

Scio Township

Winter 2011

COMMUNITY REPORT

In this issue:

From The Supervisor's Desk . . . 1

Treasurer's Talk . . . 2

Economic Development 2

Clerk's Corner 3

Planning Commission 3

Land Preservation 3

Roads Committee . . . 4

Anatomy of a Township 5

Shared-Use Pathways 6

Contacts 7

Planning Commission 8

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK – BY SPAULDING CLARK, SUPERVISOR

Township Updates

As of late November, Darrell Fecho, who served as the Township Manager since 2005, has left the Township's employ. The term of his contract expired, and while he will be reviewing his alternatives, the Township Board will similarly take this opportunity to review its future administrative and management needs, all with a view as to what will best serve the Township in the coming years. Until a decision is made, I will reprise an earlier role and will provide additional services as the Township's chief administrator under an agreement with the Township Board, an agreement which is terminable at the Board's will. As we look to the future, the Township Board plans on reviewing all the Township's prospective needs, particularly given the current economic climate in the state.

Jackson Boulevard complete

With major construction of the third phase of the Jackson Boulevard complete, the Township is turning its attention to remaining issues along that roadway, including the completion of the landscaping in the third phase, the replacement of dead landscape materials in the first two phases and looking to add landscape where appropriate. Work has now been completed for the repair of sidewalks and curbing along Jackson Boulevard that had been damaged and cracked. Finally, the Township recently received a Community Initiative Sponsorship award of \$5,000 from ITC Holdings Corp., to be used for community plantings in common spaces, and it is expected that it will be used for additional plantings within the Jackson corridor.

Township receives award

The Township was also pleased to have recently received the honor of being named a five star township as a participating community in the eCities 2010 project. The project was conducted by iLabs associated with the U of M-Dearborn College of Business. The communities were evaluated on multiple factors relating to fostering entrepreneurship and encouraging economic development. Factors evaluated included business/commercial clustering and incentives, growth, policies relating to commercial development, community (environment) and education.

Public Safety talks continue

As noted in prior newsletters, informal discussions continue with representatives of the three municipalities that participate in the Dexter Area-wide Fire

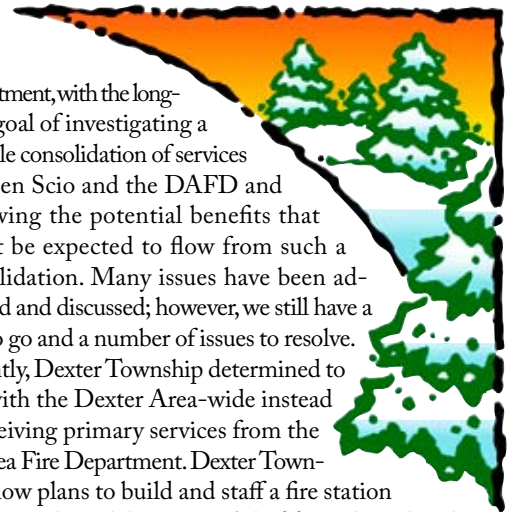
Department, with the long-term goal of investigating a possible consolidation of services between Scio and the DAFD and reviewing the potential benefits that might be expected to flow from such a consolidation. Many issues have been addressed and discussed; however, we still have a way to go and a number of issues to resolve. Recently, Dexter Township determined to stay with the Dexter Area-wide instead of receiving primary services from the Chelsea Fire Department. Dexter Township now plans to build and staff a fire station in the northern lakes area of the Township, thereby improving services within their Township and increasing their ability to participate in the wider region's efforts to improve service levels.

Road improvements

On the road improvement front, Scio Hills Subdivision recently completed a repaving of their subdivision roads and Arbor Pointe Subdivision completed half of their road refurbishment project this year. The Polo Fields and The Uplands subdivisions are currently examining establishing special assessment districts to address the needs of the roads that serve their respective subdivisions, while other property owners are reviewing the need for improvements along Park Road. The Township continues to examine methods of assisting residents and property owners in the effort to improve their roads, given the Washtenaw County Road Commission's lack of funding for residential road maintenance.

