

Prairie Township Newsletter



Prairie Township has a new seal...

Over the summer, the Township introduced the seal shown above as its new logo, which will be used on Township documents, vehicles, and wherever else the community is represented. The design on the seal represents the area's natural heritage as home to native prairies and scenic waterways, as well as its agricultural background in the form of a 'Darby Dan Farm-style' board fence.

DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE THE PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER AT HOME?

Just send us an email or call us and request that you be added to the mailing list for the coming year. The newsletter is released twice per year. Contact us at:

thatmaker@prairietownship.org

Or call:

614.878.3317 (x112)

The newsletter can be sent via email or regular mail. Please indicate your preference and include the appropriate address with your request.

PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP MOVES FORWARD WITH WEST BROAD STREET CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

Prairie Township is joining with the city of Columbus and area businesses to move the West Broad Street corridor, between I-270 and Rome Hilliard Road, toward a new era of success and vibrancy. This partnership has laid out the following vision for the area:

A safer community through increased law enforcement protection;

A cleaner West Broad Street corridor through a community improvement partnership;

More jobs and an increased customer base through business development and community improvement programs led by a community improvement partnership;

A more attractive West Broad Street corridor through a streetscape beautification program; and

Creation of a regional recreation center that will **attract new residents and visitors** to the area.

Catalysts for Making Our Vision a Reality...

This vision will become a reality because we will build upon good things that are already happening in the area, like...

Large-scale expansions at Doctors Hospital; and

A \$6 Million Ohio Department of Transportation improvement project planned for the corridor.

Building Blocks for Taking Advantage of This Opportunity...

The building blocks that will put this vision in place are:

A Joint Economic Development District—This tool, created in cooperation with the City of Columbus, will bring employers and businesses together to lead and fund the vision.

Community Improvement Corporation—This tool is a mechanism with which we will bring together a private-public partnership to assemble and rede-



velop underused areas that are adjacent to the corridor and to help maintain the area.

Corridor Planning—This part of the project is already well underway. August saw the completion of a market study and a corridor improvement plan. These efforts were completed with the assistance of VWB Research and the City of Columbus.

Eighty percent or More of Proposed Revenue will go Directly to West Broad Street Vision Projects...

Much of the revenue that *(continued on page 2....)* we are proposing to raise

West Broad Initiative (cont.)

in order to fund these projects is already being collected and sent out of this area to the home jurisdictions of the employees. A JEDD in cooperation with the City of Columbus could generate up to 2% of personal and business income in the district. There are several variables related to the level of income and taxable income in the area, but it is possible that revenue generation would range from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 per year. The majority of these funds are earmarked for direct use on our projects.

A JEDD Will Ensure that Income Taxes Collected Directly Benefit Area Businesses...

Instead of withheld income taxes being sent to other communities, they will be treated like assessments that are collected for the sole benefit of area businesses and the immediate community. Few, if any, businesses

know that their money is coming back to help them in such a direct manner.



Trustees' Report

By Steve Kennedy, Chairman

The Big Darby Accord

The Big Darby Accord has been adopted by 6 of the 10 jurisdictions. This historic multi-jurisdictional effort allows future development in Prairie Township to receive water and sewer service without being annexed. As part of this plan, water and sewer service will be extended from the Columbus system to a designated portion of the western part of the township. (See *Town Center article, Page 5*) Along with providing high quality development in Prairie Township, this extension may present future service alternatives to Darby Estates and WestPoint subdivisions. We are taking the first step toward this extension by partnering with the City of Columbus, Brown Township and Franklin County to complete a master plan for the town center. This is a plan to define what the western portion of the township will look like.

West Broad Street Corridor Improvements

We are also working with Columbus to create a Joint Economic Development District that is focused on increasing the safety, improving the quality of life and increasing the commercial vitality of the West Broad Street area. Businesses that enter into this agreement will become partners in helping to fund projects in the corridor that will benefit everyone who lives and works in the Westland Area. The use of this tool allows businesses and workers to help residents (who pay property taxes in the township) pay for needed improvements such as expanded law enforcement and physical improvements.

(continued on page 3)



The Road, Cemeteries and Parks Department recently upgraded two dump trucks. This is part of a Department program to control maintenance costs and ensure that township equipment is always available and ready to serve the public.

Trustees' Report (continued from page 2)



This new medic, which is based at the Hubbard Road fire station, went into service in August 2006.

