

## Presentation on Sailing on Barton Pond

Cathy Gendron – Barton Boat Club

### Brief History

- Dam built creating Barton Pond in 1912- 1914
- Boathouse built by DTE from utility poles circa 1920
- Built as a clubhouse for DTE employees who settled around the dam
- Barton boat club began in 1937
- Barton Hills Village incorporated in the 40s
- Club has leased the land ever since
  - \$2500 a season to rent; club does maintenance of docks, yard, repairs
- Hydroelectricity decommissioned in the 60s
- Until the mid-1980s Detroit Edison used a “winter drawdown”, lowering the water each year to allow for dam maintenance, control erosion and (we think) curtail weed growth. The City discontinued the practice in the mid to late 1980s.

### Club membership

- Open to the public, not part of Barton Village, not part of Barton Country Club
- Barton Boat Club has always emphasized racing sailing. Club began with Rhodes Bantams, which were replaced with Snipes (2-man boat) in the 60s; later added Lasers (single-handed boat) to the fleet. For a short period of time they also raced wind-surfers but, due to unfavorable wind conditions and water quality issues, eventually discontinued the practice.
- Membership has varied; Village limited membership to around 80 members; anyone from Barton Village may join at any time; for many years they were filled to capacity and had a waiting list; held two regattas every year with as many as 50 boats participating in each event; typically 30 boats for a regatta. The club has always encouraged new members, looking particularly for those interested in racing.
- Current membership is at about 30; discussion of shutting the club down because money is so low; kept open for tradition (waiting list has not existed in last 10 to 15 years)
- Requirements for the club – must own a class boat; Dues are \$285 annually with a \$100 initiation fee for new members.

### Weed control history

- In 1999 or 2000 began looking at weed issues
- Suffering from Eurasian milfoil, curly pond weed, coontail and other species
- Looked at weed control options – considered harvesting, chemical and biological controls; eventually contracted with Envirotech for weevil seedlings (seed milfoil with weevils and twist them onto other milfoil plants) → very good control of milfoil, still have a problem with other invasives; financed with Club resources (\$12,000) and a generous rent abatement for several years from the Village
- With the help of Laura Rubin and the HRWC formed a committee to study the issue; committee eventually proposed a draw down again as a 1 year test – theoretically the drawdown exposes the weed roots and seeds to freezing, thus

killing the plants; a two-month period of time was proposed to guarantee a solid freeze → Due to several questions raised, the proposal was withdrawn (Matt and Laura: Calculated a loss of \$15,000 from lost power generation, timing was bad, budget was crunched, loss of pressure at the turbine, uncertainty about what will effectively control species – if you reduce one or more species, could it create more opportunity for other invasives to take their place? We can drop the Barton dam 3 feet, no in-between options; at this level drop drinking water can still be provided)

- Tom: Aerial photography? Would need at least 3 sampling times across the summer to show different species distribution
- Matt: Limnotech report is a baseline vegetative study - \$20,000 study; they used aerial photos but literally went out with a boat and GPS; bioassessment sites
- Program in place to measure success if the river is drawn down; wanted to do internal monitoring; cataloging, photographing, watching species
- Wendy: Is this a priority based on the number of residents using this space? If controlling the weeds is going to have a benefit for how the river is functioning, that is different.
- Matt: Water plant does have concern about the weeds for those problematic at the water intake; goal for the city to have the same management strategy in all the ponds
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Other issues:

- Geese
- Zebra mussels
- Runoff from upstream
- Public access: the club would be interested in creating a better public access to the space