Scio receives a donation

In litigation dating back to 1996, I mentioned earlier that the Township had finally prevailed in terminating a non-conforming use in the case of Scio Township v Bateson. This resulted in the closing of a soils and landscape business operating in an agricultural district that had disturbed nearby residents for many years. In resolving open issues with other claimants to the Bateson properties on West Liberty, one of the individuals who foreclosed a mortgage on portions of the Bateson properties has decided to donate that property to the Township, encompassing approximately 10 acres of property. No decision has been made on how



From The Supervisor's Desk continued on page 2

the Township will use the property, given that there are other claimants to the remaining areas whose rights have yet to be determined. More information will follow later.

Encouraging signs in the Township

While the economy remains slow, there have been some encouraging signs in the Township over the past six months or so. The renovations to the Suburban Chevrolet Cadillac dealership appear to be near completion, and Motor City Mini is understood to be establishing a dealership at the old Jim Bradley site, intending to renovate the buildings

entirely. The Tractor Supply building nears completion on west Jackson near Baker Road, and Discount Tire has received approval for a location on Jackson immediately east of the DFCU credit union. Running Fit has completed an expansion of their existing facilities, Bear Claw Coffee has received conditional use approval for a retail outlet at its facilities on Enterprise Drive, and a rezoning was approved for Adventures in Home Brewing to start a wholesale/retail operation on Jackson Road.

Best wishes to all for a happy and prosperous New Year.

TREASURER'S TALK BY DONNA PALMER

Winter Taxes

There is less than a month left for the collection of the 2010 taxes here at the local office. Taxes are due February 14. If you have not received your tax bill, PLEASE call us at (734) 369-9400.

Keep us updated when you move

I am asking again for everyone to make sure we have your

correct mailing address for both the summer and winter billings. The number of returned tax bills for December was just under 100 (96). Postage alone was \$88.00 plus the added staff costs. Summer costs were almost double that amount. A forwarding order at the post office only sends the bill back to the Township and then we must mail it again. Thanks in advance for your help.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BY MARTY MAYO

Our Economic Evolution

The Township established the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) last spring to advise the Township Board on how to respond to evolving economic circumstances – how to address economic problems and pursue new opportunities. This committee has eight members, all of whom are Township residents. The members are: Randy Albert, Spaulding Clark (Township Supervisor), Christin Gleisner, Don Hicks, Gerry Kangas, Marty Mayo, Len Pytlak and Dan Stewart. The EDAC differs from the Township's Downtown Development Association (DDA) in that it is an advisory group without funding. Its charge is to study and identify strategies the Township might take to strengthen and develop Scio's business environment. The DDA is a body with funding authority and a source of funds; it is charged with supporting specific programs in the DDA district that will enable and enhance the business community – e.g. building the sewer system and constructing Jackson Boulevard. The DDA would have the ability to implement a program that the EDAC might recommend to the Township, but the two groups have different functions.

Economic potential identified

The need for such a committee emerged following an economic study of the Township conducted by the Anderson Economic Group of Lansing, which was sponsored by the DDA. The study identified areas of economic potential for the Township and made several recommendations. The EDAC was appointed to review the recommendations and

to carry economic development in Scio further by suggesting specific steps for the Township to pursue.

Scio attractive to "start-ups"

For the past several meetings, the committee has been meeting with local business people and organizations (e.g. SPARK, U. of M. Technology Transfer) to learn about the business environment in Scio and about what opportunities there may be for business development. These meetings have generated information about Township businesses that most EDAC members did not know despite being Scio residents. For example: the Township has a cluster of businesses focusing on medical devices and a high percentage of businesses in the health care area; there are seven business/industrial parks in Scio; and Scio has a retail strength in outdoors, sports, and health oriented services. The committee has also learned that Scio has an advantage in encouraging small, start-up companies to move here because there is a lot of space, rents are fairly low, and there is easy access to Ann Arbor.

Want to know more?

