

**PETOSKEY CITY PARK aka SWAN LAKE CITY PARK  
Then THE PETOSKEY ZOO**

**Now THE WINTER SPORTS PARK**

**PETOSKEY CITY PARK aka SWAN LAKE CITY PARK**

*The Petoskey Record*  
*Local & Personal, page 1*  
*Wednesday, July 17, 1907*

**Alligators for the Park.**

Mr. Nathan Montgomery has made a valuable gift to the city park in the shape of four healthy alligators, the largest of which is three feet, and the next in size two and a half feet long. These alligators are famous as being part of the largest catch known to be made at St. Augustine, and at which 25, an old alligator and 24 young ones, were taken. The alligator was well known to hunters for being wily and had been a tempting bait for many an exciting hunt. When caught one toe was found to be shot off and other marks showed it had been shot at and hit a number of times.

The catch represented four generations. Mr. Montgomery was one of the party that caught them. They will be a great drawing card for the city park when installed there.

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*The Petoskey Record*  
*Local & Personal, page 1*  
*Wednesday, July 31, 1907*

The five alligators presented the city park by Mr. Nathan Montgomery, have been installed in their new quarters and attracted a great deal of attention on Sunday. It was certainly amusing to hear the remarks of the children, some of whom had never seen an alligator and did not recognize them from their pictures. The largest one is about three feet long and its age is said to be about 25 years.

*The Petoskey Record*  
*Local & Personal, page 1*  
*August 21, 1907*

Anyone that doubted the wisdom of establishing a city park here should visit our park on a Sunday and see the crowd of men, women and children who take advantage of the holiday to spend a few hours there. The number who were there last Sunday was probably larger than usual on account of the band concert, but long before time for the music it was filled with people who wandered around to look at the animals, or sat down to rest in the shade. The alligators were a source of wonder to many and it was laughable to hear the remarks made about them. They lay perfectly quiet and it was hard to tell whether they were dead or alive they were so motionless. Children inquired if they could climb the fence, if they could jump, etc., and more than one group threw sticks and small stones at them to arouse them to some sort of stunt, but the alligators never moved. The band stand has been placed in a very advantageous position and the music could be heard from all parts of the park and many expressions of appreciation were heard for the fine program given.

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*Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter*  
*Friday, July 9, 1915, page 3*

—A regular sure enough monkey arrived by express Friday for the City park and was taken at once to his new cage there. Mr. Monkey decided to start things the minute he arrived in Petoskey and reaching through the bars of his cage began swiping pencils, books, etc., from the express messenger.

**Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter  
Friday, July 9, 1915, page 3**

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**Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter  
Friday, Sept 3, 1915, page 2**

—The monkey at the Petoskey City park got loose Friday forenoon and kept a number of boys busy chasing him about the east part of the city for several hours. He at last became tired of being chased and left for that part of the city adjacent to the City park. It is not yet known whether he returned to his cage or not.

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....Excerpt from....

Petoskey News-Review

Tuesday February 22, 1977

Cannon reared at hanging of Garfield's Killer

...Tradition reveals that paths lead one up the valley to old City Park, which became the City Zoo and later, Winter Sports Park. The north hill, about half a block west of the north end of Bay View Ave. was known as Flag Pole Hill in the Park. Here was a flag pole and "No. 27" looking over the top of the hill out onto the bay, as if guarding the city of attack by sea.

John Deschermeier visited the zoo and cannon many times as a lad, and recalls that the cannon was still there in 1928. After that, it was stored with its other tube until the Veteran Park was created in 1842, there in wartime and until 1876, it reminded motorists, that America had given her men to defend our precious country...

**Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter  
Monday, July 19, 1915, page 3**

### **MONKEY AT CITY PARK ESCAPED SUNDAY AND WAS CAPTURED MONDAY.**

The monkey at the City park has given his keepers all kinds of trouble since his arrival in Petoskey. The little fellow is about as a monkey can be and knows about how to get out of his cage as slick as anything.

Sunday he unsnapped his chain and was not captured until Monday forenoon when he was discovered in the rear of the Comstock grocery at the corner of Liberty and West Mitchell streets stealing eggs.

