



Planning Progress

January - March 2009

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Issue 1

New Employee



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The Stark County Regional Planning Commission has a new Regional Planner, Rachel Lewis. Rachel received her Masters Degree in Planning/Geography from the University of Akron and started here at the RPC January 5th.

Originally from San Angelo, Texas, she has an interest in historic preservation as well as planning. She previously worked at an old Indian fort allowing her the opportunity to see and work with historic grounds. During her internship, she worked on a project that dealt with the historic district of Canal Fulton.

Rachel received a graduate assistantship from the University of Akron bringing her to Ohio. She now lives in Clinton with her husband Chad. She loves hiking and spending time with her dog, Patches.

Promotion



Cliff Meidlein has been promoted to Planning Administrator. He is responsible for subdivision review, zoning recommendations, street vacations, divisions of property, and assisting townships with a variety of zoning and subdivision issues. Cliff took on all of these duties January 1st after the retirement of Reva Butera.

Plain Township Landlord Pays Over \$9000 In Fair Housing Settlement

In December 2008, the owner of a Plain Township duplex agreed to pay \$9375 to settle a complaint of familial status discrimination. The settlement came just one month shy of a scheduled hearing.

Fair Housing Coordinator, Valerie Watson, received a complaint from a woman who felt she had been discriminated against while trying to rent a duplex for her and her two daughters. The Plaintiff had responded to a "for rent" sign in front of the duplex and called for an appointment. The owner, who answered the call, said the unit would only be rented to one or two people.

Once the Coordinator received the grievance regarding this situation, she conducted a series of exercises in which testers made inquiries to the owner in order to rent this unit. Testers who indicated they had children were given false information or were denied the opportunity to view the duplex. Testers without children received accurate information and appointments to see the unit. Watson referred the case to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC).

After an investigation, the OCRC determined that it was probable that the owner engaged in unlawful discriminatory practices. As substantiated by testing documentation, the owner consistently discouraged or denied families with more than one child the opportunity to rent.

Although the owner denied the allegations and did not admit to any wrongdoing, she agreed to settle. The owner and complainant agreed to settle for \$8600. In addition, the owner paid the Stark County Regional Planning Commission Fair Housing Department \$775 and agreed to attend training if she remains a housing provider beyond June 15, 2009.

Ohio Green Fleets Program Launched

In August, Clean Fuels Ohio launched Ohio Green Fleets (OGF). OGF is a voluntary program designed to significantly improve environmental performance of business and government vehicle fleets across the state. OGF will help fleets self-assess their characteristics, priorities and goals; determine applicability of available technologies; assess and secure available funding; develop and execute implementation plans of applicable technologies; and recognize and promote fleet achievements.

While Clean Fuels Ohio promotes alternative fuels such as biodiesel and ethanol, the organization is fuel and technology neutral. Diesels are a primary target, but other fleet-types can also participate. Other eligible vehicles include buses, medium- and heavy-duty trucks, locomotives, construction equipment, cargo-handling vehicles, light-duty commercial and passenger vehicles. Vehicles involved in agricultural operations, mining or marine vessels are not eligible.

Perhaps one of the most important elements of OGF will be the development of a statewide scoring system designed to measure and recognize actual performance in reducing emissions. Points will be awarded for the various reductions in the four emissions of concern and other factors. The points will determine a designation of one, three or five stars.

Ohio Green Fleets plans to brand the program, much like U.S. EPA's EnergyStar, which is now widely known and sought-after by consumers.

Key to the program will be an annual recognition and award ceremony to publicize and honor fleets. Winners will receive OGF decals for their fleets, indicating the level of recognition they received, along with a marketing release and other promotional materials.

Fleets can sign up two vehicles to start and gradually get more stars by adding additional vehicles. This will be a good way to see if the program will be cost-effective by comparing early numbers. While it's too soon to determine how many fleets will sign on, OGF is encouraged by the number of companies who have already expressed an interest. Most members will probably be diesel truck owners. OGF is actively working to build relationships with members to develop a green fleet policy tailored to their specific needs. Hands-on support and assistance includes educational materials, workshops, information seminars and help locating grants and other funding for retrofitting/upgrading equipment.

About Clean Fuels Ohio

Clean Fuels Ohio is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the use of cleaner and energy efficient domestic fuels and vehicles to improve air quality and health, reduce climate change, curb dependence on imported petroleum and support Ohio's economy.

