

ADMINISTRATION

Twp Hall - 668-0270
Cemetery
Clerk
Information
Manager
Supervisor

Assessing - 669-6494

Building - 668-0278

DARA – 482-5117

Fire - 669-0071
Administration

Planning/Zoning
669-6576

Police - 669-6578
Administration

Treasurer - 668-1411

CLINTON COUNTY

1-888-224-2450
Toll Free

POLICE & FIRE ASSISTANCE

Fire - 9-1-1
EMT/Ambulance
Police - 9-1-1
State Police – 322-1911

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor
Rick Galardi
Clerk
Diane Mosier
Treasurer
Phyllis Daggy
Trustees
Johanna Balzer
Steve Musselman
Brian Ross
David Seeger

Manager
Rodney H. Taylor

INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE (IPMC)

Where are we now? And how did we get here?

A few years ago, the Township developed a report known as the South Central Area Plan (SCAP), for an area identified as east and west of BR-127 and running north of Sheridan Road and south of Stoll Road. The South Central Area of the Township was initially developed many years ago, and today the area presents its own unique challenges and opportunities. The Plan's goal is to help provide direction and revitalization to the South Central Area, and to identify tools that could be used to help take advantage of the strengths of the area and to mitigate the area's weaknesses.

Since the adoption of the South Central Area Plan, a number of new initiatives have been undertaken to bring about change, including: the creation of the Corridor Improvement Authority; appointment of the Old US-27 Design Committee; designating a Commercial Rehab District; application and receipt of the Better Buildings Grant; and approval of a Michigan Natural Resources Grant, to name just a few. One of the tools identified in the SCAP was the adoption of the standardized maintenance code, known as the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).

For almost three years now, the Township has been evaluating the benefits and expected impact from the possible adoption of this new ordinance. Since adoption will represent a change in the Township's enforcement capabilities, an intensive process was undertaken to ensure that any new regulations will meet the needs of our community. The process included the following components: 1) four different committees worked on the proposed amendment (to create the now proposed local ordinance component); 2) the process included multiple discussions before the Township Board; 3) the focus of the process was to include input from business owners, Board members, citizens, and staff; and 4) provide legal assistance for the committee members, to ensure a viable end product.

When adopting a new ordinance, it is critical to make sure that the document is balanced, meeting the needs of our community, our neighborhoods, our agricultural districts and our businesses. To make sure that the proposed ordinance meets the desired objectives without overreaching, the following objectives were created by the committees:

1. To respond to the South Central Area Plan, address citizens' concerns to help make improvements to the Southern Tier, assist all Township property owners and residents in maintaining the value of their property, and to ensure public safety.
 - o For the purposes of these committees, the primary improvement is the revitalization of neighborhoods and businesses by reducing blight and increasing safety in non-owner occupied buildings.

2. To make sure the IPMC is designed to meet the needs of our community, the following standards were used in evaluating each section of the Code:
 - o Establish standards for the health and safety of non-owner occupied properties (residential and commercial).
 - o Address external issues (blight) that negatively impact neighborhood property values.
 - o Address all properties that create a safety issue for neighboring properties (e.g. trees that can fall on neighbor's house) or a general public safety concern (e.g. unsafe structure or abandoned building).

It is important to note that while the impetus for considering adoption of the IPMC was to bring assistance to the South Central Area of the Township, the proposed new regulations will cover all properties in the Township.

After reviewing every word against the standards above, the Township is now ready to have a Public Hearing on the adoption of the IPMC, the local ordinance which amends the IPMC, and the creation of the associated Violations Bureau (establishing fees and procedures). At the regularly scheduled **July 22, 2013 Township Board meeting at 7:00 p.m.**, a Public Hearing will give citizens and business owners an opportunity to provide their input on the new regulations before the Board considers adoption. Below are answers to some commonly asked questions:

What is covered in the Code?

The Code covers a broad section of safety and blight issues such as the accumulation of rubbish; pests; unsafe structures; weed/grass height (8" single family owner occupied); and, the storage of multiple unlicensed vehicles. Chapters 4 through 7 deal with items such as occupancy, plumbing, mechanical and electrical that only affect non-owner occupied properties.

Why use the IPMC and not create our own Code?

Essentially, the process will include using both. The IPMC is produced by the ICC (International Code Council), the same entity that produces the Building and Fire codes, adopted by reference by the Township. This ensures that there is consistency between these three documents and does not create ordinances that may be in conflict with each other. The current process to adopt the IPMC, and then "make it our own" with the adoption of the local ordinance allows the Township to "customize" the IPMC.

If you violate a section of the Code, what are the fees?