The EDAC plans to continue inviting members of the Scio business community to their meetings, with the goal of learning more about how the Township can support local businesses. We meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Township Hall. Meetings are open to interested residents. The next EDAC meeting (on January 13) will be a review session on what the committee has learned so far and how it should proceed in the next year.

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School Board election in May

Register
to
VOTE!



We're looking forward to seeing a good turnout in May when the Dexter Community School Board will have candidates on the ballot. We will also have the opportunity to vote on WISD's request for a 10-year renewal of the special education millage. This proposal will allow the intermediate school district to levy the special education millage previously approved by the electors. The ballot language for the renewal reads:

"Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Michigan, be increased by .9850 mill (\$0.9850 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, 2011 to 2020, inclusive, to provide funds for the education of students with a disability (above is a renewal of millage which expired with the 2010 tax levy); the estimate of the

revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2011 is approximately \$14,000,000?"

Since this will essentially be a "Schools Election", clerks are allowed to consolidate precincts to save on costs. We anticipate that this will be accomplished for the May election, so please check the Township's

website (www.twp.scio.mi.us) to be sure you get to the right polling place on May 3. The last day to register before the May 3rd School Election is Monday, April 4, 2011. The polling sites will also be determined before the Spring 2011 Newsletter, so check back in the Clerk's Corner then.

Electronic Poll Book

When you voted in November, you may have noted that we have a new 'station'—the electronic poll book (a laptop computer). The program on the computer has the list of voters in each individual precinct. In addition to the laptop, there is a scanner included so when you show your picture ID (usually a driver's license), it can be scanned to automatically pull up your name on the list. We hope that you like the new system because it speeds the process of finding your registration and address. The only information that is saved on this computer is whether or not you came to the polls on Election Day to vote. Once the County and the State have certified an election, the information is completely removed from the laptop.

Election workers needed

Please be sure to thank your election workers as you go through the line. Every one of them works hard to be sure that you have the opportunity to vote. In fact, if you have ever considered working on an election day, please consider giving me a call. We have an application process and the County provides a three-to-four-hour training session. We are currently looking for people who are comfortable working with a computer. It can be a long day, starting at 6 a.m. and usually ending around 9:30-10:00 p.m.

Scio Voter turnout

Do you wonder what the voter turnout in Scio Township was on Election Day in November's General Election? Given that we received 1,992 absent voter ballot requests (14% of Scio's registered voters). Scio's final tallies overall were at 58% compared to 45.8% in Washtenaw County.

Turnouts by Precinct were:

Prec.1, 57%	Prec. 4, 68%	Prec. 7, 52%
Prec. 2, 63%	Prec. 5, 44%	Prec. 8, 67%
Prec. 3, 64%	Prec. 6, 55%	Prec. 9, 58%

Scio Township Celebrates Land Preservation

On November 16, 2010, members of the Scio Township Board of Trustees and Land Preservation Commission gathered in the Township Hall to honor local landowners who have protected their land through the Township's land preservation program. In addition, winners of the Scio Land Preservation Photography contest were awarded their prizes. Nine of the ten properties protected with the assistance of the Township Land Preservation millage were represented at the celebration.

Commissioner Leslie Desmond coordinated the event that saw landowners or their representatives receive plaques honoring their participation in the Township's preservation efforts. Additionally, a large map showing all the preserved properties in the Township was revealed. Approximately 50 Scio residents enjoyed refreshments and shared in the preservation celebration.

Since the passage of "Proposal J" in 2004, the Township of Scio has protected ten properties within the Township covering 569 acres. Four of those properties are open to the public. Using funds raised by the Township millage as well as funding from other governmental agencies when available, Scio has protected farmland, woodlands and open space. For additional information on properties protected with land preservation funds, see www.ScioWatch.com.



Shown with a sample of the new Township Protected Property signage are, from left to right, the following participating landowners/representatives: Norma Green, Nancy VanBlaircum, Neil Stierle, Don Botsford, Dan Green, Paul Scherdt, Betty Fox, Helen Parker, Stan Parker; Front row: Lew Kidder, Karen McKeachie

Roads In Review

Scio has 108 miles of public roads that are, with a few exceptions, in a generally substandard condition.

