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TRAVERSE CITY
RECORD EAGLE

August 13, 2003

ELMWOOD TOWNSHIP: Suit to restore man's marina slip a success

He said eviction was due to his vocal criticism

By
Record-Eagle staff writer

GREILICKVILLE - An Elmwood Township resident who accused local leaders of casting him adrift from the municipal marina because he criticized them may again float his boat at a township slip.

Township board members agreed to a settlement that will permit Erik Saxon to return to the marina where he kept his boat for six years.

The township also gave Saxon a \$6,000 credit to be used for fees and services there, Supervisor Noel Flohe said.

"It dismisses any lawsuit threat against the Township without cost to the Township," Flohe said.

Saxon filed suit against Flohe in February, claiming the supervisor evicted him from the marina after he spoke out against township officials.

"The suit is about free speech and due process," Saxon said. "I think the settlement really helps the environment in Elmwood get to a condition where people can speak openly and more freely and I think that's really important."

Saxon is a member of Elmwood Citizens for Sensible Growth, which in 2002 successfully fought Lincoln Meadows, a 55-unit clustered housing development on 138 acres near Lincoln and Bugai roads.

And when the township planned to install a new boat launch ramp at the marina, Saxon wrote a critical letter to the

Army Corps of Engineers. The letter delayed the project, which cost the township \$30,000.

Flohe insists he was not trying to punish Saxon and maintains he lost the spot he had held for six years because he violated rules at the marina. Flohe, however, would not discuss the alleged violations.

"A lot of things were creative allegations," Flohe said. "And I'm not going to go into that."

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