



# PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI 49686

[www.peninsulatownship.com](http://www.peninsulatownship.com)

**Township Board Regular Meeting**

**Township Hall**

**September 10, 2019, 7:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

**Amended 10-22-19**

1. **Call to Order** by Clerk Chown at 7:02 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call:** Manigold, Bickle, Wahl, Sanger, Wunsch, Achorn, and Chown
4. **Brief Citizen Comments (for agenda items only):** none
5. **Approve Agenda**

**Bickle:** re-submitted communication from the Grand Traverse County Road Commission that provided an update to the residents who drive Island View Road and Bower's Harbor Road [See attachment at the end of the minutes]. This also provides to the board his pursuit of funds that are still owed to the township in the amount of \$183,095.21

**Chown:** added an item to the consent agenda to reappoint Wunsch as the township board representative to the planning commission for a term to end December 2019 and to reappoint Wahl to the zoning board of appeals as the township board representative to conclude December 2019.

**Moved by Wahl to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Sanger.**

**Roll call: Manigold-yes, Bickle-yes, Wahl-yes, Sanger-yes, Wunsch-yes, Achorn-yes, Chown-yes.**

**Passed 7-0**

6. **Conflict of Interest:** none
7. **Consent Agenda:** any member of the board, staff, or the public may ask that any item on the consent agenda be removed and placed elsewhere on the agenda for full discussion
  1. Invoices (recommend approval)
  2. Reports
    - A. Fire department report for August 2019
    - B. Ordinance enforcement report for January–July 2019
  3. Correspondence:
    - A. Bruce A. Fisher and Julie Adams
    - B. Lois Byrne
    - C. Follow-up from Charter Communications regarding Peninsula Township's request to remove lines from Consumer Energy poles
    - D. Letters from township residents regarding the DNR Waterways Grant, Kelley Park, and the Haserot Beach boat launch and parking lot improvement project
  4. Award from the 2019 DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting Grant Program (recommend approval)
  5. Request from the Friends of Peninsula Community Library to use Charlie Doe's sign to announce the annual book sale to be held at the new library September 18–28 and to post their

banner at fire station #2 (recommend approval)

6. Minutes from August 27, 2019, township board meeting (recommend approval)
7. Request to reappoint Isaiah Wunsch as the township board representative to the planning commission for a one-year term to end August 2020 (recommend approval)
8. Re-appoint Wunsch to the Planning Commission and Wahl to the Zoning Board of Appeals until December 2019

Consent Agenda retroactively approved at 10-21-19 special 3:00 p.m. township board meeting.

## 8. Business

1. Public hearing on SUP 123 Amendment #1, The 81 on East Bay

**Manigold:** closed the regularly scheduled meeting and opened public hearing.

**Meilnik:** the application for the amendment was filed with the township back in June 2019. This was presented before the planning commission with a scheduled public hearing on July 15, 2019. There were no public comments at that time, but after the hearing, issues were raised by adjacent property owners regarding the relocation of one of the lots. This item was then removed from consideration, leaving us with the five items listed in the report in the findings of fact and conclusions. The planning commission at the August meeting recommended that it be presented to the township board. The controversial element of the project was removed, the relocation of one of the lots to the southerly portion of the subject site to a northerly portion of the site. There are five items for consideration that are minor in some respects.

**Kyle O’Grady, 901 S. Garfield Ave.:** this request has only a few simple changes from the original SUP 123 that was previously presented and approved by the township board.

No public comments were received.

**Manigold:** closed the public hearing.

**Meihn:** has reviewed the proposed changes and finds that everything is in conformance with the ordinance, state law, and customary practices.

**Moved by Wunsch to approve the amendment to SUP 123, Amendment #1, as described in the attached findings of fact and conclusions, with the two conditions described therein. These conditions include 1) that all prior findings, conditions, and safeguards imposed by the Grand Traverse County Circuit Court and the Peninsula Township Board of Trustees remain in effect, and 2) that site-specific storm water reviews continue to be required for each lot, seconded by Chown.**

**Roll call: Wahl-yes, Sanger-yes, Wunsch-yes, Achorn-yes, Chown-yes, Manigold-yes, Bickle-yes. Passed 7-0**

2. Public hearing on the DNR Waterways Grant, Kelley Park, and the Haserot Beach boat launch and parking lot improvement project

**Manigold:** closed the regularly scheduled meeting and opened the public hearing. There were many questions after the last meeting regarding this issue. [Manigold] tracked down some answers and information and will present them in a slideshow. The presentation is provided in the packet and can also be reviewed on Streamspot.

