

Concept plan for lakefront pavilion gets thumbs up

Written by KRISTYN HALBIG ZIEHM
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 18:30

Board backs proposal for picnic building that would also memorialize drowning victims

A concept plan for a proposed picnic pavilion that would be placed on Port Washington's coal dock as a memorial to two recent drowning victims was approved Tuesday by the city's Design Review Board.

The pavilion, planned by the Port Washington Waterfront Safety Advisory Committee, would stand as a memorial to those who drowned off the city's shores, including 15-year-old Tyler Buczek, who drowned off the city's north beach on Sept. 2, 2012, and 23-year-old Peter Dougherty, who drowned while kayaking on March 11, 2012.

The octagon-shaped, open-air pavilion features a second floor lookout offering 360-degree views of the city and Lake Michigan that would be lit at night.

The heavy timber and metal-roofed structure would be 30 feet in diameter and be built in a prominent position near the main parking area in Coal Dock Park.

Architect Mike Ehrlich told the Design Review Board that the committee wanted to build something that wouldn't simply be a memorial but instead would be functional.

Board member Jorgen Hansen asked how the memorial would be incorporated into the design, saying the two uses seem disparate.

"I'm wondering how to separate the two activities," he said. "Intuitively, I don't think it (the memorial) should be right next to where people are sitting and eating lunch, laughing.

"I like the whole concept. I'm just taken aback with how you can merge these two things so directly."



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Fire Chief Mark Mitchell, a member of the board, concurred, asking, “Is it going to grow with stuffed animals, plantings and other things left there on anniversaries?”

“That’s a legitimate concern,” said Ehrlich, who told the committee the memorial aspect of the pavilion would take the form of a plaque that could be mounted to the structure or a sign hung or mounted nearby.

Ehrlich said the memorial will be erected once the group has raised the estimated \$90,000 needed to build it. Before construction begins, he said, he will seek final approval from the board.

In other action, the board recommended approval for an expansion of the Yacht Club in Veterans Memorial Park.

The roughly 600-square-foot addition to the east side of the building will provide additional meeting space for the club and a unisex, handicapped-accessible restroom.

It will also allow the club to level off the floor of the building. Currently, there is a 6-inch difference in grade at that side of the building.

Care was taken in designing the addition to ensure it fits in with the existing structure, club member Bill Driscoll said.

“We want people to come in and say, ‘I love this old building,’ not ‘What a nice remodeling job,’” he said.

Plans for the memorial and the Yacht Club addition will be reviewed by the Plan Commission Thursday, March 21.

Contributions to the Tyler Buczek Memorial Fund may be sent to Port Washington State Bank and earmarked for the pavilion.

Image Information: A DRAWING shows a memorial pavilion to be built in Coal Dock Park to honor those who have died in Lake Michigan off Port Washington’s shore — including Tyler Buczek and Peter Dougherty, who both drowned last year. The pavilion was approved by the Port Washington Design Review Board Tuesday and will be reviewed by the Plan Commission Thursday, March 21.

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