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LAKESHORE LIVING

LMSA 2023 Newsletter

Message from the President

Change can often times be difficult to accept. Or it can enthusiastically accepted depending on the issue. Over the decades the LMSA geographical area has encountered major changes to the shoreline. Beaches are constantly changing and certainly not nearly as large as they were back in the day when many of our current residents were kids. I am told that bluffs extended significantly further to the west than where they are now. The housing stock has changed from a majority of summer cottages (and summer only living) to year-round primary residences.

There are two changes that are currently in the planning stages, one at West Side County Park and one at Pier Cove Beach.

At West Side County Park, Allegan County is in the process of developing beach access designs that will provide full access down to the beach. Please see the article elsewhere in this newsletter for a full description of the plans being developed. The County has solicited the input of area residents on the design. If you have not already done so, I encourage you contact the Allegan County Parks Board with your input.

At Pier Cove Beach, Ganges Township is proceeding with plans to improve and expand the beach area. The additional public beach will include the creek which has been an attraction for kids for generations. Please see the article elsewhere in this newsletter for a description of the design process that is being followed and how input from the public has been solicited. When the preliminary design plans have been put together, they will be presented to the Ganges Township Board for its review and comment. This board meeting will be open to the public and I strongly encourage you to attend and provide your input. The LMSA Board will notify its members when this Township Board presentation is scheduled. If you cannot attend that meeting, I encourage you to provide your input in writing via either email or letter.

“Change is inevitable” certainly applies to size of beaches and location of the bluffs....Mother Nature will always win. The design of the improvements at both West Side County Park and Pier Cove Beach are works in progress. Ultimately the best solutions will be reached when the County and Township receive input from the public and consider those thoughts in the final designs. Please make your thoughts known.

Charles Landefeld
LMSA President



Lakeshore Drive Safety & Signage

Signage: Since the completion of the Lakeshore Dr. widening project, the committee has continued to review issues of speed and signage. In cooperation with and the support of Ganges Township, 2 digital signs, with speed limit signs attached were added on the stretch south of M-89. Additionally, we will again be working with ACRC on a plan to add 'Share the Road' signage going north and south of M-89 and we are working with others to get enforceable no parking areas with signs where appropriate in the vicinity of Pier Cove.

Safety: Lakeshore Drive, within the LMSA boundaries, continues to see increased usage and thus we are providing some simple safety reminders for all types of road traffic (vehicles, bicycles, walkers & runners). We hope the following will serve as helpful reminders that can improve safety for all.

What follows may seem obvious, yet the intention is to alert all who enjoy the area to be on the lookout for opportunities to avoid accidents and to be considerate of others while walking, riding, or driving so as to create a safe environment. We encourage family, friends, neighbors, visitors and those passing through to join in helping maintain a safe environment for all. Slow down and enjoy the scenery.

1. **Walking or running** – Always walk or run AGAINST traffic. There is now a lined and paved shoulder South of M-89. North of M-89 where there is no paved shoulder walk on the side of the road. Be aware of your surroundings. Always assume oncoming traffic is not aware of your presence. Let people know you are there at night by using a flashlight moving it left and right ahead of you, not into the oncoming traffic.
2. **Riding (bicycles)** – Ride with traffic. Use flashing front and rear lights if you have them. Use appropriate hand signals. When riding in a group, ride single file during high traffic periods or when traffic is present. Note: Cyclists have the same rights to the road as other vehicles.
3. **Driving** – Follow the speed limit and precautionary signs. Watch for walkers, riders and other vehicles within your surrounding area.

Watch for kids playing in or near the road and be prepared to slow down or stop. Do not pass when walkers are present in the oncoming lane. Slow down when conditions would indicate - rain, ice, snow blowing snow or debris, etc.