[Manigold began the slideshow.]

This is the document from when Kelley Park, also known as the Moorings, was a campground owned by the Nevingers. The land was sold from the Nevingers to an individual named Puto. On September 5, 1970, a permit was issued authorizing 17 mooring buoys, an 8 x 8-foot swimming dock, a 135-foot mooring dock, and a 12 x 50-foot steel boat ramp in that location. The dock was there for a number of years and had a gas pump at the end. When the inn sold, they came up with a different plan that allowed for the shorefront of that parcel to be divided. There was a campground that had two existing cottages that were removed and a store that sold everything from milk to minnows. The property contained 29 campsites. When this was sold by the Nevingers, Puto developed a site condominium with four shorefront lots and six more upland. He also applied to have a marina, which was accepted. This would have contained 10 boat slips that would have held 24-foot boats or more. When the lots did not sell, the owner was approached to go to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF). The trust fund agreed to the acquisition of the project for a little over two million dollars.

At the DNR trust fund meeting on December 4, 2013, it was moved by Mr. Canale, supported by Mr. Charters, to approve 13-131 the Old Moorings place acquisition subject to local conflict uses being resolved and contingent upon the agreement of use patterns, both at Haserot Beach and the Old Moorings property. A local resolution by the township was to be passed indicating that the township had carefully considered the best way to resolve the use conflicts at the Haserot Beach site, and the boat launch would be installed at the location that best met the goal with consideration given to anticipated long-term maintenance costs. This motion passed without dissenting vote.

On May 13, 2014, at a public hearing with the planning commission and the park commission, per Michelle Reardon, our planner, it was noted that per the resolution approving the funds, the MNRTF had offered the township the opportunity to determine the best location for increased boater access to the Great Lakes while forming consensus related to the future use patterns in and around the Old Mission village area.

[Manigold presented photos highlighting the proposed former development and the current proposed boating access site development at Kelley Park.]

An agreement was fashioned regarding what Kelley Park would look like with a low impact boat launch. The land would be leased back to the township and the DNR would clean out the launch. The township would be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of mowing, trash removal, and the bathroom area. Planting the area with wildflowers and dune grasses to keep the mowing minimized was discussed. The DNR did sign this but the township did not have title to the property at that time because it was still going through the conservancy.

[Manigold showed a picture of Haserot Beach, which was purchased by the township sometime in the late 1980s or early 1990s.]

This was previously Harry Britten's house. The beach area was expanded. Three parcels were part of the Haserot Company. The Haserot Company owned a place in Leelanau County and used this access to come over and pick up cherries from the farmers. When this operation failed, all of the property was disbursed by the Haserot family, and 280 feet was given to Peninsula Township for beach access. Two other pieces are now owned by the Laus or Gleasons; this is private property. They have very graciously allowed people over the years to use this property for beach access as well. There is also a little strip that back in the 1960s was the boat launch.

The DNR came up with this plan over the past few years as they realized there was a no development zone on the Hyslop property. They were proposing a two-ramp boat launch that later changed to a one-lane boat ramp and to begin to improve the parking. In the summer when days are hot, the beach is very congested. People then park down Bay Street and both sides of Swaney. Last year signs were put in. Rocks were placed by an individual but the road commission made them remove them from the right-of-way. The majority of the calls we receive are for keeping this area all swimming and keeping propellers away from swimmers.

The other area of concern is the parking along the roads. [Manigold] approached the Grand Traverse County Road Commission and was deferred to a sergeant of the state police. The road commission said it would allow a 90-day permit for no parking. The sergeant indicated that he did not see a problem there.

One thing that has been discussed is blocking the road off at the American Legion Hall and gating that and blocking the road off, which would require having the Grand Traverse County Road Commission abandon the road.

Joe Hagen inquired about incorporating the village of Old Mission; that is complicated and is not a feasible solution at this time.

People have questioned why the township does not purchase more beach access land. When you look at the property already preserved, 15,141 feet of beach is available. Some is secluded and some like Haserot is very congested. This does not include the road ends, of which there are at least five or six, but there are regulations for using the road ends.

