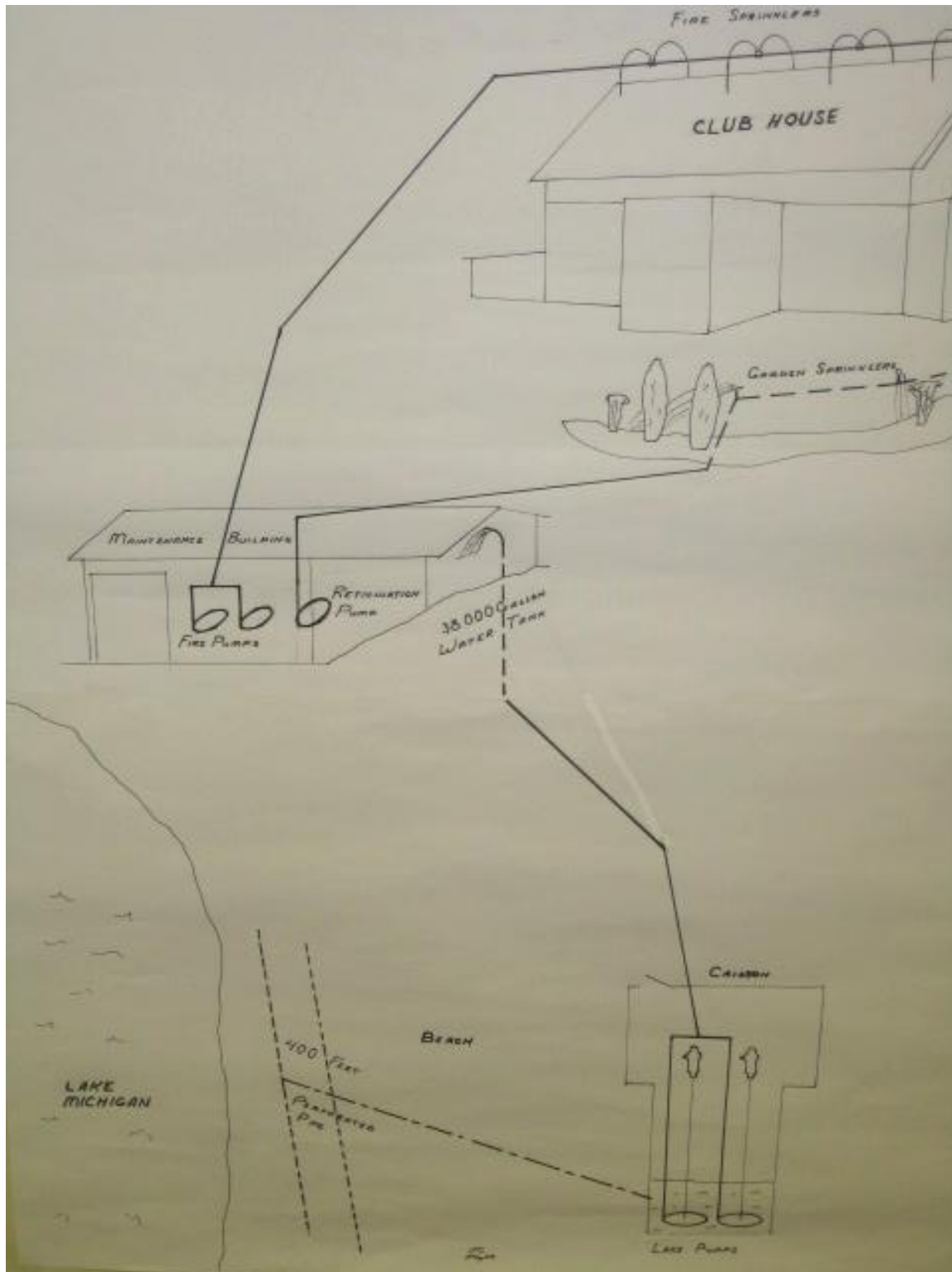


Regrettably, this excellent story of Irv's could not be included in the Beachcomber due to formatting issues.