4. The **new wider paved shoulder** provides marked lanes for walkers, cyclists. These shoulders are not likely to be maintained by the road commission, so we can all do our part by sweeping up debris that collects on the shoulder in front of our properties. It may only be necessary a couple times a year, like after the snow plowing season is over. Another neighborly reminder is to keep **trash cans** out of the shoulder/walking lanes. Obstructions or debris in the road shoulders can be a hazard that neighborly actions can mitigate.
5. We all need to be aware of our surroundings. Most accidents are preventable, often by either party. When walking or riding during the darker hours wear light or reflective clothing. Use kind hand signs when attempting to attract driver attention to slow down, etc.
6. **Safety and Awareness Campaign** - We are suggesting that people consider wearing bright colors when riding and walking. Toward that end we have created bright 'safety' Tee shirts, in blue and safety green (see photo), that have the speed limit on the back and a 'slow down' mantra on the front. We will gladly give people a shirt with a minimum \$10 donation to the LMSA. For information about shirts and donations please email lmsasafesignage@gmail.com



*Andy Murch, Ed Welk,
Daphne Fairbanks, & Lynn Kirkaldy*

LMSA Marketing Committee Update

The marketing committee began an initiative this past year to update the branding of the LMSA organization. Many thanks to Kat Needham for designing our branding and new logo. From Kat, “LMSA was founded to protect, preserve and enhance the West Michigan lakeshore (south of the washout to 111th Ave). There are three main things we work to protect, preserve and enhance at the West Michigan lakeshore: 1) Environment 2) History 3) Lifestyle or culture. Our new logo mark was designed to convey water/lake, sand, beach grass, and the sun, while having a classic, historic and timeless look overall.”

We have also just launched a beautiful new website which not only looks better, but has significantly improved functionality. As the website becomes our main communication tool some areas of the site will be further developed. An example is highlighting and capturing the history of the landmarks within our association boundaries, like Glenn, Wau-Ke-Na, Plumerville, West Side County Park, and the Pier Cove area. LMSA members with suggestions, skills and interest in drafting historical content are welcome to assist!

This newsletter will become primarily a digital newsletter hosted on a dedicated page of the website. For those who prefer paper copies, they can be printed and we will have copies at the annual meeting. And as we host events like beach or road cleanup, and tree planting, we will develop a ‘calendar of events.’ Please let us know about your experience with the new website or ideas for further consideration. Other upcoming initiatives include updating the road signs at the corner of M-89 & Lakeshore Drive, and on Lakeshore Drive just north of Glenn. Stay tuned!

Check out the new website:

<https://www.lakemichiganshore.org>

*Daphne Fairbanks, Kat Needham,
Curt Bailey, & Frank Alfieri*



West Side County Park Tree Replacement Program

Last year the LMSA Board completed a very successful fundraising program to plant five maple and three crabapple trees along the West Side County Park frontage along Lakeshore Drive. The eight trees were planted in November of last year. Twenty-four donations totaling \$7,518.34 were received and each of the eight trees were “adopted” with a contribution of \$800 for the maples and \$380 for the crabapples. A brick paver will be installed at each tree with an engraved message requested by each adopter. Approximately \$2,000 remains unspent which will be used for a temporary sprinkler system as well as for miscellaneous plants around the park signage.

Meet the Board of Directors

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Frank Alfieri	2024
Curt Bailey	2023
Duane Brown	2024
Clark Carmichael, Membership	2023
Daphne Fairbanks	2023
John Folks	2025
John Hagen	2025
Charles Landefeld, President	2024
Andy Murch, Treasurer	2025
Kat Needham, Secretary	2024
Don Olendorf	2023
Ed Welk	2023



Pier Cove Beach Park Project Update

Ganges TWP was awarded **2 grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund** in December of 2021 to make improvements at Pier Cove Beach (\$266,000) and for the acquisition of an additional parcel of land to the north (\$128,700). The TWP will provide a 25% match. Additionally, the TWP was awarded a \$5000 grant from the Allegan Community Foundation in April 2023 to go toward the overall project. In addition, about \$32,000 in donations to the project have been pledged, including a \$2500 donation from the Lake Michigan Shore Association (LMSA) to be used for trees and shrubs.

