



Williamstown Township News

A publication of the Williamstown Township Board
Serving Williamstown Township residents in the
Williamston, Okemos, Haslett and Perry School Districts
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Williamstown Township, 4990 North Zimmer Road, Williamston MI 48895
Phone: (517) 655-3193 Fax: (517) 655-3971 www.williamstowntownship.com

from the desk of SUPERVISOR Mickey Martin

Exclusionary Zoning – What It Means to Williamstown Township

Williamstown Township, like all other municipalities, derives its authority to zone land from Michigan Public Act 110 of 2006. Act 110 contains an important provision in Section 207, which prohibits the practice known as “exclusionary zoning.” Section 207 reads as follows:

A zoning ordinance or zoning decision shall not have the effect of totally prohibiting the establishment of a land use within a local unit of government in the presence of a demonstrated need for that land use within either that local unit of government or the surrounding area within the state, unless a location within the local unit of government does not exist where the use may be appropriately located or the use is unlawful.

The significance of Section 207 is that, when drafting or amending a zoning ordinance care must be exercised to avoid excluding any needed uses, even when there is not widespread support in the community for the uses. There have been many notable exclusionary zoning cases that have gone to court in other communities regarding mobile home parks, affordable housing, billboards, and certain industrial uses.

The issue of exclusionary zoning recently came to the forefront in Williamstown Township when the Capital City Canine Club proposed a need to allow a canine training facility in the Township. The Club presented statistics to demonstrate that a need existed in the Township and the surrounding area.

The Planning Commission and Township Board did not want to exclude a use for which there appeared to be a need, but they were aware that the use wouldn't be suitable everywhere in the Township. The zoning solution was to consider the use similar to restrictions on horse competitions and similar events, which would make the canine training facility a Special Land Use in the AG-SF district. Special Land Use requires a Public Hearing and gives the Planning Commission and Township

Board discretion to determine if a use belongs on a particular site, and if it does, under what conditions. This zoning solution maintains a high degree of control for the Township, but is not exclusionary.

The Capital City Canine Club subsequently submitted a proposal for a training facility on a specific parcel in the Township. This proposal currently is making its way through the review process with the Planning Commission. At their February meeting the Planning Commission will deliberate on the proposal and make a recommendation to the Township Board to approve, approve with conditions, or deny. Then, the Township Board will consider the recommendation and vote on the proposal at their March meeting. This is the process that all Townships must follow in order to have control over development. If the process is not followed, development decisions may be taken away from the Township and made by the court system.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Vacant land sales within the Township continue to show land values should be increased. You will notice increases on land values reflected in your current assessment. Also the Township reassesses approximately 1/5 of the Township every year to keep in compliance with State Law. The assessed value, however, is not the value that is multiplied by the millage rate to establish taxes. Increases in assessed value will not mean significant increases in taxable value unless your property was uncapped due to a transfer in 2006 or had new construction. Assessed value fluctuates with the market and some assessments will see a decrease in assessed value.

Taxable Value is the basis for your property taxes. This will be calculated using an inflation rate of 1.037 for the 2007 capped value. Please review your change notice when you receive it and if you have questions or concerns please contact me at the Township office. Remember, it is taxable value that is used to compute tax bills.

Homestead Exemption is also indicated on the change notice. You should check your notice at the center bottom for the number that can range from 0 to 100%. To receive 100% property exemption you must own and occupy your residence. All homeowners for newly constructed homes must file an exemption form with their local government and occupy the home by May 1st to receive the exemption. The forms are available at the Township office. If you believe yours is incorrect, please contact the office immediately.

Notes from the Treasurer

More County Tax will be Collected in Summer Billing

In the Summer 2007 property tax billing, the last one third of Ingham County operating millage will move to summer. This will increase your summer bill by approximately as much as it increased last year (2.1171 mills last year). Please know that four small taxes will still be collected for Ingham County in the Winter billing. They are Special Transportation (SpecTran, .3917 mills), 911 Emergency Phone System (.8436 mills), Capital Region Airport Authority (.4695 mills), and Juvenile Justice (.5906 mills). All these millages are from last year. We do not yet know the exact amount for this year. The county operating tax is used to fund county operations, for example, the sheriff's office and county government in general, while the four taxes described above are for specific purposes.

Thanking Harold Husse and Welcoming Lori Hurst

Our Deputy Treasurer Harold Husse has asked to step down from his position in order to have more time available for travel. Lori Hurst has been appointed as Deputy Treasurer. Lori has 20 years experience at Meijer, Inc., and holds a degree in business administration and accounting from Davenport University. Harold will remain on staff as Treasury Assistant. We thank him for his valuable service during the past year.