The Overall Picture

Since this column has previously covered a number of issues affecting roads in Scio Township, a brief review should suffice here. Two facts are preeminent: First, Scio has 108 miles of public roads that are, with a few exceptions, in a generally substandard condition. And second, these roads have reached that unhappy state, not from the standard bogeymen of “waste, fraud, and abuse”, but because we are under-funding them by at least \$500,000 per year. Everything else is details. Why the under-funding? Don't we already pay for them with our taxes? Not really. Our property taxes get divided into a number of parts – schools, libraries, land preservation, fire, law enforcement, county and township government – but nothing for roads. The Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC) gets almost all its funding from the state's gas tax and vehicle registration fees – and while Michigan's gas tax has been 19 cents per gallon (15 cents for diesel) since 1997, that falls considerably short of neighboring states with similar demographic and climate conditions. Ohio's gas tax is 28 cents per gallon, Wisconsin's 32, Pennsylvania's 35.

If that seems a little too dry for you, however, let's consider something a little closer to home. The WCRC currently gets about \$2,900/mile/year from Act 51 for our nearly 60 miles of Township local roads. Uplands Drive (more on this one later) is a 0.2-mile segment that serves as the principal entrance to several major subdivisions lying north of Scio Church Road in the southeast corner of the Township. The road is in lousy shape, but nothing gets done. Why? Do the math. Pulverizing and repaving a road now costs at least \$200,000/mile – but two-tenths of a mile x \$2,900/mile is just \$580. That's right – \$580/year! At that rate, the WCRC could accumulate the necessary capital to fix Uplands Drive in about 65 years. Provided they do no snowplowing, of course.

2009 - Wing Meadows Takes The First Step

Are taxes the only solution? Well, call it whatever you want – but absent a very generous tooth fairy, money for things like this has to come from somebody. Fixing a road takes heavy equipment, drivers, fuel, limestone, asphalt, and engineers. Bottom line? We can duck and dodge all we want – but in the end, that “somebody” ends up being you and me. Wing Meadows, led by the patient but persistent El Wier, was the first Scio neighborhood, at least in modern times, to grasp that essential truth and elect to do something about it. After nearly three years of educational efforts and countless kitchen table discussions, they were able to successfully complete a petition for a Special Assessment District (SAD) to rebuild Wing Drive and Harold Circle. The result? A completely refurbished set of roads. Smooth surface, nice crown, redone shoulders, all driveway entrances merged with the main road. The cost? The original bid was \$124,000, but with \$24,000 from an

innovative incentive program (courtesy of a cooperative effort between the WCRC and the Township), the net bill came to just under \$100,000. That left the cost per household at just over \$3,000, which could be paid up front or stretched in installments over ten years. And if you elected the installment option, interest was a very reasonable 3.5% per annum.

2010 - Scio Hills

Scio Hills is a platted subdivision on the west side of Wagner Road between Miller and Pratt. Developed in the late 1980's, it has 1.38 miles of paved local road, with two major trunk lines (Barclay Square Drive and Coventry Square Drive) and several shorter cul-de-sacs. As 2010 approached, all of the roads were in poor condition. Informed by the experience of Wing Meadows, leaders of the Scio Hills Property Owners Association decided to explore their own SAD. Much education followed, along with a failed petition drive in early 2009. But in 2010, Scio Hills tried again – and this time succeeded. The result was a September-October project that included repaving all of the roads, installing 3,200 feet of new curb and spillway, and extending the pavement to service the several banks of mailboxes within the development. The cost was \$425,000, which when reduced by a \$22,000 incentive from the Road Commission and split among 92 parcels, came to \$4,400 each.