The Ed. 6/4/09

### The Story of the DA Pumps



Many of you may not know that Dune Acres has a water supply system which includes a water inlet pipe under the beach north of the Clubhouse. This inlet empties by gravity into a well under the caisson by the beach. When construction was underway of the new inlet pipe, we had to bulldoze a road

from the beach up to the caisson to get equipment up there! There are two pumps in the well which pump the water up to our 38,000-gallon tank in the south end of the maintenance building by the Clubhouse. This tank is kept full at all times. At the back of the maintenance building are three pumps, two of which have been converted to fire pumps for the Clubhouse and the third has been piped for irrigation of some of the Clubhouse gardens.

There is adequate capacity if additional piping were added to water more of the garden area and/or the lawn. The soil, as you know, is very sandy and regular watering has a big benefit for those gardens and lawn.

## The History

As you all know, we now buy our water from the Indiana American Water Company (IAWC). The water, flowing from an inlet pipe not far from the center of Gary, comes from a tunnel that runs north under the streets, buildings, highways, railroads and the US Steel plant to a point about a mile out in Lake Michigan.

But before we started buying our water from IAWC, we had a very nice water pumping station of our own to supply our water needs for many, many decades, primarily for the East side of Dune Acres.

Plans were made in 1995 for additional lots on the West side. To serve more homes, the Town started a number of improvements. Larger lines were installed to improve the pressure on the West side, including larger and additional parallel lines. Recognizing that better pumping facilities were necessary, our water department installed two new high-pressure pumps. This was a major improvement since it included new electrical distribution and the latest electrical controls with high efficiency variable speed motors. This equipment was commissioned in 1998 and proved very successful in improving pressure and reliability.

But the Lake level was not as high as it is now and in the summer of 1999 trouble was brewing for us, though we were blissfully unaware of it at the time. Running under the beach sand just down from the Clubhouse there was 200 feet of inlet pipe which collected water for two "well" pumps located just up from the beach. Each of these two pumps experienced severe maintenance problems and had to be reworked. When the weather turned cold and the ground froze, we learned what was happening. One day we woke up and the pumps were shut down due to low water in our reserve tank at the maintenance building. The tank was empty and little to no water was coming from the Lake. After a contractor dug down to put a TV camera in the pipe, we learned that our inlet pipe was just not sufficient. In the freezing cold January 2000 (and it was COLD), 400' of stainless pipe was buried in "imported" sand (from out of state to meet government regulations) which more than doubled our inlet volumes.

But the State regulatory agencies were beginning to get more restrictive, primarily because there were a lot of small municipalities which were using well water and the testing, surveillance and treatment was suspect. The requirements were becoming so prohibitive, a "marriage" was arranged in 2004. As it turned out, IAWC was looking for customers and made us a good offer which included our rather marginal distribution network but it did not include any of our inlet or pumping equipment.

Why do I mention all this? When the water system was sold in 2004, we were left with a water inlet and pumping equipment which was in excellent shape. The question was what would the Town do with the system?

An obvious choice was to improve fire-fighting capability at the Clubhouse. This idea was accepted and a 4-inch high-pressure line was installed between the Maintenance Building and the Clubhouse. A side benefit was that when the trench was dug for this large pipe, we also put in two water lines, and four utility lines. Subsequently the Clubhouse has had an automatic sprinkler system installed and one of the water lines has been connected to the garden reticulation.

It sounds trivial but the pumping equipment was a substantial capital investment. Certainly if we were going to design a system for fire protection and irrigation now, we would not have chosen the devices which are installed. But as it was, we had them.

We have had a very close lightning strike and some other electrical interferences which have caused expensive electrical repairs. These problems caused some soul searching but the repairs were made. When this work was done, we took many preventive measures to minimize future problems. The quality of the equipment and the wonderful insurance it provides to our Clubhouse overcame any doubts.

There is no reason why this "hidden" asset of ours should not last many years into the future. It will continue to provide the Town with some fire insurance and the Clubhouse gardens and lawn with additional beauty.

*Irv Call*