The Township's goal has always been compliance, not the assessment of penalties or fees. As such, the Township will make every effort to work with residents and businesses to resolve concerns and make progress in resolving any issues. Unless there are significant safety issues, the Township will communicate with the property owner before any penalty is ever assigned. Most property owners will address the issues with no further effort required by the Township. If, after a reasonable time, the property owner has not resolved the issue, a municipal civil infraction notice with a civil fine of \$25 can be issued. For a second repeat offense, the fine increases to \$100 and any subsequent offense is \$250.

We have a junk ordinance now, why do we need the IPMC?

The existing ordinance is not broad enough to cover the situations that currently exist with some of the properties in the Township. As the Township has become more densely populated, it is necessary to adjust our ordinances. The proposed IPMC ordinance would repeal the outdated junk ordinance.

I heard that the proposed Code deals with all kinds of issues inside and outside my home. Does it?

The standard Code does have a number of items that go beyond the Township's objectives. As such, the committees have recommended changes to the Code (local ordinance) to ensure that it deals with safety issues or blight that might affect another property. For example, the standard IPMC talks about the structure's furnace being capable of maintaining a minimum temperature. This section, as well as many other sections of the Code, was changed to deal only with businesses or non-owner occupied homes.

How will the Township learn of violations?

The implementation of this Code will be complaint driven, meaning that there will not be a Code Official driving around looking for violations. The only exception would be if staff observes a significant safety concern that needs to be addressed.

Changes in the future?

If the proposed ordinances (IPMC, Local Ordinance, and Violations Bureau creation) are adopted, they will be monitored to ensure there are no unintended consequences. The Code will be reviewed regularly and adjustments will be made as needed to ensure that it continues to meet the original objectives.

Where can I find a copy of the Code to review?

Copies of all three documents (IPMC, Local Ordinance, and Violations Bureau creation) are available at the Township offices.

So, that is where we are now with the IPMC, and how we got to this point in the process. Please consider providing your input at the Board Meeting on July 22, 2013. If you have questions or comments, you are encouraged to call Township Manager Rod Taylor at 517-668-0270.

NEW OFFICERS HIRED



Earl Christensen, III, began his employment on May 6, 2013. "It's great to be working in the community where I live. This is a great department." Earl earned a Bachelor's of Criminal Justice from Lake Superior State University. His previous experience includes the Jackson Police Department and Lake Superior State University Public Safety.



Brandon Shellberg recently graduated from the Lansing Community College Mid-Michigan Police Academy and is ready to begin his career as a DeWitt Township police officer. "I grew up here and am excited to be part of this great community." Brandon's first day on the job was June 3, 2013.

YOU'VE CALLED 9-1-1. . . .CAN HELP FIND YOU?

You have an emergency. You have requested service from police, fire or an ambulance. Can they quickly find your house? Is your house marked with the appropriate address? Is it even marked at all?

There are many times when we, as first responders, are asked to help; but, when we get to the general area, we have difficulty finding your home. Why is that? Because there is no address on the house or mailbox at the road, the numbers are too small, the address on the house is in script, or the address is only on one side of the mailbox. In the case of an emergency, these difficulties can cost precious minutes.

Clinton County's Address Ordinance (#92-1) is governed by the County Equalization Department and applies to the entire county. The following are requirements under the Ordinance:

1. Address numbers must be Arabic Numerals (0, 1, 2, 3. . . .) not script.
2. Numbers must be visible from the road.
3. Numbers must be at least 3 inches tall, but may be larger.
4. Numbers must be visible from both sides of a mailbox. If two boxes are side by side, numbers must be posted in another location.
5. Be sure your number is not blocked by trees or shrubs.
6. Numbers must contrast with the house.
7. Numbers must be posted 2 feet above the ground and no more than 6 feet above the grade.
8. If your house is more than 100 feet from the road, your number must be posted on a post, fence, tree, or another visible location.

Now, take a moment and go outside. Go to the road and look. Is your address clearly visible? Can you see the address on your house from the road? If not, do you have your mailbox at the road marked on both sides or is there a post at the end of your drive with your address? Use reflective numbers so we can find them at night. The reflective green signs with white numbers usually show up best at night. (Signs can be purchased from the Bath Township Firefighters Association at 517-641-7811, as well as many on-line sources.) Put yourself in the role of a public safety responder. If you responded to your house, could you easily find it?

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

4th Annual Midsummer Blooms Garden Walk – Sunday, July 14, 2013 – Noon – 5 p.m., rain or shine. A wonderful tour of five distinctive private gardens in DeWitt. Tickets for the Garden Walk are \$8 in advance and \$10 the day of the tour. Contact Carol at 517-668-6592 for ticket information. Event is sponsored by the DeWitt Millennium Garden Club, Inc., a member of the National Garden Clubs, Inc., and Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc.

Clean Community Event – September 28th – from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. in DeWitt Township. The Clinton County Dept. of Waste Management (DWM) is planning for the Fall Clean Community Event. This valuable event assists residents to recycle or properly dispose of just about any household generated waste item. For more information and a list of acceptable items and fees, visit the DWM's page at www.clinton-county.org. To schedule a required appointment, contact DWM at 989-224-5186 or email recycle@clinton-county.org.