2011 - Uplands On Deck

The Uplands was the first of several developments in the area bounded by I-94 on the east, Liberty Road on the north, and Scio Church Road on the south. The plat consists of two major streets – Snowberry Ridge and Chicory Ridge – along with several short cul-de-sacs. Like Scio Hills, Uplands was built in the late 1980's – and again like Scio Hills, its 1.53 miles of paved local roads were approaching the end of their useful lives. Having learned from the two SAD's that preceded it, the leaders of the development were able to pursue the process in a more efficient manner. They kicked off the campaign at their annual meeting in January 2010, published regular articles in the development's newsletter, enlisted several people willing to do the door-to-door thing – and after initiating the petition drive in September 2010, took only six weeks to get signatures from 97 of the 131 property owners. Actual bids will not be sought for several months, but the project cost is estimated to fall between \$470,000 and \$570,000. The final amount will likely be reduced by a Road Commission/Township incentive of just over \$20,000, which means the final cost for each of the 131 households would presumably fall between \$3,400 and \$4,300. Construction is likely to begin in late summer of this year and take 30-45 days to complete.

Where from Here

Could the SAD process be useful for your neighborhood? In many cases, yes - especially if your streets are entirely residential. In fact, the Polo Fields Homeowners Association is already exploring the possibilities and inquiries have

been fielded from residents in several other developments. Note: If you would like to talk about the streets in your neighborhood, you are invited to call me, Lew Kidder, chairman of the Township's Road Committee, at 662-1000. Unfortunately, however, the SAD process becomes a more cumbersome tool when the road is a major collector. Several nearby neighborhoods have begun to explore the possibility of paving the portion of Park Road between West Birkdale and Zeeb, while another group is looking at a cooperative effort to repair a section of Uplands Drive. We'll have more information on these efforts in a future edition of the newsletter.



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ANATOMY OF A TOWNSHIP - BY JACK KNOWLES, TRUSTEE

What's a Township?

Scio Township is your home - your community! Maybe you have recently moved here, or maybe this is your hometown and you have never lived anywhere else. Whatever your situation, you may not be aware of the types of government that manage your little part of the world. Many questions have been addressed regarding the local "Department of Works," or who is your "Mayor?" These questions come from new, as well as long standing, residents and they reflect a lack of understanding about the type of government that exists here. The information in this article will help you gain an understanding of what the Township can and cannot do to serve its citizens.

General Law Township

The Township of Scio (the official name) is a General Law Township. Townships first came into existence in Michigan through the Northwest Ordinance passed in 1787. They are generally 36 square miles (although in some cases boundaries were not able to be drawn precisely - Scio is less due to parts having been annexed to Ann Arbor), and vary in population. They were originally formed to localize relief for the poor, perform cemetery maintenance, control horse and cattle problems, and assess property values. Though the duties and responsibilities have changed with the times, the scope of the responsibility for the most part has not changed for General Law Townships. Townships that have become "Charter" are able to levy millage on the residents without a vote of the people, but this is not permitted in General Law Townships, such as Scio.

Board of Trustees

Scio Township does not have a mayor or city council because we are not a city. Scio is governed by an elected Township Board of seven people, consisting of the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer (all full time positions) and four Trustees (all part time). The full time officials are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Township, along with having a seat on the Township Board for discussions and decisions of policy. The Trustees are not in the office daily, but mainly serve as policy makers. The seven-member Board meets twice

monthly on a continual basis; however, they occasionally schedule special meetings to handle emergencies or added business. The areas of supervision for the daily functions of the Township office are divided between the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer. Some of the duties are stipulated by statute and others are organized for efficiency in managing the Township.

Services are limited

A General Law Township is funded mainly through State Shared Revenues, and does not have the authority or ability to levy any tax on its residents without a vote of the people. Consequently, the township does not offer street cleaning, refuse hauling, sidewalk maintenance or other services typically provided in a city because taxpayers have not passed a millage to cover those costs. The extra fees that have been levied in Scio include the Proposal J / Land Conservation millage and the Fire special assessment, both of which have been voted in by the citizens of Scio Township. General Law Townships are also prohibited by law to construct and maintain their own roads. The County Road Commission is legally the agency that must care for the roads. That does not prevent the local residents from determining that they want more than the Road Commission can provide, and in so doing can fund additional roadwork through special assessments by working with the Road Commission and the Township

Do you want to know more?