Questions raised by the Hyslop family found that we do have an encroachment. When you read the document, the family has the right to take that part of the property back if something is done in violation of the agreement. Mr. Hyslop would like to work with us as it was his mother's dream to have this property preserved for the people of Old Mission. We have Haserot, which is 187 feet, and then 110 privately owned feet, and then 213 feet. The Old Moorings place is 500 feet. The DNR has been very specific about this land remaining in natural grasses and wetlands. They hired the conservancy to walk the property last year and identify all the sensitive plants. There were drainage issues last year. When the drain commissioner opened up the drain on the Old Mission side, this was also opened up by the DNR last fall. There will be limitations on what can happen on this site. Bill Hyslop came in with this shoreline schematic, which details the depths of the lake.

**Chown:** regarding the trees and the swale north of the existing launch at Haserot, someone raised the concern that perhaps the township would not be able to obtain a permit to remove those [and provide additional beach], but that does not seem to be an issue. Jennifer Hodges of GFA indicated this would be doable.

**Manigold:** we are proposing five different items that are also online in tonight's packet materials.

[Manigold read the memo of understanding to the audience.]

The board did check into moving the grant to Kelley Park, but the grant is site specific and therefore cannot be transferred to another location or property. Feels that Kelley Park could be developed into a low-key area, and the best thing would be moving all of the truck and boat trailer traffic over to this site. This would be an immediate improvement at Haserot and then we could

work to develop Haserot with the community and try to resolve the parking issues. If the road closure was successful, then volleyball courts could be added. We believe we could keep a two-and-a-half-foot draft in the launch with minimal dredging. Historically, the DNR has been willing to lease this property back to the township. The fear with the DNR is possible changes to the site. There was a lifeguard on duty at one time. Perhaps this is something we reestablish at Haserot. **Chown:** stressed that public comment will be taken on the design prior to any finalization of the project so that this will be an inclusive process between the public and the township board.

**William Rudolph, 4784 Forest Ave.:** last week my grandson was here who is five years old. He is the fifth generation of this lineage to be able to enjoy Old Mission and the waters here. We are not voters here, only part-time residents of the peninsula for six months of the year. Is interested in maintaining the ambiance of the Old Mission community to the best of our ability. There is a closeknit sense of community here. When you look at what happened with the residents here and [preserving] the Dougherty House, this is a special thing. We like the environment here along with the agricultural setting. We are also interested in the history as this is a special place with the Dougherty House and the Old Mission church. We do have some concerns here such as suburban-type development in the area. We know it is difficult to stop that type of development but it also breaks down community values. We are also concerned about overuse of our resources. We see this in the summertime with the encroachment of boaters into Old Mission Bay. Boats come from Elk Rapids and have parties. A larger boat ramp could cause even more congestion. Is encouraged by the memorandum that is being proposed but hoped it would be in the form of a resolution. Likes the way this is going in terms of a low-impact facility. Thinks the board is on the right track.

**John Jacobs, 5290 Forest Ave.:** thanked the board for listening to the comments from last month's meeting. Is refreshing having spoken before the previous administration to have a board that actually listens. As outlined, this plan has a lot of benefits that might be acceptable to a lot of people. As discussions continue, asks the board to keep in mind the parameters being offered: one lane, shallow water, no increase in parking, and retaining township control of the launch. Has a few concerns as Kelley Park has a lot of land and in a few years a different administration in the township or DNR could decide to make this a larger facility. Would like some assurance that what is being built will stay that way and that it won't become Disneyland. Bill Hyslop has done an admirable job of researching the lake levels and graphed this beautifully. Thinks it is also worth checking out with another source before moving forward just to ensure that you can float something larger than a paddleboat in a low water year. People swim at Kelley Park as well. One of the big motivations for moving the launch from Haserot to Kelley is to get the boats away from the swimmers but don't be fooled into thinking there won't be swimmers at Kelley too. You may want to be prepared to address that. Thank you for making this an ongoing discussion and for treating us like your friends and your neighbors.

**Hannah Matthews, 18625 Mission Road:** lives across from Kelley Park. Knows from personal experience living across Kelley Park since the DNR picked it up that the number of boats coming across from Elk Rapids has increased. We cannot control people's behaviors and attitudes but there is a lot of bad behavior and attitudes that come across. They do not respect the people who are there swimming; they turn their music up and let their dogs and kids out to do their business. In spite of nicely asking them to turn the music down, they are disrespectful. What is the point of bringing more people to the area that we love and cherish? Doubts there is any financial gain in bringing more people. Pure Michigan has done too good of a job of advertising Michigan. Would like to see this area stay as original as it was but realizes this may not be possible.