He was seen early in the day on the roof of that store and when several men tried to capture him he leaped to the roof of the Charles Ernst residence and then into a tree and reached the ground and disappeared. Later he was caught in the store.

Sunday afternoon several men and boys tried to corner him on Lake street and at one time had him surrounded at the Leach popcorn wagon where the little fellow was having a feast from the corn dropped near the wagon. He was also cornered near the old opera house but managed to get away. His keeper says he now has him behind locked doors and hopes to keep him for at least a few days.

## PETOSKEY CITY PARK aka SWAN LAKE CITY PARK

Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter  
Wednesday, September 8, 1915, page 2

The Petoskey Evening News & Daily Resorter  
Tuesday, September 4, 1917

### LAD OF NINE YEARS IS BADLY CHEWED BY BEAR AT CITY PARK TUESDAY

Edward Locher, nine-year-old son of Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Locher, of De Witt, Mich., who has been spending his vacation with his grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Edward Locher, of 811 East Lake street, was frightfully injured at about 9 o'clock Wednesday morning when one of the bears at the City park chewed a large piece of flesh from the boy's right hip, another piece from his right elbow and also chewed his right foot.

The lad, who has been a great friend of Keeper Stephenson, of the City park, and who has gone with him nearly every day of his stay while he attended the animals there, was with him Wednesday morning while he cleaned the bear pens. Mr. Stephenson warned the lad not to come near the pens while he was inside working but the lad soon forgot instructions and gradually drew closer to where the bears were. He was standing near one of the doors of the pen when one of the bears reached through the bars and caught him with both paws. The bear quickly tore at the lad's flesh and before Keeper Stevenson could secure his club which stood on the far side of the pen, had chewed him quite badly. A few hard blows over the head was about all the bear wanted and he retreated leaving the lad free to crawl out of danger.

He was carried to the Locher home and from there was hurried to Petoskey hospital where his injuries were dressed. No bones were broken and the muscles are not badly injured. He should recover rapidly if complications do not set in and within a few days should be out and about again.

### CITY PARK ELK TURNS MILITANT Tries To Annex More Territory

#### Prepares Secretly and Then Charges Fence; Keeper, Armed With Pitchfork, Retreats 12 Times

The eight-year-old bull elk in the City Park has been running amuck since Sunday morning, and, as a result, Charles W. Stephenson, the park keeper, has been having his hands full.

The elk has a powerful spread of antlers which have developed since he shed his old ones last April. Until a few days ago they were "in the velvet," but on Sunday the animal decided they were hard enough to do business with, and proceeded to begin the demolition of the high wire fence which encloses his domain.

Visitors fled when he began the job, and the keeper and assistants were notified. An attempt to put up another layer of wire proved difficult because the elk objected and pushed the new fencing away with his horns. Finally, with the aid of a pitchfork used as a prod, and a pail of oats, temporary strength was added to the enclosure, and yesterday Mr. Stephenson put in most of his time doubling the number of posts and making secure the extra wiring. The animal would kill some one if he got out, said the keeper.

Mr. Stephenson worked inside the enclosure when he set in the new posts and packed the bedding of both old and new. He worked with a pitchfork handy, but at least a dozen times he had to climb the fence as the animal charged him.

A by-stander, from Grand Rapids, told of an elk in the Grand Rapids park that tore away fencing of heavy logs. One heavy cross log became balanced on the rebel's antlers and he ran between two good-sized trees with it so and broke both trunks square off.

Mr. Stevenson says the animal will become more docile in a few days.

**PETOSKEY CITY PARK aka SWAN LAKE CITY PARK**

Petoskey Evening News  
Wednesday, April 13, 1921, page 1

# MUST KEEP DOGS OUT OF PARKS

**KEEPER STEPHENSON SAYS  
THEY ARE WORRYING  
ANIMALS.**

Charles Stephenson, caretaker at the City park, reports that a number of dogs have been persisting in chasing the newly acquired Michigan deer just placed in the park. All efforts of the keeper, short of shooting the dogs, have availed little and the worrying of these pretty animals continues.

