area?**

The vision is to purchase bayfront land from MDOT Park at Five Mile Road north to the US-31 and M-72 intersection to create open viewscapes, public parkland, and beaches.

*(Also see Q15 for an explanation of Acme Township’s Placemaking Study which is a separate, much broader project focusing on the US-31 corridor from Holiday Rd. north to the Grand Traverse Resort & Spa.)*

**5. Was there public input into this vision for the shoreline area?**

Yes. In 2007, Acme Township hired Russ Clark, a landscape architect, to obtain public input and create a preliminary shoreline concept. This plan was developed to conceptually illustrate the “public’s vision” as the Township began to approach government agencies for grants to fund the project.

**6. How is Acme Township able to purchase this land?**

Parkland is being purchased with the help of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Trust Fund, a variety of private foundations, and private donations from individuals. The DNR Trust Fund works with local units of government to secure land for outdoor public recreational enjoyment. For the first three phases of the project, the Trust Fund contributed 75% of the purchase price, and private donations made up 25%.

**7. How was Acme Township able to secure this support from the DNR Trust Fund?**

Acme Township, in collaboration with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, wrote and applied for a grant for each of the first three phases, and each grant application was successful.

**8. How is the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy involved?**

In order to fulfill its shoreline vision, Acme Township has engaged the expertise of other area organizations. Acme Township is partnering with the GTRLC to lead the land acquisition and fundraising processes. Acme Township and the GTRLC only work with willing landowners. When any land owner is interested in selling their property and the Township supports the acquisition, the GTRLC moves forward to negotiate fair market sale prices for their land and facilitate the process through closing. The GTRLC also secures gifts from private individuals, foundations, and other key organizations who wish to contribute to this project.

Additionally, the GTRLC has managed the successful, on time and on budget demolition of Mountain Jack’s, Sun ‘N’ Sand, and Beach Club properties – and 87.44% of demolished material was recycled.

**9. What Are the Details Behind Each Phase?**

**Phase 1** included four parcels previously occupied by three motels – The Shoreside Inn, The Willow Beach, and The Knollwood Motel.

Following an intensive fundraising campaign led by the GTRLC on behalf of Acme Township, all properties were under Township ownership by June, 2010. The DNR Trust Fund specifies

that any remaining or newly-constructed buildings on the newly-purchased parkland must be used solely for the purposes of public outdoor recreational enjoyment – or be removed. Therefore, all buildings except for the main house structure of the Knollwood Motel (known as the Knollwood House) were deconstructed or moved by April, 2011.

The Knollwood House – formerly known as the Hoxsie House and built in 1875 as the home to Acme’s founder, Leonard Hoxsie – temporarily remains on its site. In order to fulfill the agreement between Acme Township and the DNR Trust Fund, the Acme Township Board voted to relocate this historic house from its current site. New sites for the house are under consideration now, and the house will be relocated no later than June, 2014.

From Spring, 2012, and forward, this historic house – now officially referred to, once again, as the Hoxsie House – will be maintained by the Acme Heritage Society (AHS) at no expense to taxpayers. While the house remains on its current site, there will be two open houses per year to give tours and fundraise. Once relocated, the Hoxsie House is intended to serve as a historical museum.

**Phase 2** included the acquisition of The Sun ‘N’ Sand Motel, Mountain Jack’s Restaurant, and a vacant parcel north of Mountain Jack’s. The purchase of these properties and the transfer of ownership to Acme Township was completed in March, 2012.

In accordance with an agreement between Acme Township and the DNR Trust Fund, the former motel and restaurant buildings had to be deconstructed no later than June 30, 2013. This time frame was put in place to enable the EBHC time to relocate its offices, previously in the lower level of the Mountain Jack’s building, to a new building being constructed on EBHC property.

**Phase 3** includes acquisition of the Beach Club motel property plus a vacant 15-foot wide parcel located just north of the Beach Club. Although the Coldwell Banker Schmidt building located north of the existing Bayside Park near the M-72 and US-31 intersection was initially planned for acquisition in Phase 3, Acme’s Township Board voted in 2013 not to acquire this property.

Deconstruction of Phase 2 and 3 properties were also included in this phase; these activities were successfully managed, on time and on budget, by the GTRLC. Creation of an endowment for perpetual park stewardship and funding for short-term park improvements to enhance public access and enjoyment of the property are also part of Phase 3.