**Manigold:** regarding the boat launch, there would be buoys out there so the boaters would have to respect not going into a launch area but they would be able to access the swimming area. We are all here because we live here and we want to do what is right. In the construction, we can do everything possible to minimize any concerns. The best thing to do is to have ownership so that we maintain control.

**Linda Keely, 19535 Brinkman Road:** appreciates how much the board has listened to the people. Thinks it is a good plan to start with and that the board will continue to hold open hearings and receive input from the citizens. Is encouraged that the best plan will be put in place for all parties.

**John Andrus, 19088 Eastern Road:** has sat back and watched and listened to this process for several years now. Has heard a lot of stories and a lot of facts but very little to back them up. Has also heard a lot of personal interest being shoved into this thing but, again, very few facts. You keep stating that the parking is the problem on Swaney Road. You are even proposing to abandon Swaney Road to make more parking for a season that last between the middle of June to the middle of August. Does that make any sense? If parking is the problem and the swimmers and sunbathers who park there are causing the problem, then instead of taking a perfectly good boat launch that is exiting into deep water and moving it over into an area that the DNR does not want to put a launch in because it's been proven it will cost too much to dredge it, why wouldn't you just move the swimming area over there and leave the boat launch at the current site? You would not have to abandon anything and it wouldn't cost you anything. It's common sense.

**Manigold:** closed the public hearing and returned the issue to the board for comments.

**Wahl** moved to approve the five-step memorandum.

**Chown:** before we do that, my understanding of the intent of the land gift given to the township by the Hyslop family is that there cannot be a structure on that land, and right now the township is violating that agreement. Should the Hyslops wish to do so, they could enforce the agreement the township signed off on and have that land returned to them for non-compliance. So, if I understand this correctly, the boat launch does need to be moved from where it currently is at Haserot Beach.

**Meihn:** yes, you are right.

**Chown:** it means a great deal to honor the intent of that gift.

**Meihn:** you have to honor it or you're in violation of the agreement.

**Chown:** is very much in favor of eliminating that launch altogether and constructing a similar launch down the beach at Kelley Park with minimal impact consisting of a single lane, shallow draft, and minimal parking. Keep it low maintenance and low key in order to keep the character of Kelley Park the way it is currently. Wants to maintain the endangered grasses and low swale areas with one of the most scenic views in all of northern Michigan.

**Bickle:** thinks this is a starting point and the direction we are heading towards; it doesn't mean tomorrow there will be a new launch. There will be more public hearings and input; this is simply to inform the DNR that we are not going to take the grant for Kelley. With the direction of our residents, we are going to restart and revisit the process. This is very constructive and clear.

**Meilnik:** the removal of the ramp is part of the five-step process or description that was outlined.

**John Andrus, 19088 Eastern Road:** spoke with Mary Shultz who was the elected official in charge when the launch was moved from Bay Street. She was asked if a survey and engineering study had been done; she replied yes to both. If an engineering firm was paid to do a survey and study on where the launch should go and it got put in the wrong place, then why are we responsible for that financially and why after 25 years would the Hyslop family allow that?

[The board did not allow public debate.]

**Manigold:** was told by the family that they will not press anything, and they did sign off to allow a basketball court. This would be in their control if they were to take action, but, as indicated in many of their letters, they are happy to have the launch removed and relocated to Kelley.

**Moved by Wahl to approve the memorandum to: 1. respectfully decline to sign the proposed grant agreement with MDNR in recognition of additional public input indicating significant opposition to the project location and the understanding that moving the project is not possible. 2. Acquire Kelley Park from the MDNR or enter into a long-term lease that retains township control of the park and its assets. 3. Develop plans for a similar but alternative project at Kelley park that includes a single lane shallow water launch accommodating up to a 2.5 foot draft, a launching area for non-motorized boats, low-impact vehicular movement/parking areas with minimal added parking, and signage. These plans would include identifying possible alternative and measures to minimize impacts on neighboring properties. 4. Present alternative project to area and township residents for feedback and plan design development. 5. Take steps to re-apply for MDNR funding (as early as spring 2000), sign a new agreement, and proceed to build all or a portion of the proposed project at Kelley Park. This project would include removing the existing boat ramp, riprap, and dock at Haserot and restoring the swimming beach, seconded by Bickle as read with all five points. Roll call: Manigold-yes, Bickle-yes, Wahl-yes, Sanger-yes, Wunsch-yes, Achorn-yes, Chown-yes.**  
**Passed 7-0**

#### 9. Citizen Comments

**Linda Keely, 19535 Brinkman Road:** a long time ago when the launch was on the other side of Haserot and the property next to it was owned by the Brittens [Keely's ex-husband's grandparents], it was high entertainment to sit on the beach and watch cars and trucks try to launch boats from there. John Andrus's dad who always came with his tractor to pull people out, and he may have made money doing that.