Mr. Stephenson would like to have dog owners keep their animals out of the park, and if this is not done may find it necessary to use a rifle on some of the intruders. According to rules and regulations of this park dogs are not allowed inside its boundaries.

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**The Levering Local**  
**Thursday, January 8, 1925**  
**Page 1**

Petoskey—The big black bear at the city park is dead. He had been at the park for several years and had grown to a great size.

# PETOSKEY WINTER SPORTS PARK

Northern Michigan Review  
January 18, 1951

## City Given Park Land

Petoskey accepted a warranty deed to property at the east end of Winter Sports Park adjoining Bay View-ave. from Mr. and Mrs. William Hodgkiss and Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Douma, at the Monday council session.

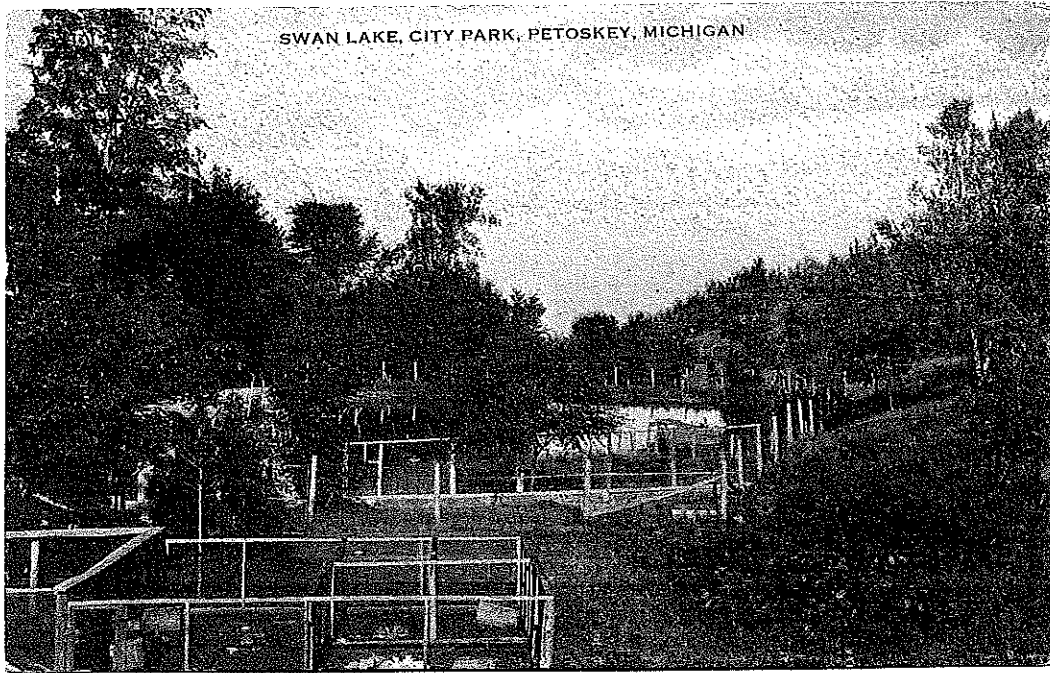
The parcel of land, 150x429 feet, includes a sharp incline which can be used for skiing, bump jumper riding or other such activity. The land was given under a contract with six clauses, which, if violated, will cause the land to revert to the owners.

### Conditions include:

- 1—Land will be used only for parks and recreation for the public;
- 2—No building or signs may be erected;
- 3—No drilling for oil or gas will be permitted;
- 4—No trees or shrubs will be permitted to grow over four feet high;
- 5—Wood posts or rails may be used for a line fence but this must not be higher than four feet and cannot be a solid fence;
- 6—The former owners shall have the right to repair (at their own expense) the underground septic field if such need should arise.

Council expressed thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkiss and Mr. and Mrs. Douma for their generosity and civic mindedness.

# PETOSKEY CITY PARK aka SWAN LAKE CITY PARK



Post card dated, August 18, 1912, Cook Publisher, Petoskey, Mi.



"Driveway" City Park, Petoskey, Mich.

Post card dated, June 20, 1908