Fire Department Developments

The fire department took delivery on a new medic back in August of last year. Also, the fire department recently added six new part-time firefighters. Among other improvements, these new firefighters will allow additional staffing at the Hubbard Road fire station. By the way, don't forget that the firefighters are always willing, when time allows, to help residents with unloading recyclables into the new drop off location at the Inah Avenue firehouse.

Senior Center Happenings

The senior center continues to serve the community by providing services and recreational opportunities to area seniors, as well as other residents. The center has been successful at providing these services while staying within budget restrictions, all of this while increasing its hours of operation. Congratulations are in order for manager Robin Comeans and his volunteer staff.

Zoning Department Activities

The zoning department has taken the lead on several initiatives this year. As always, the department coordinated the spring cleanup and provided support to the summer youth program. In addition, the department has been busy working on implementing Big Darby Accord initiatives and helping to make Prairie's new nuisance abatement process a success in addressing problem properties. Zoning also coordinated the township's cooperation with Municipal Map Publications to prepare a new Prairie Township map and community guide, which is due out this fall. *(Continued on Page 5...)*

Prairie Township Encourages Recycling



The township recently worked with SWACO to install recycling bins at the fire station at 123 Inah Avenue.

The Prairie Township Fiscal Officer is Your Contact for Questions About Street Lights, Records

Lori Montag, the Prairie Township Fiscal Officer, is responsible for keeping records, financial and otherwise, as well as the streetlights in the township. Residents with questions or requests, as well as those wishing to report streetlight outages, should call Lori at 878-3317 (x111) or email her at lmontag@prairietownship.org.

Seeking Alternate Zoning Board Members!

The Township is looking for residents to serve as alternates on both the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Zoning Commission. Send a letter of interest to the Zoning Department; 25 Maple Drive; Columbus OH 43228

Township Cooperates with County to Seize and Remove Derelict Apartments

By Tracy Hatmaker, Township Administrator

Prairie Township has been cooperating with the Franklin County Treasurers office and the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department in efforts to remove three derelict apartment buildings at Mix and Stiles Avenues. The County Commissioners took a big step toward accomplishing this when they voted to land bank the property in July. The township is currently working with contractors to prepare an estimate and scope of work for demolition of the buildings. The site is slated to be cleared this fall.

Senior Center Expands Offerings

By Robin Comeans, Senior Center Manager

The Prairie Township Senior Center, which is located in Lincoln Village Plaza at 4656 West Broad Street, has been in operation since June of 2004. The Center offers a wide range of classes, activities and seminars to seniors age 50 years and up.

One program that the center offers is the 'Lunch and Learn' series. A wide variety of businesses and organizations conduct seminars and provide a free lunch to those in attendance. A few of the businesses scheduled for this fall include Sunset Cemetery, Mount Carmel Hospital and the United Cerebral Palsy / Grace Kindig Center.

The center provides free exercise classes four times a week to seniors in our area. We are able to provide this service to the seniors in our community thanks to a grant from the Mount Carmel Foundation. If you are interested in this or any of our functions call us at 878-5110 or just stop by the center.

Prairie Township Fire Department Wants Everyone to Make the Coming Autumn and Winter Seasons Safe Ones

By Chief Stephen Feustel

As autumn approaches, so does the desire to rid your property of the leaves and prepare your yard for winter. We wish to remind you that burning your leaves is prohibited and could earn you a fine. Consider some of the alternatives: Mulch your leaves back into your yard for a greener spring lawn, drop them off at a recycler such as Ohio Mulch on Roberts Road, or use them on next year's garden to keep the weeds down between the green bean rows. These ideas help improve our environment and avoid creating breathing problems and noxious odors for our neighbors.

According to National Fire Protection Association, 8% of reported home fires started in the bedroom. These fires caused

23% of home fire deaths, 22% of home fire injuries, and 15% of the direct property damage.

Don't become a statistic!

When you change your clocks this fall, change your smoke detector battery. Remove the 99 cent extension cords from radios, televisions, etc. that you are using as permanent wiring. Place candles inside glass containers and don't leave them unattended. Check chimneys, furnace ducts, and dryer vents now – while the weather is still nice.

Above all, move all matches, lighters, etc. up and out of the sight of little children. More than half (54%) of the

people killed in child-playing fires are under 5, and such fires are the leading cause of fire deaths among preschoolers.

Let's have a great fall and winter season by starting with a safe and healthy environment for everyone.



