



Local News

SH Twp. approves covenant for Lake Michigan frontage

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Published: Sunday, December 18, 2011 1:06 PM EST

SOUTH HAVEN - South Haven Township has given its support to the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy by imposing a restrictive covenant on the 27-acre Pilgrim Haven site along Lake Michigan.

The restrictive covenant will be recorded along with the deed when the property transfers this month to the land conservancy from the estate of Sue Upton DeLano Parish, Township Supervisor Ross Stein said.

The covenant will assure that the former church camp property, which features 800 feet of Lake Michigan frontage, will remain undeveloped in perpetuity and maintained for limited public use, he said.

The Township Board approved the action Thursday night at the request of the land conservancy. The covenant was required by the estate as part of the land transfer, expected to be completed by Jan. 1, land conservancy Executive Director Pete Ter Louw said Friday.

The land conservancy had agreed to keep the site undeveloped anyway, but the covenant simply provides one more public, written documentation of that intent, Ter Louw said.

"It's an amazing gift," he said.

The Camp Fire Girls of Chicago in 1911 opened a camp at the site, off 18th Avenue. The property was sold to the Michigan United Church of Christ's Congregational Church in 1948. That camp, called Pilgrim Haven, remained in operation until it was sold and closed in 1986.

In other township news, the board appointed township Trustee Mel Jessup to serve on a Van Buren County committee set up to study issues related to the platted Syndicate Park subdivision along Lake Michigan in the township.

The subdivision includes many small, tax-reverted lots now owned by the county. The committee will study a wide range of issues with the property, including untangling legal questions on easements, roads and future land uses and development ideas, Stein said. The county has enlisted the help of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission to help the committee sort out the matter, he said.

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