The Purpose as stated in the initial Grant application: *“Enhance the overall accessibility and scenic value of Pier Cove Park while honoring the rich history, quiet restfulness, and natural beauty of this unique lakeshore area. Renovating the current parking, fencing, signage, and steps will benefit safety, accessibility, and improve the park's overall attractiveness. A new walkway and gathering space will add barrier-free accessibility to parking, restrooms, and a new overlook on Lake Michigan. The renovations will help restore a more natural and rustic environment and repair damage from*

shoreline erosion using native plantings and wildflowers. Interpretive signage will offer a unique stop on the Lake Michigan Water Trail between South Haven and Saugatuck and along US Bike Route 35 where users can learn about the history and natural resources available at Pier Cove and enjoy its natural beauty.”

In June 2022, the TWP appointed a volunteer committee of 4 citizens to work with a landscape architect to develop plans for the Pier Cove project. Those members are Dana Burd, Robert Grese, Jay Gooch and Daphne Fairbanks. The landscape architect firm of Beckett & Raeder (BRi) was hired in August, 2022 to design the project and create documents to put the project out for bid. The work of the committee and the architect began in Fall 2022. A public vision session was held in October at the Fennville library and was followed up with a public survey which garnered a great deal of valuable community input and excitement. Beginning design plans were drafted over the winter with several sessions to examine the multiple details involved. BRi is currently working on the final revision after a site visit at the end of April.

The committee and architect gave an update to the TWP in early spring and the plans thus far were met with appreciation and enthusiasm by the TWP. The committee also reached out to a few adjacent neighbors and the family who offered the adjoining parcel of land to the TWP to share a few concepts as the design was being developed. The Trull family whose land was offered to the TWP is pleased with the concepts and progress thus far and happy to be helping to improve Pier Cove beach.

There is concern about the removal of the No Parking signs along 123rd and north on Lakeshore Dr. and the impact of vehicles parking along the road to access the beach. The signs were removed and not replaced by the road commission when the road was redone. Parking along the roads creates congestion and safety concerns for all types of traffic, including emergency vehicles needing clear access. The TWP passed a resolution in August of 2022 requesting that the State Police do any studies required to approve the replacing of the no-parking signs that had been present for over a decade. There has been no communication from the State Police to date and the committee is continuing to press for a determination.

This is a concern to neighbors who fear that a new, safer walkway along the curve to the north will encourage people to park along the roads when the 10 parking spots at Pier Cove are full, although even without improvements parking on the road is a temptation for beachgoers. There is hope that the no parking signs will be replaced in concert with the park project.

The acquisition of the adjoining parcel of land to the north was surveyed and all acquisition documents were approved by the DNR. The purchase offer was approved by the TWP Board at its May 16th meeting.

Completion of the design phase is expected this summer with a design being presented to the TWP for its approval at a public meeting (date TBD). Then the project will go out for bids and an earliest anticipated start date for the project is Spring or Fall of 2024 with an approximation of 3 months for completion.

The design will be made public when reviewed by the township and includes the following concepts and elements. The current 10 parking spaces will not be increased and will include 2 designated accessible spaces and a bicycle rack. The parking area and walkway will be extended to keep users away from traffic. Views of Lake Michigan will be enhanced with landscaping, different fencing and a larger space adjacent to the parking and walkway north. The stairs will be redesigned to add a north facing landing due to changing water levels that can impact the bottom steps. Native species plantings will be installed to enhance and maintain the bluff and fencing will demarcate areas for walking. There will be an accessible port-a-john (enclosed), benches and interpretive signage clustered about the top and along the walkway detailing history, native species, park rules, etc. The project overall will enhance the natural setting to provide safety features and expanded views. Ongoing planning by the committee will include maintenance recommendations and possible future considerations re potential erosion.

The committee is excited about the project and thankful that the TWP is embracing this wonderful public resource.

Daphne Fairbanks

LMSA Annual Meeting
July 22, 2023 at 9:00 AM
Glenn Community Center

Our annual meeting on July 22 will feature speakers that will address the operation and management of the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. More specifically there will be a focus on the history of Wau-Ke-Na, a terrific property in the LMSA geographical area, that was donated to SWMLC by Bill Smith. Bill also formed LMSA in 1962. A focus of the discussions will be how LMSA can be better represented in the decisions as to how the Wau-Ke-Na properties are managed, operated, and improved with funds set aside by Bill Smith when he donated the property.