Prairie Township Improves Community Facilities with Creative Funding

By Dave McAninch, Road, Cemeteries and Parks Superintendent

The township trustees received the agreement for the Inah Avenue Improvement project in July of 2007. The township is in the final design stages of the Inah Avenue Improvements project and the project will go to construction in the spring of 2008. The total estimated cost for this project is \$1,420,000.00, \$908,800.00 of which is paid for by the state grant. The townships share of this project is \$511,200.00, which comes in the form of a 0% interest, 20-year loan. This project includes the addition of sidewalks, ADA ramps, curb and gutters, reconstruction of the road including repaving and storm water improvements. The township realizes this work will be an inconvenience to the residents in this area but the end result will be well worth it.

This year was the fifth year for our sidewalk replacement program. We had approximately 20 residents participate this past year. This is a great opportunity to have your sidewalk replaced if need be. The program also allows for replacement of your

concrete aprons. Anyone interested in the 2008 program should call 878-3316 and leave your name, address and phone number. We will contact participants around June 2008 to begin the process by giving an estimate. At this point the homeowners will have to decide weather or not they want to do the work. If they want to do the work, there are two payment options; the first is a 10-year interest free assessment on their property taxes. The second option is

to pay in full before the improvements are made.

In closing, I would like to remind the residents that winter is approaching and soon the township will be out doing snow and ice control. The residents can help our department during these times by removing their vehicles from the roads whenever possible. Thank you and have a safe fall, winter and holiday season.



Three views of the walking path that was installed in Carl Frye Park this summer. The Road, Cemeteries & Parks Department laid out the path and put down the base. The paving was completed as part of the townships 2007 paving contract through the County Engineer's office.

Prairie Township Lays the Groundwork for Responsible Growth

By Connie Swisher, Zoning Inspector

The Zoning Office has had a busy year. It has been one year since the adoption of the Darby Accord in 2006 and our office has worked non-stop with the Prairie Township Zoning Commission on updates to our Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and towards the creation of a conservation zoning district to ensure consistency with our Darby Accord partners. This collaboration among the jurisdictions is a result of the Accord planning process and will ensure this plan's success. We have been working together in these efforts so we can fulfill our commitment to the Darby Accord. The implementation of this plan will help preserve the ecology of the Big Darby Watershed while we grow into the future.

Another accomplishment within this last year is the creation of Darby Accord Panel. This Board meets once a month downtown at Memorial Hall to review development proposals; they then forward a recommendation to the jurisdiction that has final approval. Prairie Township's representative on the Panel is Mr. Bruce Whyte long time township resident and former Zoning Commission Board Member. For more information on the Big Darby Accord or Darby Accord Panel meetings visit the website www.bigdarbyaccord.org

Despite budget cuts at Keep Franklin County Beautiful, Prairie Township has managed to continue to provide its residents with the annual Spring Clean-Up Program. Discarding un-

wanted trash and debris from our streets, roadways, parks and even, from our backyards is a way to help maintain the integrity of existing neighborhoods and keep our Township beautiful. We are always looking for volunteers to help the week of the Clean-Up. Please call the Zoning Office at 878-3317 (x113) if you would like to help by volunteering during our next Spring Clean-Up!



This new welcome sign located on West Broad Street was a cooperative effort between the township and SWACO.

Prairie Works With the City of Columbus, Franklin County and Brown Township to Begin Planning the Big Darby Town Center

By Tracy Hatmaker, Township Administrator

Prairie Township is working with Big Darby Accord partners, the City of Columbus, Franklin County and Brown Township to begin the process of preparing the Darby Town Center Master Plan. The Darby Town Center is a cornerstone of the Big Darby Accord. The Town Center is to be an area of at least 5,000 homes and businesses. This development is expected to incorporate the latest design techniques to

protect the environment, while providing an attractive, well-built community.

So far, the partners have been working with interested members of the public to determine what should be addressed in the plan. This phase of the project will result in a planning team being in place and beginning work on a final product at the beginning of next year.

Coming This Fall...

The Prairie Township map and community guide. This informative, well-designed guide to Prairie Township is provided to the public free-of-charge by area businesses and the folks at Municipal Publications. The guide provides facts about Prairie Township, as well as its services, facilities and regulations. Prairie Township cooperated with Municipal Publications to provide this wonderful guide to the community at no charge.