[Board and audience laughter]

#### 10. Board Comments

**Wahl:** thanked Fred [Gilstorff, the fire chief] and the fire staff who volunteered for the Ironman Triathlon. They gave a lot of support and were very encouraging. The only way it would have been better is if Old Mission Peninsula had been part of it but understands why it wasn't.

**Manigold:** received a proposal from Ginger [Schultz, the lighthouse manager]. Every once in a while, the township receives a proposal from someone wishing to use the property to shoot a commercial, and a request came in to use the lighthouse. They pay to use the grounds, and we have to make sure they have insurance coverage.

**Chown:** a few individuals think they've spotted piping plovers at the Moorings property. Did some research on this and will add this information to the minutes in an addendum.

**Bickle:** as treasurer, always wants to make sure that what is owed to the township gets paid.

**Hodges:** all projects have been closed out and the board has accepted them. All the documentation and paperwork was forwarded to the road commission back in June. Worked with Brad [Bickle, the treasurer] to reach out to Mr. Gillman, which expedited the process. In the past few weeks, has been in contact with the accountant for the road commission. Provided budget information along with the history, as this person is new. Have exchanged emails. This has been kicked back to the engineering department for their signoff.

#### 11. Adjournment:

Moved by Wahl to adjourn, seconded by Sanger.

Passed unam

Adjournment: 8:02 p.m.

**Treasurer**

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**From:** Treasurer <treasurer@peninsulatownship.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2019 9:28 AM  
**To:** 'Jason Gillman'  
**Cc:** 'Jason Gillman'; 'Brad Kluczynski'; 'supervisor@peninsulatownship.com'; 'Jennifer Hodges'; 'Craig Goodrich'; 'Marge'; 'Becky Chown '  
**Subject:** RE: Hello from Brad Bickle @ Peninsula Township - Road Projects left incomplete

Jason,

What is the latest update on my residents' concerns about the incomplete nature of Island View Road and Bowers Harbor road? I plan to speak to it tonight as it has been many months since I first asked you after a Town Board meeting to personally assess. I did receive your response below – but respectfully I really can't 'decipher' what is being stated.

Separately I have been asking Gordie Fraser the status of the \$183,095.21 that is obligation from the Road Commission as it pertains to all our Special Assessments Road and Drain commitments since 2017. Further our representative at GFA is providing me all the backup documents in which many attempts over the past 90 -120 + days to collect seem to be going ignored.

i plan to bring both items along with supporting documentation tonight at our Board Meeting in an effort to update them and our concerned residents.

All the best,

Brad Bickle  
Peninsula Township Treasurer  
13235 Center Road  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
Office (231) 223 – 4484  
Fax (231) 223 - 7117

**From:** Jason Gillman [mailto:tech@icunet.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 29, 2019 3:45 PM  
**To:** Treasurer <treasurer@peninsulatownship.com>  
**Cc:** Jason Gillman <jgillman@gtcrc.org>; Brad Kluczynski <bkluczynski@gtcrc.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Hello from Brad Bickle @ Peninsula Township - Road Projects left incomplete

Brad, we have been following up on this, and in fact discussed it at length this last Thursday during our meeting. You can watch the discussion on upnorth media if you like. It is later in the meeting near the end.

The engineer is recommending an easement offer for a section of the property at this point to satisfy it more easily while providing the drainage for the road necessary for safety. I should note that we are not responsible (yet) for the MDOT portion which is clearly more of an issue, but we are attempting to make all parties satisfied just the same. We are looking forward to that eventuality as well.

Nancy should be hearing from someone soon if she has not already.

cc: MGR



Jason Gillman  
Industrial Covert Unlimited LLC  
PO Box 5449 Traverse City, MI 49696  
231-932-9550

On 7/29/2019 2:33 PM, Treasurer wrote:

Jason,

Following up from our conversation after a recent board meeting during which I communicated that residents are unhappy about the current 'incomplete' state of Island View Road and Bowers Harbor Road. I trust you did take the time to drive them to see for yourself of what I am speaking to. Please advise me of when those roads are scheduled to be completed as I want to be able to answer residents when they ask. Feel free to call with any questions or clarifications as necessary.

