

THE BAY CITY TIMES

The point is history for developer on Tawas'es' sandy spit

Thursday, December 07, 2006

The Ohio developer who is building The Cottages at Tawas Point condominiums is completing what nobody else would do.

Larry LaPointe, with the help of his daughter Lisa LaPointe, is preserving the maritime history of the Tawas'es.

Bravo!

When LaPointe bought 371 feet of waterfront property last year, there were fears that the former home of the local U.S. Coast Guard station would fall to the wrecking ball.

The developer, it turns out, appears more interested in local history than the local folks.

He offered the old structure, built in 1876 for the U.S. Lifesaving Service, to any preservation group that would have it.

Sadly, none came forward.

So LaPointe is spending \$500,000 to restore the place on that sandy shore. He'll use it as his own home.

The historic structure is saved.

Complete with a lookout room atop the roof, a widow's walk and red-and-white paint, it'll look as it did around the turn of the last century.

Local landmarks are worth saving.

Just look at the Tawas Point Lighthouse. What would the point be without it, and the state's restoration of that historic beacon?

Why, it would be just like the waterfront down in the towns of Tawas City and East Tawas.

There, the citizens uttered few words of protest before wrecking balls this fall crumbled the former city hall, called the Greystone Building, and that marvelous, old curiosity, the Detroit & Mackinac Railway roundhouse.

We'll never see their likes again.

Not everything that is old is worth saving. But landmarks such as these surely were.

Thanks to the LaPointe family, one of the few remaining reminders of a bygone era on that wild, windswept spit of sand called Tawas Point will remain.

If the community can't - or won't - save these structures, it at least owes those who do its heartfelt thanks.

Thank you, LaPointe's. You are a welcome and valuable addition to Northeast Michigan.