Our primary speaker will be Michael Larson, the newly appointed Executive Director of SWMLC.



Michael is a resident of Battle Creek living with his wife and two daughters. He brings more than 30+ years of nonprofit administration and fundraising experience, having most recently held the role of President & Chief Executive Officer of the Michigan Association of United Ways since 2017. He is an avid outdoorsman and will bring his passion to protect and care for nature, one of the primary missions of SWMLC.

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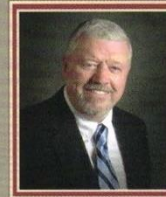
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West Side County Park Beach Access

Will 2023 be the year that Allegan County upgrades beach access at West Side County Park? It is possible—if Allegan County is successful in its application for a Michigan Spark Grant. Allegan County Parks Director Brandy Gildea says that the County will be applying in June and could know by September. In the current round, nearly \$23 million will be awarded to Michigan communities. Michigan Spark Grants help local communities create, renovate, and redevelop public recreation opportunities for residents and visitors—especially those communities whose economies and health were hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The West Side County Park price tag could exceed \$2 million, but the benefit would be restoration of Allegan County's only park on Lake Michigan to its premier status as the jewel among its eight facilities. The County expects to take a phased approach to the project with boardwalks constructed first and an emergency access drive second.

In late January, LMSA representatives Charles Landefeld and John Hagen met virtually with Allegan County officials Brandy Gildea, Dean Kapenga, and Dan Wedge. Their purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of the County's plans and timelines to help guide LMSA Board policy and engagement. Brandy Gildea provided an overview of the project. She noted that the original stairs were installed about ten years ago and lasted for three years. In 2016, they were extensively damaged. Some sections were found buried in several feet of drifting sand. Others were destroyed by wave action from Lake Michigan.

Last year, Allegan County hired Abonmarche, an engineering firm, to redesign a beach access system. They developed two alternatives. Plan A would rebuild the north wooden stairs with a concrete sidewalk; construct a new south wooden stair and ramp system and an asphalt road for emergency vehicles along the southern park boundary. Plan B would rebuild the north wooden stairs with a concrete sidewalk and build an asphalt/ramp road for both pedestrians and emergency vehicles in the mid-southern area of the park. See maps on the following page.

Plan A is preferred by the Parks Board and estimated to cost \$2+ million; Plan B would cost \$1+ million. In either alternative, the north stairs would cost \$400,000-\$500,000. The County held a public on-site meeting in September 2022 and Parks Board meetings in October and December. Three priorities emerged from the December meeting: ADA access, view access, and maintenance and safety.

From their meeting with county officials, LMSA representatives learned several important details about the plan alternatives. The County owns about forty feet of removable metal platforms salvaged from the previous structure. In Plan A, these will be attached to the end of the ramp and positioned along the beach parallel to the waterline for enhanced access. If Plan B is adopted, the ramps will also be used to extend access north along the beach from the asphalt road. The non-removable parts of the stairs and ramps will be attached to permanent pilings anchored deeply into the sand. The old stairs had treated wood posts sunk only four feet +/- into the ground, which turned out to be insufficient. In Plan B, public and emergency access is integrated in one structure. Locked, removable bollards will be placed at the top of the road. They will keep out vehicular traffic, but wheelchairs, strollers, etc. will be able to pass through. However, they will not prevent skateboarders, for example, from using the surface. The Plan B schematic does not appear to have turnouts where people can stop, rest, enjoy the view, and let others pass by. However, some turnouts have subsequently been added to the plan, and it may be possible to add more, if needed. The ramp system in Plan A satisfies ADA requirements, and if it should become unusable, the emergency road can be used—at least temporarily—and is ADA accessible. The ramp system in Plan A is a 1-in-12 ft. slope. The emergency road is a 1-in-10 ft. slope. For outdoor structures, 1-in-10 ft. slopes meet ADA minimum requirements. However, the emergency road in Plan A has no turnouts or flat sections, as is the case in Plan B. All wood stairs and ramps have handrails in both plans. The emergency road in Plan A does not but does have a retaining wall. The concrete walkways in both alternatives do not. The preservation of the existing land as much as possible is very important to the County, and Option A requires less cutting into the existing dune/bluff with less tree removal. Drifting sand will be a problem for

any of the structures in both plans, including not only the road, but the wooden ramps and stairs. They will require ongoing maintenance.