**10. Are the taxpayers picking up an increased burden to support this project?**

Not at this time.

**11. How much shoreline parkland has been added for public enjoyment?**

Almost 6 acres of land with 1300 feet of shoreline were purchased in Phases 1 and 2. The following Table (page 6) breaks out the reclaimed East Bay shoreline, by Phase and Property.

<b>Park Expansion Phase and Property Name</b>	<b>Reclaimed East Bay Shoreline (in feet)</b>	<b>Acres</b>
<u>Phase 1: Purchased</u> The Shoreside Inn The Willow Beach The Knollwood Motel	189 ft. 160 ft. 172 ft.  521 ft. Total	    3.58
<u>Phase 2: Purchased</u> Sarris (narrow parcel) Mountain Jack's bldg Sun 'N' Sand Motel	147 ft. 427* ft. 194 ft.  768 ft. Total	    2.12
<b><u>Phase 1 and 2 Totals</u></b>	<b>1,289 ft.</b>	<b>5.7</b>
<u>Phase 3 – In process</u> Beach Club Motel 15 ft parcel (N of Beach Club)	190 ft. 15 ft.	
<b><u>Phase 3 Total</u></b>	<b>205 ft.</b>	<b>.26</b>
<b><u>Grand Total</u></b>	<b>1,494 ft. Total</b>	<b>5.96</b>

\*427 ft. restored Lake Michigan vista and parkland; ~340 ft. used by EBHC Marina with no public access.

## 12. How has this project impacted tax revenue for Acme Township?

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, \$197,960 was collected for Acme Township. Approximately 3.5% of this total was for the acquired properties.

The Township supports this project because it will help to energize the Acme community by planning for and creating: public beaches, open space, and recreational areas that welcome residents, businesses, and tourists – thereby encouraging private investment and tax base growth.

## 13. How many dollars has Acme Township contributed to this park expansion project?

To date, Acme Township has contributed \$347,000 to this project – which is less than 4.75% of the total cost. These contributions are as follows: \$150,000 for Phase 1 land acquisition; \$35,000 toward Phase 2 land acquisition; \$80,000 toward deconstruction of Phase 1 properties.

It is important to note that, when a township is asking for grants, one of the things on which its application is judged is *whether* and *how much* the township contributes to its own project. While the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant covers 75% of allowable project costs, the Township must pay 100% of the costs at closing and be reimbursed for the 75% grant amount. Therefore, the Township has issued grant anticipation capital improvement bonds to be repaid by grant proceeds when received. The cost of issuance and interest that the Township paid was \$82,000.

**14. Will there be a new municipal marina along Acme’s shoreline?**

Not at this time. A Marina Feasibility Study was conducted in Spring/Summer, 2011. While the study demonstrated that a municipal marina is feasible, the Acme Township Board voted on August 2, 2011, for the township to further investigate the topic before making a final decision. The subject has been tabled since 2011. The Marina Feasibility Study and a summary of its findings are located on the Township’s website at <http://www.acmetownship.org>, **Look at the Planning and Zoning drop down for Marina**. The competitive analysis completed as part of the study remains a viable report for Acme Township and surrounding shoreline areas.

**15. What was the Placemaking Study that was conducted in 2012?**

The Placemaking Study is a separate project led by Acme Township. This project focused on developing strategies – including land use, redevelopment, and reinvestment plans and projects – to improve the US-31 corridor from Holiday Road north to the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa. The Bayside Park expansion (shoreline project area) is within the overall Placemaking Study area.

The Township hired Beckett & Raeder to conduct the public process and create a plan document that could, someday, be successfully implemented by the community. The study officially began on May 1, 2012, and the community was invited to attend feedback sessions during the Summer, 2012. The study concluded in October, 2012, and a conceptual visioning drawing was prepared with elements and ideas that are now being used to help shape the detailed park plans.

The study cost \$35,000 and was completely funded through grants from Northwest Michigan Council of Governments via the Grand Vision, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, and the Coastal Zone Management Program. The Watershed Center of Traverse City has obtained an additional Coastal Zone Management grant for the purpose of creating low-impact development guidelines and naturalized vegetation to handle storm water control on the park site.

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