All the best,

Brad Bickle  
Peninsula Township Treasurer  
13235 Center Road  
Traverse City, Mi 49686  
Office (231) 223 - 4484  
Fax (231) 223 - 7117

## Treasurer

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**From:** Jason Gillman <tech@icunet.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2019 10:00 AM  
**To:** Treasurer  
**Cc:** 'Jason Gillman'; 'Brad Kluczynski'; supervisor@peninsulatownship.com; 'Jennifer Hodges'; 'Craig Goodrich'; 'Marge'; 'Becky Chown '  
**Subject:** Re: Hello from Brad Bickle @ Peninsula Township - Road Projects left incomplete

Brad, my apologies for any confusion.

To follow up on our phone conversation

Also after reviewing the email chain, I apparently had been thinking about the wrong intersection/road. I agree, the Island view road section for a stretch should be looked at with a little more discerning eye. We will follow up, and understandably those critically looking at our takeover of center road/M-37 are paying attention.

As for the \$183K, the invoices have not been on our radar, and this was the first I, or the manager had been apprised of the claim. Brad is following up on this as we speak, and we shall get to the bottom of it.

Jason

Jason Gillman  
Industrial Covert Unlimited LLC  
PO Box 5449 Traverse City, MI 49696  
231-932-9550

<http://cul.com>

On 8/27/2019 9:43 AM, Jason Gillman wrote:

As for "incomplete nature" I am not sure what you are asking.

Deciphering: There is a drain that runs across M37 (center) there are things our engineers would like to do to complete this, and it may require additional easement from the property owner.

As for the status of \$\$\$ you mention, I am completely unfamiliar with this.

Jason

Jason Gillman  
Industrial Covert Unlimited LLC  
PO Box 5449 Traverse City, MI 49696  
231-932-9550

**Treasurer**

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**From:** Jason Gillman <tech@icunet.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2019 12:17 PM  
**To:** Treasurer  
**Cc:** Jason Gillman; Brad Kluczynski  
**Subject:** Island view, bowers harbor answers

From Brad:

Island View and Bowers Harbor were both wedged in preparation of a chip seal. Due to the shortage of aggregate, we have not completed all of our chip seals for this calendar year. Those that were chip sealed are now waiting on weather to be fog sealed and should be by the end of the week. If the chip seal has not been completed, we will be trying to still accomplish this in the first two weeks of September. If the aggregate does not make it in time, it will need to wait until spring to be chipped

As for the other, apparently the project was apparently never closed out. Brad will reach out to you later with more information.

Jason

Jason Gillman  
Industrial Covert Unlimited LLC  
PO Box 5449 Traverse City, MI 49696  
231-932-9550

## **Addendum Regarding Possible Piping Plover Sighting at Kelley Park**

Several residents I see regularly at Kelley Park have reported spotting piping plovers, which are on the endangered species list, along the shoreline this summer. I'm a big fan of piping plovers and have watched them with interest at Wilderness State Park over the years. Knowing this bird typically prefers wide, sandy, lonely stretches of beach with rocky areas to lay and camouflage their eggs in, I did some research and made a few phone calls.

I learned that, historically, piping plovers do not nest on the Old Mission Peninsula, although a different species, the semi-palmated plover, has been seen at Lighthouse Park over the years. That type of plover is not endangered. It looks a lot like the piping plover, as do sanderlings, Wilson's plover, and the snowy plover. In fact, these species look so much alike that it typically takes an ornithologist to tell them apart. You can see pictures of all these birds at the website [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org). You can also look up plovers and other endangered plants and animals online at the MI Natural Features Inventory.

I also learned that migratory season is now concluding for the piping plover. This season lasts from the third week of July to the second week of September, while nesting season goes from late April through the third week of July.

I'm not sure when the sightings first occurred, but people frequently bring dogs to Kelley Park, and the beach is narrow this year with few pebbles or rocks. This makes me wonder if the birds that were sighted might be piping plovers stopping here to forage while heading south during their lengthy migratory period or possibly a different species of plover altogether.

Thanks, everyone, for your interest and concern, and please chime in if you have any additional information or pictures.

Becky Chown