Winter '06 tax deadline was February 14th

Williamstown Township Treasurer Al LeBlanc reminds taxpayers that the deadline for Winter 2006 property taxes was Wednesday, February 14, 2007. Payments that were in the drop box by the start of business on Thursday, February 15th were considered to have arrived on February 14th due date. All taxpayers who pay by mail or in the drop slot will receive an official property tax receipt by return mail. Late payments, with the added 3 percent penalty, can be accepted at the township until 7:00 PM on Wednesday, February 28th. After that time taxes on real property (taxes for land and homes as opposed to business equipment) must be paid directly to the Ingham County Treasurer with additional interest charges. The Ingham County Treasurer is located at PO Box 215, Mason, MI 48854 or call (517) 676-7220

Taxpayers who have mortgage escrow accounts (your tax bill would have been printed on yellow paper) will receive a receipt by mail as soon as the mortgage company pays the tax bill. The receipt will be sent directly to the taxpayer-homeowner, not to the mortgage company. If you have a tax escrow account and have not received a receipt, you should call the Williamstown township office at (517) 655-3193 and ask the Treasury department to check on your payment. LeBlanc added that the Treasury department will also be happy to help with any other tax related issues.

TOWNSHIP BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

	2006	2005	2004	2003
Residential	3	17	22	35
Addition/Remodel	26	24	40	49
Accessory Building	14	14	15	20
Deck/Porch	12	14	11	11
Commercial/ Institutional	1	0	0	0
Swimming Pool	4	3	2	6
Demolition	0	3	2	3
Re-Roof	23	23	16	20
TOTAL	83	98	108	144

TOWNSHIP WIDE WIRELESS INTERNET

The Township is working with the School District and T-Mobile to possibly combine our efforts and resources to provide broadband internet service. If it is possible to locate an internet provider on the telecommunications pole located on school property it would greatly reduce the Townships capital outlay. We will continue to search out all options for the best service to the residents

SUPERVISOR MICKEY MARTIN ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS

Edward Timm will join the three-member panel Board of Review.

Joining the six-member Cable Commission are **Nancy Williams and Marv Thompson**. Marv will serve as commission chairman.

In addition, a Compensation Commission has been formed to review the salary compensation of elected officials. The five-member commission includes **Chairman Wilbur McNinch, Secretary Dave Robinson, Ethel Andersen, Andy Sheets and Sally Martin Stewart**. For more information about the Compensation Commission please visit the township website.

Visit us at:

www.williamstowntownship.com

FREE PUBLIC USE OF THE PROPERTY SEARCH SYSTEM

PLANNING COMMISSION

Commissioner Michael Fielek has been elected to the position of Planning Commission Chair.

Commissioner Maurice Vaneestra has announced his resignation as his family is leaving the area. The commission wishes to thank Maurice for the many years he served the township on the planning commission.

Residents Rod Imhoff and Ger Schultink have been appointed to serve on the commission to fill the vacant seats. Their insights and experience will be a great asset to township residents.

Congratulations township planner Jim Bruekman on your promotion at McKenna and Associates. The township welcomes “Zeb” Peter Acuff as the new planning consultant. Also joining the planning commission as assistant is Wanda Bloomquist.

The Planning Commission meets regularly on the third Tuesday of the month.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

The Old Branch School #4 renovation project is progressing despite the extreme weather conditions. The roof is nearly complete. Unfortunately a few bad panels were delivered but installation will proceed as time permits.

The committee wishes to thank the township residents who have generously donated items for the school display. We have received a wood burning stove from Bob Harris and a pot belly stove from Dave Grunwald. The pot belly stove did have some damage and was repaired by Jeff Grossman, a welding instructor from the Lansing Career Center. We thank Jeff for volunteering his time and expertise to the repair. A bronze school bell, donated by Jeff Foote, will be installed in the bell cupola when the roof is finalized. We are also grateful to residents who have donated photographs of early Sherwood Road, desks, McGuffey readers and a teacher's desk world globe and brass bell. Les Foote has been especially helpful in describing his experiences. Special thanks to the estate of Dick Watson for the photos and documents we received which will greatly help us recreate the school house environment. Please visit the township hall or website to see a current list of the needs of the Historic Committee or call for more information.

Clay Braden—Procurement Coordinator (517-349-0163)

Steve Eyke— Volunteer Coordinator (655-3616)

Tom Johnson— Membership information (655-1030)

In Memoriam Conrad Roy Taschner

April 5, 1926— December 12, 2006

Served as Cemetery Board Chairman 2002-2006
and cemetery volunteer since 1996

Resident of Williamstown Twp for 54 years

Married High School sweetheart Virginia Drall in 1952

Three children and four grandchildren

Purple Heart Award recipient - U.S. Marine Corp,
tour in Iwo Jima '44 -'46 and Koren War '50 -'51

“We miss you, Connie”

S N O W R E M O V A L

With winter maintenance services at a high demand, it would be greatly appreciated if residents and service vendors could assist the Road Commission by assuring that their mailboxes are winter worthy,



that vehicles get pulled into driveways for clearing of snow and that trash receptacles are placed far enough off the road on pickup days so as to not get hit by a plow. These few things make it much more efficient for the County workforce to get through all the roads during the cleanup of winter storms.