Drop off School Supplies - The Township will once again be a host site for the Capital Area United Way's Day of Caring School Supplies Drive. New school supplies can be dropped off in the lobby of the Police Department now through the end of July. Donations will go to local students. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

DARA RECREATION NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) is located at the DeWitt Township Community Center, 16101 Brook Road, Lansing, MI 48906. Information regarding any event or program can be obtained by calling the DARA office at 517-482-5117. You may register for programs in person at the DARA office, the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt) or DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street, DeWitt).

| Program Name | Dates | Time | Registration | Age/Grade | Cost (Res/Non-Res) |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Summer Fun Club & Double Digit Day Camp | 6/10-8/23 spots may be available | 7:30 am-5:30 pm | Call for availability | 5-9 10-14 | \$105/\$120 |
| Youth Golf @ Hawk Hollow | 7/9-8/7 Tues or Wed | 6-7 pm or 7-8 pm | Begins 6/1 | 8-15 | \$50 |
| Adult Soccer Leagues-Session II | 7/21-8/25 Sundays | 4-8 pm | Begins 6/1 | 18+ | \$150/team \$5 res/\$20 non-res player fees |
| Fall - Adult Softball Men's Co-Ed | 8/11-9/15 8/12-9/16 | Sunday - Co-Ed Monday – Men's | Begins 6/21 | 18+ | \$200/team \$5 res/\$20 non-res player fees + umpires |
| Flag Football Leagues | 9/7-10/12 | 1-5 pm game times vary | 6/1-8/16 | Grades K-5 | \$34/\$49 |
| Cheer Program (Flag Football Sideline Cheer) | 9/7-10/12 | 1-5 pm game times vary | 6/1-8/16 | Grades K-5 | \$34/\$49 |
| Preschool Play | Beginning 9/5 Thursdays | 10 am - Noon | Pay each day | 1-5 | \$2 |
| Haunted Halloween Trip | 10/26 | 6 pm-12 am | 9/6-10/18 | Grades 6-8 | \$40 covers bussing and admissions |
| Fall Soccer Leagues | 9/7-10/12 | 9 am-1 pm | 6/1-8/16 | 4-6 | \$34/\$49 |
| Basketball University (2 sessions) | 9/12-10/3 10/10-10/31 | 5:45/6:45/7:45 pm | 8/2-9/11 | Grades 1-2/3-4 5-7 | \$35 |
| Preschool Sports Starter | 10/19-11/23 | 9:30 am-Noon | 9/6-10/5 | 3-5 | \$34/\$49 |
| Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt | 10/15 | 6:00-7:30 pm | 9/6-10/14 | 3-5 | \$6/\$8 |
| Youth Basketball Leagues | 10/26-12/14 skip 11/30 | Times vary depending on teams | 9/6-10/4 | Grades 3-6 | \$50/\$65 |
| Youth Basketball Leagues | 10/26-12/7 skip 11/30 | Times vary depending on teams | 9/6-10/4 | Grades 1-2 | \$34/\$49 |
| Youth Volleyball | 11/5-12/10 | 5:30-8:30 pm | 9/6-10/18 | Grades 3-6 | \$34/\$49 |
| Open Volleyball | Wed & Sun Begins 9/8 | 7-9 pm | Drop In | 18+ | \$2 |

You may register for most DARA programs online by visiting our website at www.dewittrecreation.org. DARA accepts Visa and Mastercard payments for online registrations. You may also print a registration form by clicking on our newsletter link from our home page and then mail it with payment to 1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820. You may drop off registration forms at the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Rd.) and DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street) as well. Call the DARA office at 517-482-5117 if you have any questions. You may also follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dararecreation> to receive the most up to date information.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

2013 has been a busy year thus far; and, as the year progresses, we anticipate more development to occur. Following are recent developments:

- ✓ Eleven businesses (attorneys and small businesses) - Crown Pointe Plaza located on Old 27, just north of State Road
- ✓ Holloway Institute (real estate training) - Clark Corners, located near the I-69 and Old 27 interchange
- ✓ Cross Fit Gym - Clark Corners, located near the I-69 and Old 27 interchange
- ✓ I Scream (ice cream shop) – Schavey Road Plaza
- ✓ Tin Can (bar) - Schavey Road Plaza
- ✓ Citgo Gas Station – formerly Sunoco, Old 27 and State Road
- ✓ First Merit Bank – formerly Citizens Bank
- ✓ Mega Mall Auction House - located at the corner of Wieland and Old 27
- ✓ Mancino's (restaurant/pizzeria) – Northway Plaza
- ✓ Giving Tree Farm located at 15433 Turner Road - seasonal produce stand
- ✓ Techmark, Inc. (agricultural engineering)– 15400 Old 27
- ✓ Great Lakes Dental – across from Schavey Road Plaza
- ✓ Gunnisonville Meadows Assisted Living Center – 1754 E. Clark Road (opening soon)
- ✓ The Quarry Apartments – south side of Clark Road between Schavey & Airport – Phase One of the apartment complex is expected to begin summer 2013 in which 76 units will be constructed. The overall plan indicates a total of 272 apartment units.
- ✓ Ridge Rock Subdivision – Plat review for Phase 2 & 3

If you have any questions on the above developments, contact the Planning Department at 517-669-6576.