Trustees' Report *(continued from page 3)*

Road / Cemetery / Parks Department Upgrades

There are two new buildings at our road department. We replaced the salt shed, which was destroyed in a fire, and we are adding a new maintenance building that will allow us to keep our equipment in good working order while meeting new state environmental requirements. We are also finishing up with the 2007 road work that includes new curbs, gutters and pavement on Lakefield Drive, Dukewell Place, Dovalon Place and Darlene Place. Other upgrades at the department include Carl Fry Park's new 2/3 of a mile walk path and two new dump trucks to help ensure that Prairie continues to provide excellence in snow and ice removal.



The new Road/Cemetery/Parks Dept. maintenance building takes shape at the Alkire Road facility.



New pavement, curbs and gutters are in place on Lakefield Drive.

FALL/WINTER 2007-2008

Prairie Township Trustees
Prairie Township Hall
23 Maple Drive

Phone: 614-878-3317
Fax: 614-878-0566
Web Address: www.prairietownship.org



We're on the web:
www.prairietownship.org

Prairie Township Government

Townships were first laid out in Ohio according to the basic policy for the survey and sales of public lands established by Congress through the Northwest Ordinance of 1785. Prairie Township, being within Ohio's Virginia Military District survey, was established under the more traditional 'metes and bounds' survey method. After the first Ohio Constitution was adopted, the legislature tended to follow the original survey lines in creating statutory townships. Prairie Township was established in 1819.

In Ohio, Townships are unincorporated civil jurisdictions. Unlike municipal corporations, Ohio townships do not enjoy the broad grant of local self-government regarding matters of local concern including the form and structure of local government. However, Prairie Township does provide a broad range of services including: road maintenance; cemetery management; parks; law enforcement; fire protection and emergency medical services; nuisance abatement; development services and zoning regulations. The township form of government allows Prairie Township to provide these services under a limited governmental structure that permits more efficiency and lower costs.

In 2002, the Prairie Township Board of Trustees enacted legislation adopting a "limited home rule" form of township government. The option to adopt this form of government is only available to the most populous townships in the state. Limited Home Rule status grants qualified townships expanded legislative authority and more power to enforce township resolutions.

Since the adoption of the 1851 Ohio Constitution, the basic form of township government has remained relatively unchanged. Governed by three elected trustees serving four-year terms, this board of township trustees is the legislative authority and also fulfills many executive responsibilities. A fourth elected official, a Township Fiscal Officer, is independent of the trustees, yet by law must work closely with them. The Township Fiscal Officer's duties include recording township proceedings and keeping records and financial accounts.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP

Prairie Township Fire.....	emergency: 911	non-emergency...878-4571
Prairie Township Administration Office.....		878-3317 x112
Prairie Township Fiscal Officer.....		878-3317 x111
Prairie Township Road Dept.....		878-3316
Prairie Township Zoning Dept.....		878-3317 x103
Prairie Township Senior Center.....		878-5110
Prairie Township Fax.....		878-0566

FRANKLIN COUNTY NUMBERS

Franklin County Sheriff.....	emergency: 911 ...	non-emergency 462-3333
Franklin County Engineer.....		462-3030
Franklin County Building Dept.....		462-3166
Franklin County Board of Health Dept.....		462-3160
Franklin County Mosquito Control.....		462-BITE
Franklin County Animal Control.....		462-4385
Franklin County Sanitary Engineer.....		462-3940

SCHOOLS/LIBRARY

Westland High School.....		851-7000
Norton Middle School.....		801-3700
Alton Hall Elementary.....		801-8000
Prairie Lincoln Elementary School.....		801-8300
Prairie Norton Elementary School.....		801-8450
Stiles Elementary School.....		801-8375
South-Western City Schools Service Center.....		801-3000
Westland Area Library.....		878-1301

OTHER SERVICES

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District.....		486-9613
Doctor's Hospital OhioHealth.....		544-1000
Nail-A-Dumper Hotline.....		871-5322
Ohio Utilities Protection Service (Call Before You Dig).....		1-800-362-2764
Ohio American Water Company (Lake Darby Service Area).....		882-6586

Prairie Township Board of Trustees:

Steve Kennedy,
Chair...614-878-7330

Nicole Schlosser,
Vice-Chair...614-870-2846

Doug Stormont, Trustee...614-878-8212

Prairie Township Fiscal Officer:

Lori Montag...614-878-3317 (x111)

Township Administrator:

Tracy Hatmaker...614-878-3317(x114)

UPCOMING DATES

Prairie Township Trick-or-Treat Hours...October 31st from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm



Thanksgiving Week Trustee Meeting
Date...November 21, 2007 Regular Meeting Rescheduled to November 19, 2007