TOWNSHIP WEBSITE

The website is updated on a weekly basis as information is submitted. New pages are being added for township committees and commissions. If you experience any problems with the website or wish to make constructive comments, please contact Gwen at 655-3193.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

6—Township Board Meeting, 7:00 PM
 10—Recycling—9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
 12—Board of Review (TBA)
 13—Board of Review 6:00 PM
 20—Township Board Meeting, 5:30 PM
 19—Planning Commission Meeting, 7:30 PM

April

3—Township Board Meeting, 7:00 PM
 6—Good Friday. Township Closed
 10—Parks-and-Recreation Mtg, 7:00 PM
 14—Recycling—9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
 17—Township Board Meeting, 5:30 PM
 17—Planning Commission Meeting, 7:30 PM

May

1—Township Board Meeting, 7:00 PM
 8—School Election
 12—Recycling—9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
 14—Parks-and-Recreation Meeting, 7:00 PM
 22—Township Board Meeting, 5:30 PM
 22—Planning Commission Meeting, 7:30 PM

Township Recycling Service Update

The Township has expanded collectables for recycling service. In addition to the items that we already accept we will now accept

- ◆ #1PET Plastic bottles, jugs, and milk jugs
- ◆ Beginning April 14th, per budget approval, we will have a container available for collection of corrugated cardboard

Recycling dates are the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Cemetery Announcements

All gravesite blankets and artificial flowers will be removed and disposed on April 1, 2007. Please remove any memorabilia from gravesites before April 1st. Items will not be preserved. Cemetery water will be turned on Sunday, April 15th.

WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

TOWNSHIP BOARD (ELECTED)

Supervisor - Mickey Martin
 Clerk - Howard Dahlstrom
 Treasurer - Al LeBlanc
 Trustee - Martin Wright
 Trustee - Frans Wilbrink
 Trustee - Rick Williams
 Trustee - Robert Hayes
 Code enforcement - Vacancy

HIRED STAFF

Building Inspector - Mark Miller
 Asst - Michelle Morse
 Caretaker- Benjamin Moline
 Sexton/Maintenance- Mark Tabor
 Treasury Asst—Harold Husse

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Deputy Clerk - Bob Cwiertniewicz
 Deputy Treasurer- Lori Hurst
 Supervisor Asst. - Gwen Chirico-Brandon

PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael Fielek- Chair
 Rex LaMore- Vice Chair
 Gerald Eidt- Secy
 Wanda Bloomquist- Planning Asst
 Ronald Cook
 Ger Schultink
 Rutgar Hoag
 Rod Imoff
 Martin Wright, Twp. Board Rep.

BOARD OF REVIEW

Gerald Eidt
 Robert Tetzlaff
 Edward Timm

BOARD OF APPEALS

Michael Fielek- Chair
 Dali Giese
 Dan Kraft
 Kurt Guter
 Mickey Martin, Supervisor

CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS

Aage Jensen
 Stephen Patoprsky
 Mark Stevens

CABLE COMMISSION

Marv Thompson, Chair
 Norma Johnston

Ivonne Key
 Kurt Guter
 Nancy Williams

Rick Williams, Twp. Board Rep

NIESA REPRESENTATIVES

Ronald Wiegandt, Alternate Twp. Rep.
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Greg Lammers— Chair
 Andy Andersen- Member at Large
 George Monroe— Williamston City Rep

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Jerry Fulcher - Chair
 Betty Challis
 Christine Nilsson
 Jan Morris
 Tom Trepky
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATION COMM.

John McLaughlin- Chair
 Richard Kill
 Terry Monahan
 Mickey Martin, Twp. Board Rep.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Tom Johnson
 Rutger Hoag
 Steve Eyke
 Clay Braden
 Conrad Bappert
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Wilbur McNinch- Chair
 Dave Robinson- Secy
 Ethel Andersen
 Andy Sheets
 Sally Martin Stewart
 Gwen Chirico-Brandon- Asst

REPRESENTING OUR TOWNSHIP

United States Senator	Carl Levin (D)	e-mail:	senator@levin.senate.gov	377-1508
United States Senator	Debbie Stabenow (D)	e-mail:	senator@stabenow.senate.gov	203-1760
United States Representative	Mike Rogers ®	web:	www.house.gov/mikerogers	702-8000
Michigan State Senator	Gretchen Whitmer(D)	web:	sengwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov	373-5397
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 67)	Barbara Byrum (D)	e-mail:		373-0587
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 69)	Mark Meadows	e-mail:	markmeadows@house.mi.gov	373-1325
Ingham County Comm. (Dist 13)	Randy Schafer (R)	web:	www.ingham.org	655-1325