For more information about OGF, go to **www.ohiogreenfleets.org/** or contact Brad Couch, Program Development Director, at **Brad@CleanFuelsOhio.org** or (614) 884-7336.

Ohio EPA-
Compliance & Prevention Quarterly

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Review Process

The application deadline for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011, was Wednesday, November 5th at noon. A total of twenty-nine applications were received from various municipalities and non-profit agencies. Of those submitted, twenty-eight were deemed eligible for CDBG funding. After staff and the CDBG Application Review Committee study the projects, a meeting will be held to present the results and rankings of these projects to the public.

The twenty-eight eligible applications requested just under \$4,600,000.00 in CDBG funding for use over the next three fiscal years. During FY 2009-2011 (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012), it is expected that \$650,000 - \$775,000 will be available each year for use by applicants (the total CDBG yearly allocation is expected to be in the range of \$1,400,000.00). Thus, many of the eligible applications will fall below the funding threshold and will not be able to be funded. Also, CDBG regulations allow a maximum of 15% of the total CDBG allocation to be utilized for public service type activities, i.e. operation of homeless shelter programs, legal services for low-to-moderate income persons, parenting programs, family enhancement programs, etc., consequently less than \$210,000 will be allocated toward these types of projects during each of the three fiscal years.

After the public meeting is held to present project ranking results, a public hearing will be held in early spring with the Board of Stark County Commissioners to present the proposed FY 2009-2012 CDBG program. At this time, a 30-day comment period will commence; the Board of Commissioners will defer a final decision on the CDBG funding program until this comment period is completed. After Board adoption, the program will then be submitted to the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for review and acceptance. Once CDBG funding becomes available for use after July 1, 2009, funded projects will then commence.

Though CDBG applications are only accepted every three years, it is never too early to start planning for the next round. The CDBG program will again accept applications during the fall of 2011, so if your municipality, non-profit, or for-profit agency is interested in future CDBG funding, now is the time to begin development. It is expected that an application workshop will once again take place during mid-to-late summer 2011 for potential CDBG applicants, but the CDBG staff is available to discuss your future application ideas between now and then. You can call Lynn Carlone, Community Development Administrator at 330-451-7774 or Beth Pearson, Chief of Community Development at 330-451-7395, to discuss future projects. We look forward to hearing from you.

Stark County's FY 2009 HOME Funding



The Stark County Regional Planning Commission is under contract to the Board of Stark County Commissioners to administer the Stark County HOME program. Stark County receives this federal funding as a direct entitlement grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Last year, the County received approximately \$855,300.00 in HOME funding. This included American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) funds in the amount of \$7,223.00; this funding is utilized to provide downpayment assistance to qualified low-to-moderate income first-time homebuyers within Stark County outside of the City of Canton or the Village of Hills & Dales corporate limits. It is expected that for FY 2009, the County will receive approximately this same HOME allocation amount. This funding will be available for use between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010.

Stark County participates in the HOME program as a consortium with both of the cities of Massillon and Alliance, thus a portion of Stark County's HOME funding will be provided to each. The cities will receive 18.35% and 20.25%, respectively, of the HOME allocation for use in their jurisdictions.

HOME eligible activities are housing-related projects that benefit low-and moderate-income persons/households. Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) were encouraged to apply. The County plans to allocate up to \$127,200.00 of HOME funding to such activities.

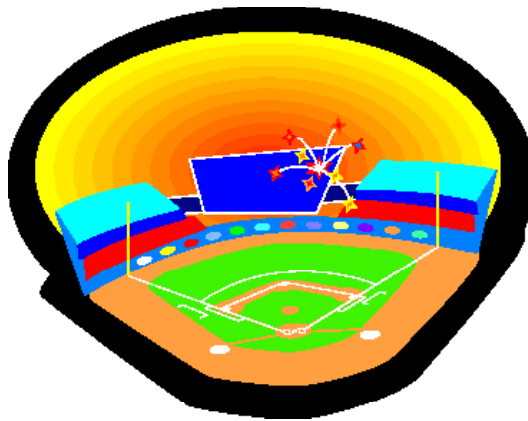
A HOME "Request for Proposal" workshop was held on November 18th, with applications for this upcoming HOME program being due by Friday, January 16th at Noon. After the applications are received, they will be reviewed. A decision in regard to the 2009 program is expected to be presented to the public by mid-March, with a public hearing to take place in early April presenting the proposed program to the Board of Stark County Commissioners. For questions about the HOME program, please contact Lynn Carlone, Community Development Administrator at 330-451-7774.