Finally, the Parks Department is planning other improvements to the park, such as signage, in conjunction with the beach access project. Staff is preparing a plan for 2024 to replace signage in all county parks with a uniform entrance sign design. The Spark grants support projects that provide safe, accessible, public recreation facilities and spaces to improve people’s health, introduce new recreation experiences, build on existing park infrastructure, and make it easier for people to enjoy both indoor and outdoor recreation. It was made possible because of the Building Michigan Together Plan, signed in March 2022, which included a historic infusion of federal funding in state and local parks.

John Hagen



<https://www.allegancounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument/9428/637980660986170000>



<https://www.allegancounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument/9430/637980661252430000>

In Loving Memory

LMSA would like to remember and honor the following members who passed away since our newsletter last year.

Jerry Leigh Hill

November 13, 1934 – December 10, 2022

Rudolph Hanka

August 5, 1940 – November 7, 2022



~ Reminder ~

It's Lyme Time!

Protect Yourself Against Lyme Disease

- Walk in the middle of trails; avoid sitting on logs and leaning on trees.
- Wear a hat, tuck in hair, if possible.
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt fitted at the wrist.
- Wear shoes, no bare feet or sandals.
- Wear long pants tucked into high socks or duct tape around pants.
- Consider Deet for skin and permethrin for clothes.
- Wear white or light-colored clothing to make it easier to see ticks.
- Do tick checks immediately and 3 days after outdoor activity.
- If you find a tick, remove it carefully and save it.
- Ask your veterinarian about protection for your furry friends.

Lyme Disease is transmitted by a tiny tick, most often the size of a poppy seed.

Remove tick with tweezers. Pull straight out as close to the skin as possible. Save tick in container and call doctor.

Lakeshore Drive Feasibility Study North of 126th Street

Last year the Allegan County Road Commission (ACRC) working in collaboration with civil engineers, Prein & Newhof, offered two workshops to present the current and potential future erosion concerns along Lakeshore Drive both north and south of the 1986 wash-out. The study covered Lakeshore Drive from 130th to 126th. However, **LMSA is bounded by the wash-out at 128th on the north to 111th on the south. Therefore, we will focus only on that area in this article.**

You can see our affected area in the map presented here. Note the colored band running along the lakeshore, these colors represent the likelihood of further erosion and areas for potential future washouts:

- Green = long-term, unlikely
- Yellow = long-term, possible
- Orange = short-term, possible
- Red = short-term, likely

ACRC and Prein & Newhof proactively have been meeting with small neighborhood groups in the affected areas to gather input. In February, along with my neighbors and Charles Landefeld (LMSA President), I met with ACRC and Prein & Newhof representatives to talk through the concerns, discuss ideas and options.

On March 14, LMSA sent a letter to ACRC suggesting that the road projects – within the LMSA boundaries – could be designed and constructed in two separate phases – indicated on the map only to clarify the areas, not as road recommendations.