There is far more to your local government than this short article can cover. This includes the connection with county agencies, services provided at the Township Hall, our responsibility with regard to new construction, your Freedom of Information Act rights, ordinance restrictions and many, many more areas. To find out more, contact us at info@twp.scio.mi.us. We will be more than happy to answer your questions or put you in touch with someone who can.

Many questions have been addressed regarding the local "Department of Works," or who is your "Mayor?" These questions come from new, as well as long standing, residents and they reflect a lack of understanding about the type of government that exists here.

Shared-Use Pathways Update

Residents of Scio Township have, for over twenty years now, expressed the need for an “interconnected, multi-modal, easily accessible and safe trail system.”



Scio Township applies for a County Connection Communities Grant

At their December meeting, the Board of Trustees (BOT) passed a resolution stating that the BOT “supports and endorses the submission of the Connecting Communities Application as presented in order to obtain financial assistance in the establishment of the Zeeb Road Non-motorized Trail segment.” The entire application can be viewed at: <https://twp-scio.ewashtenaw.org>.

Background

As was reported in the 2010 Fall Newsletter, Phase 1 of the Non-Motorized Paths Planning Initiative was completed with the release of the Shared-Use Pathways Report. The Planning Commission adopted the report after a public hearing in September and the BOT adopted it the following month. The report is also posted on the above website. Since then, the Paths Technical Advisory Group (PTAC) has been working on Phase 2 of the paths initiative, with the goal being to submit a trail segment for a construction grant from the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC). This six-member group (Allison Arscott, Anne Louise Baird, Ryan Buck [Washtenaw Area Transportation Study], David Read, Roy Townsend [County Road Commission], and Coy Vaughn [Washtenaw County Parks]) took the recommendations of the Phase 1 report and, with further analysis, identified a northern portion of Zeeb Road as the top priority segment. By November, PTAC completed the Connecting Communities grant application and letters notifying landowners along the Zeeb Road segment were mailed out. The BOT resolved support December 14th and the application was submitted December 27th.

Zeeb Road Shared-Use Trail/ Pathway – Phase 1

The Zeeb Road trail segment runs north from the end of the sidewalk in front of the County buildings to the Huron River. The segment is divided into three phases: 1) County buildings north to Dexter-Ann Arbor Road; 2) Dexter-Ann Arbor Road north to the south end of the bridge crossing the Huron River; 3) the south end of the bridge to Huron River Drive. The Connecting Communities grant application is for funding of Phase 1 of the Zeeb Road trail. The conceptual plan calls for a 10-foot wide paved surface trail on one side of Zeeb Road with a 10-foot wide boardwalk crossing the wetland at the Township hall. Conceptual diagrams have been developed and can be viewed on the Township website. The proposed route shown on the diagrams is conceptual only, and the actual alignment may vary significantly as design and engineering concerns account for a number of variables including public input and landowner considerations.

Benefits

Residents of Scio Township have, for over twenty years now, expressed the need for an “interconnected, multi-modal,

easily accessible and safe trail system.” Surveys, visioning sessions and public hearings have consistently listed pedestrian/bike trails, along with preservation of open space as the top goals for the Township. This trail initiative is a huge step in meeting this stated need. Further, the Zeeb Road Trail offers these other benefits:

- Improves connections to other Township recreation areas such as the County Border to Border Trail developing along the Huron River, the Burns-Stokes Preserve and the Fox Science Preserve;
- Provides the first truly north-south non-motorized connection in Scio Township from Jackson Road, eventually to Huron River Drive;
- Links some of the newer high density developments located on South Zeeb Road to the north half of the Township;
- Allows access to Jackson Road business district by residents north of I-94;
- Increases opportunities for more citizens of all ages to move safely around the Township via non-motorized methods;
- Creates an environment for better physical fitness.