Major League Baseball LEEDs With a New Stadium

The 2008 season was the first for the Washington Nationals to play professional baseball in their new stadium. It is the first professional-league stadium in the country to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification from the US Green Building Council.

The stadium's proximity to the Anacostia River meant that its stormwater design team had to carefully consider the potential problems of runoff and water pollution. The water filtration system separates water used for cleaning the ballpark from rainwater. Both sources of water are treated before they are released to the sanitary and stormwater systems.

A manhole for sampling sure pollution levels was field. The roof areas at the to minimize heat gain. An concession stand and bath Nationals Park also won its ease of access and tation. Five percent of its for carpoolers and drivers ton Nationals Park also cause it sits on a reclaimed location of an asphalt plant.



stormwater runoff to mea- installed on the playing Nationals Park are reflective extensive green roof tops the room area beyond left field. LEED certification points for proximity to public transpor- parking spaces are reserved of hybrid vehicles. Washing- earned LEED points be- brownfield, the former

Recycling played, and continues to play, a big part of the new ballpark's culture. About 100 bins are set up throughout the stadium so that fans can conveniently discard recyclable items. Recycled materials account for about 20% of the stadium.

Water conservation covers the bases at Nationals Park. Installing air-cooled chillers, instead of the water-cooled type, will save 6 million gallons of water annually. Low-flow lavatory faucets and low-flush toilets will reduce water consumption by 30%, saving 3.6 million gallons a year. Native, drought-resistant plants were used for landscaping to reduce the need for irrigation.

The lights used on the field beam from energy-conserving bulbs and are projected to use 21% less energy compared to typical field lighting. A 1,500-watt green generator will save \$440,000 in energy over its expected life of 25 years.

Future design projects include the Minnesota Twins Ballpark and the New York Mets Ballpark. Major League Baseball teams that have been adding green features in recent years include the Cleveland Indians, Colorado Rockies, and the San Francisco Giants.

Margaret Buranen

NRAC Approves Grant

The NRAC approved a grant to Stark Parks to assist in the first phase to purchase the Harold Fry Farm property near East Sparta in Pike Township.



This phase includes almost 75 acres, a portion of which is shown in the photo above. Once completed, the park will total more than 320 acres of rolling grasslands, hardwood forest and wetland areas. The 4 acre lake, included in this first purchase, will be stocked by the district for fishing.

FYI



Mark your calendars! The RPC's Annual Dinner meeting is Wednesday, March 25th. The guest speaker will be our 16th President of the United States, "Abe Lincoln."

For the first time in many years, the RPC and the Stark County Prosecutor John Ferrero co-sponsored a Board of Zoning Appeals Governmental Law Seminar in the fall. Various topics were covered. Be sure to keep an eye out for future Law Seminars.

The Stock Pile is celebrating its 10th Anniversary this year. An open house will be scheduled soon. Don't forget to visit the warehouse or website for a one-day pass. Anyone can use the pass Tuesday through Saturday 9-2.

Our Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) meetings have changed. They will now be held quarterly at the Goodwill Industries on 9th St. S.W. in Canton. The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 25th at 1:30. The guest speaker will be Stark County Engineer Mike Rehfus. He will discuss present and past projects. All those living and working in Stark County are encouraged to attend.

Did you know that you can get rid of all those unwanted catalogs that clog your mailbox? Go to CatalogChoice.org and let them know which catalogs you want to keep and which ones you want to just go away.

If every household in the nation would buy and use just one package of Green Forest (or other brand using recycled materials) toilet tissue, 60,000 lbs. of chlorine pollution would be stopped, 356 million gallons of water, and 1 million trees would be preserved.

Upcoming Events

February

2	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
3	SCRPC	7:30 PM
23	SCATS	1:30 PM
25	CAC	1:30 PM

March

2	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
3	SCRPC	7:30 PM
23	SCATS	1:30 PM

April

6	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
7	SCRPC	7:30 PM
27	SCATS	1:30 PM

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