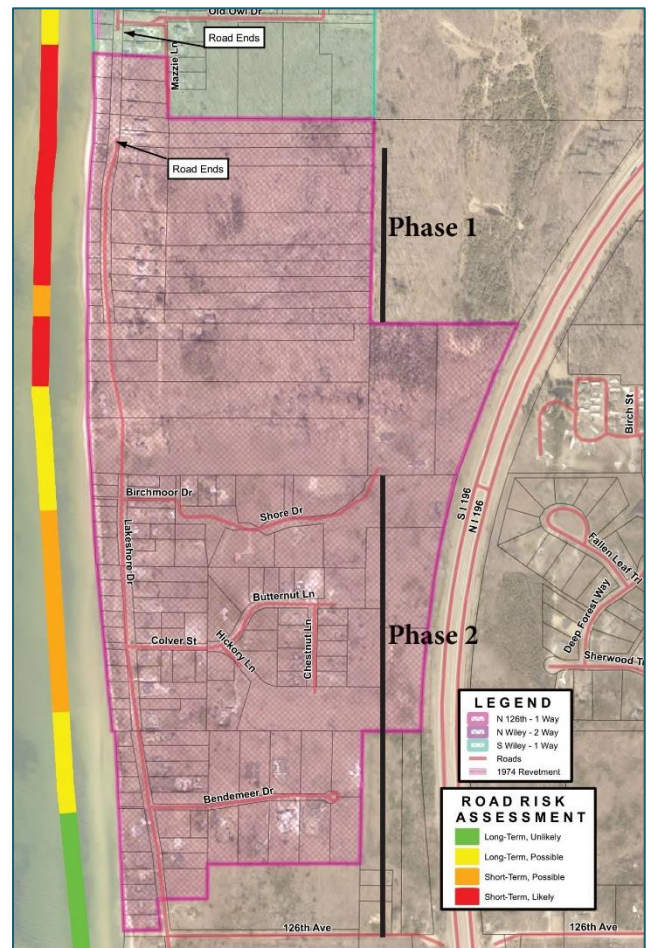
Phase 1 contains all of the riskiest stretches of bluffs. This phase would be the area starting at the Ferguson properties at the south (near the site of the 2008 creek wash-out and the recent 2019 wash-out) and running north connecting to Wiley Road. This new roadway could be positioned at the quarter mile line at the east side of land parcels of the eleven residents just south of the 1986 wash-out. It is our understanding that this roadway location was acceptable to most of those eleven homeowners a few years ago when the newest wash-out was being addressed. LMSA has requested that ACRC and Prein & Newhof work closely with those eleven property owners to develop a route to access their homes from the main north/south roadway.

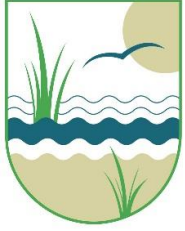
Phase 2 would be the area starting at 126th at the south and running north to Birchmoor/Shore Drive. There are a few potential new roadway options that might work. One could run north of 126th to Bendemeer, cut about a quarter mile behind the homes that face the lake, connect to Shore Drive and terminate at the corner of Shore Drive and Birchmoor. Another option could run tight to I-196, then tie into Shore Drive and Butternut Lane via “connectors.” LMSA has requested that ACRC and Prein & Newhof consider those and other options that would then be presented to our neighbors who live in the affected area.

Please note that the northern edge of the LMSA geographical area stops at the 1986 wash-out, and Phases 1 and 2 do not address any of the connector routes north of that wash-out. Nor have we addressed any route that connects the north of the wash-out area with the south of the wash-out area.

We will continue to report on any new updates as available.

Kat Needham





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2023 LMSA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I hereby make application for membership in The Lake Michigan Shore Association which represents an area bounded by Lake Michigan on the West, Lake Shore Drive “wash-out” or 128th on the north, then along Interstate 196 on the East, then South to exit 30, then South on Blue Star Hwy to 111th Ave (the southern boundary), then west to Lake Michigan, in Allegan County Michigan. I am a property owner or resident of this described area.

It is a condition of membership that any group, owning or residing in a membership property, are included in a single membership.

**Enclosed is my check for \$35.00 covering membership dues
 for the period January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2023.**

Name(s): _____

Primary Address: _____

Primary Phone: _____

Local or Other Address: _____

Other Phone(s): _____

E-Mail Address(s): _____

Michigan Voter? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, Ganges Twp. ___ Saugatuck Twp. ___ Casco Twp. ___ Other ___

I am interested in serving on an LMSA committee: ___

I am interested in serving on the LMSA Board of Directors: ___

I am interested in helping LMSA in other ways. Please contact me: ___

Make checks payable to LMSA and send to:

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Please take a moment to add suggestions, concerns or “areas of interest” that you would like to share with the LMSA Board on the reverse side of this form. Visit www.lakemichiganshore.org for more information or to apply online.



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