Costs and Funding

A cost estimate based on the conceptual diagram was prepared and is part of the grant application. The Phase 1 trail segment is estimated to cost a total of \$530,000 and includes costs for design and engineering services (\$40,000), acquisition of easements (\$50,000), construction (\$380,000), and construction oversight (\$60,000). The Connecting Communities grant application requests funding for only the construction costs of \$380,000. Begun in 2009, the Connecting Communities program is a 5-year effort to help communities expand the trail network in the County, allocating up to \$600,000 each year for the construction of non-motorized trails and accessory improvements. The local community must be prepared to commit a minimum of 25% funding to the project. The source of the local funds is yet to be determined but may include in varying degrees the Scio Township General Fund, Scio Township Land Preservation Fund (for acquisition of trail easements only as allowed by the millage), a special one-time millage, voluntary user fees and/or a newly-created trail association/foundation.

More to come

The WCPARC will announce the Connecting Communities grant recipients in March. Hopefully, with a grant in hand, the Paths Technical Advisory Committee will move forward with grant applications to other state and federal entities in an effort to leverage the costs of this project, thereby maximizing our local dollars. The Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission, the Paths Technical Advisory Committee and the Paths Study Group all look forward to working with the residents of Scio to move this initiative forward. Stay tuned for announcements of future public meetings to be offered to field questions, concerns and ideas and to find ways to accommodate all of the interests.



Get involved in your community

Scio Township Information

Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 369-9400; info@twp.scio.mi.us
visit us at: www.twp.scio.mi.us

Township Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Utility Department Hours:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Utilities emergency: (734) 651-4770
Utilities Administration: (734) 369-9350

Township Board of Trustees

Spaulding Clark, Supervisor
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James Merte – Assessing

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County Building Inspection Services . . . (734) 222-3900

The Scio Township Community Report

Is published quarterly by the Scio Township Board of Trustees for the residents of Scio Township.

Editor
David Read
Graphic Design
Julie Tanguay
Photographer
David Read

Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall. E-mail sent to townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

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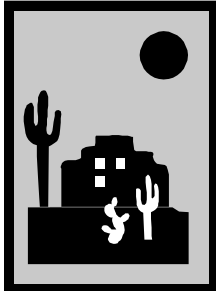
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Their Internet operation, which provides supplies for home brewing hobbyists, has become one of the top ten in this industry nationwide

PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE BY GERRY KANGAS, CHAIRMAN

Planning Commission Update

Changes Have Been Approved for The Scio Sign Ordinance

Changes have been made to *Chapter 36, Sections 367–372 of Code of Ordinances of The Township of Scio*. These changes include clarification in the wording of the ordinance, imposing a 15' setback from the ROW, providing for the use of logos on internal directional signs, allowing up to 2 free standing signs for parcels that have more than 450' of frontage, limiting multiple tenant listings to 3 per sign, and guidelines on illuminated outdoor signs. The sign ordinance amendment can be found on the Township's website: <http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/ordinances>

Mini Cooper of Ann Arbor Dealership coming to Scio Township

The old Jim Bradley dealership (recently relocated to the vacated Saturn dealership) will soon be replaced by Mini Cooper of Ann Arbor. The site plan includes construction of a 12,800 square foot retail building that fronts the north side of Jackson Blvd. Other modifications to the site include removal of the existing dealership building and much of the paved area, new landscaping, lighting, and a new pedestrian plaza on the corner of Wagner and Jackson Blvd. The Mini Cooper of Ann Arbor plan has received final site plan approval and was forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval. Plans are available for viewing in the lobby of Township Hall.

Misty Farm Conditional Use

The Misty Farm conditional use proposal was approved at the December 13th Public Hearing. The application proposed that the existing farmland be utilized as a special event venue. This use would be a commercial land use that is complementary and accessory to the primary agricultural land use and consistent with the Township's Master Land Use Plan for Open Space/Agricultural/Rural properties.

Adventures In Home Brewing, Rezoning

Adventures In Home Brewing has proposed to expand its operations to a second location which they plan to locate in Scio Township. They expect to move all of their Internet operations into a large warehouse located on Metty Drive. Their Internet operation, which provides supplies for home brewing hobbyists, has become one of the top ten in this industry nationwide. No onsite dispensing of alcoholic product will be part of the operation. The rezoning simply changed the current industrial building into a commercial setting - adjacent buildings are already commercial. The operation would be compatible with the Township's retail/commercial zoning. The application was approved at the November 22nd Public Hearing.