NEWS BITES

MEADOWS CELEBRATION – VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED - If you would like to help out at the upcoming event (see the insert) contact Laurie at 517-668-0270.

CONGRATULATIONS to Ben Scheffler of St. Johns High School, Norma Coscarelli of DeWitt High School and Alexis Studer of DeWitt High School – all award recipients of the Clinton County Young Entrepreneur Competition. Each student entrepreneur in the competition was required to submit a business plan for a new venture that either made a new product or provided a new service.

DOGS IN PARKS - Per Chapter 30-22, Section (V) of the Township's Codified Ordinances - Dogs and other household pets cannot be brought onto park property, unless posted. The only areas posted to allow dogs are Padgett Park and in the non-paved section of Granger Meadows Park (located on the south side of Granger Meadows Lane). Dogs must be on a leash of not more than six feet, be under control, and all feces must be immediately removed.

REMINDER – DEWITT'S REDEEMER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOOD BANK - you can drop off non-perishables any time of the year at the DeWitt Township Hall. A box is located in the Police Department's lobby. The lobby is always open.

FOLLOW US - www.dewitttownship.org, www.facebook.com/dewitttownship, <http://twitter.com/DeWittTownship>, <http://flickr.com/DeWittTownship>. Find agendas, minutes, community events, job openings, event photos, election information, planning notices and much more.



SIGN PERMITS AND WHEN THEY ARE REQUIRED

DeWitt Township regulates signage under the Township's Zoning Ordinance. The intent and purpose of regulating signs is to protect the health, safety, and welfare by establishing reasonable standards for the design, placement, size, and maintenance of all exterior signs and sign structures.

DeWitt Township requires a sign permit any time a sign or sign structure is erected, replaced, structurally altered, enlarged, illuminated, changed, or relocated unless specifically exempted under the Ordinance requirements. Examples of exempted signage include: no hunting or trespassing signs, signs located in the interior of buildings, temporary political signs, historical markers, and agricultural seed/fertilizer advertising signs on farms. A complete list of exemptions can be found in the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance is available to review at the Planning Department. It is also available online at www.dewitttownship.org by navigating to the Planning Department's webpage. The Zoning Ordinance is located in Chapter 42 of the Codified Ordinance and Sign regulations are listed under Article VIII.

The Township also permits temporary signs that do not require a sign permit for the following type of activities provided certain conditions are met: residential garage sales, for sale signs, building construction signs, and temporary political signs. These signs must be on private property and not within the road right-of-way.

Billboards are the only off premises signs that are allowed. Signs that are placed within the road right-of-way are not permitted and may be removed by the Township. If you are thinking about putting up a sign or have other questions, please contact the Planning Department at 517-669-6576 to ensure that your signage complies with the Township's requirements.

HOME OCCUPATIONS: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

In this age of computers, an ever increasing number of us are able to work from home. Before you consider starting a home-based business, or a "home occupation," as they are known in the Zoning Ordinance, there are a few things you should know. Section 42-958 of the Zoning Ordinance includes certain standards that are intended to assure that home occupations will not impact the residential character of our homes and neighborhoods. For example, only residents of the dwelling are permitted to be employed in the home occupation. Also, there are very specific limits to the amount of area in the dwelling that can be used for home occupation purposes. In essence, there should be no external evidence, other than perhaps a permitted sign, that the dwelling is being used for anything other than residential purposes.

Home occupations must be registered with the Township. There is no fee for registration and application forms and more detailed information regarding ordinance requirements are available from the Planning Department. If you have questions about permitted uses, call the Planning Department at 517-669-6576.

Upcoming Dates to Remember.....

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|--------------------|---|
| July 19 | Meadows Celebration – A Blast in the Moonlight |
| September 2 | Labor Day - Offices Closed |

DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP
1401 W HERBISON ROAD
DEWITT MI 48820-7900

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 66
LANSING MI

TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

**CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES
2013 BUSINESS AWARDS**



**Food Systems Award
Bath Public Schools**



**Benefiting the Community Award
HomeTown Pharmacy**



**Entrepreneurial Spirit Award
Mega Mall**



**Contributing to the Community Award
Peckham, Inc**