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Resident input sought for new Township hall project

Plymouth Township is undertaking a study on the feasibility of constructing a new Township Hall. For most of the past decade, Township residents, officials, and employees have talked about the need to combine all Township services at one location, making it easier for residents to find the department they have a need for; and making it more cost efficient for operation of Township government. Currently, Township offices are spread out between four buildings at the corner of Lilley and Ann Arbor Road, with the Planning, Water, and many other departments located four miles away off Beck Road.

The Township Board of Trustees has hired the firm of Plante & Moran CRESA to prepare a needs and cost assessment. That study is nearing completion and the Township is reviewing the possibility of constructing a new Township Hall as a part of the development of what is called the Massey property, near the corner of Haggerty and Ann Arbor Road.

The preliminary thinking, which is all open for review and discussion, is that the Township would build a new Township Hall at its new location and sell the

property it currently owns and upon which the Township offices now sit. Depending on the size and scope of the new building, which will include a new fire station, Township residents will be asked to approve about .30 mills to pay for the bonds which will be sold to finance construction. Plymouth Township currently has the lowest tax rate in Wayne County. This would continue to be true even if residents approved an additional .30 mills.

Steve Mann, Township Supervisor, is seeking input from residents. "Nothing is final and it will not be until the Township Board reviews the entire issue and votes to build a new Township Hall. We are all aware of the need to run our Township efficiently and to keep our taxes low. That will all be a part of the equation when a final decision is reached."

The four buildings currently in use include the Clerk's office, in what was once a restaurant, the assessing department in a building next to the police station and the Supervisor, Treasurer and Building department in the original building. In addition, the Township Planning, Water, and many other departments are located in a building four miles away.

Tax rates lowest in Wayne County

Important Phone Numbers:

- General Twp. Government Number: 453-3840
- Police, Fire, EMS Emergencies: 911
- Police (non-emergency): 354-3249
- Supervisor 354-3201
- Clerk 354-3224
- Treasurer 354-3214
- Trustees:
- Kay Arnold 455-2683
- Charles Curmi 455-9658
- Ron Griffith 455-1083
- Abe Munfakh 459-7547

Area Community Millage Rates		
Community	Local Twp./City Millage	Total Millage*
Plymouth Township	3.27	27.66
Northville Township	6.78	30.62
Canton Township	8.85	33.03
City of Westland	10.97	37.75
City of Livonia	11.43	35.57
City of Plymouth	15.24	39.64
City of Northville	15.89	41.21

* County, Schools, Library, Community Colleges, RESA, Huron Clinton Metroparks

Solid Waste Notes: curbside yard waste collection resumes March 31

Curbside yard waste collection is seasonal

Should Mother Nature choose to give us an early spring, please remember that there is **no** curbside yard waste collection during the winter months of December, January, February and March. During this time you must keep/store any yard waste you generate on your property. **Curbside yard waste collection will resume on March 31, 2003.**

Alternatives for your winter yard waste

Since you cannot put yard waste out for curbside collection during the winter months you could consider backyard composting. Compost, coined as "black gold" by many gardeners over the past century, can do wonders for your lawn and gardens. There are many different ways of composting from using specially made containers that you purchase, to containers you create yourself, to just a pile or heap in a corner of your yard. For more information and ideas try your local library, bookstore, the internet or call the Solid Waste Department.

The next Household Hazardous Waste Day has been scheduled for

Saturday, May 17, 2003

Look for information on acceptable items and location in the spring newsletter!

Watershed Wisdom

Watershed Wisdom

What we do in our everyday lives impacts the water quality of the Rouge River Watershed in which we live. Understanding how we fit into the pollution picture is key to improving water quality for all citizens. There are two types of pollution:

Point Source Pollution

This type of pollution comes from a definite source. For example, factories and wastewater treatment facilities. Federal and State Regulations including the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act have successfully restricted this type of pollution.

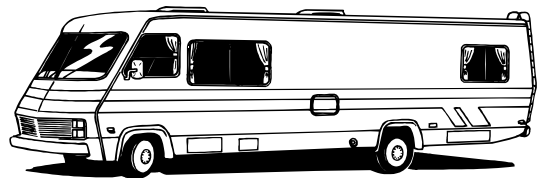
Non-Point Source Pollution

Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, comes from many diffuse sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and even our underground sources of drinking water.

Examples include excess fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides, oil and grease, pet waste residue, and even sediment or dirt.

Try these tips to help reduce your impact on the Rouge River

- Reduce your use of household hazardous waste and dispose of those you do use properly by taking to Household Hazardous Waste Day on May 17, 2003 or to a licensed hazardous waste facility.



- Clean up that pet waste! Pet waste can contain bacteria and other pollutants that find their way into the storm drains after a snowmelt or rainstorm. Pick up in a sanitary manner and simply flush down your toilet.
- Going someplace warm for the winter? Remember to dispose of your Recreational Vehicle waste at a licensed disposal facility.
- Try using sand to keep your driveway ice-free this winter. Always make sure your sidewalks and approaches are kept clear and dry for safety!
- Join a River Friendly Organization! The Johnson Creek Protection Group (JCPG) can be contacted at 734-761-1010. Contact Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) at 313-792-9900.
- Take a winter walk in the park! Plymouth Township Park offers barrier-free pathways that include interpretive signs with lots of watershed information!
- Visit the Environmental Interpretive Center at the University of Michigan – Dearborn. The center has informative displays on the history of the river and information on current activities! Call 313-593-6370 for hours and directions.

For more information on any of the ideas presented please call the Department of Public Services at 734-453-8131 ext. 33.

Safety at the fuel pump

You get out of your car to get gas and as you close your car door . . . zap! You feel a shock. This is caused by static electricity. While the static shock may be unpleasant, it is important to discharge the static from your body before touching the gas pump nozzle. On rare occasions, the static electricity spark can ignite the gasoline vapors, causing a fire.

Static electricity is more common during cool or cold and dry weather, although it may occur at any time. Static electricity is a naturally occurring phenomenon and is not unique to the service station environment.

The Plymouth Community Fire Department offers the following tips for preventing a static fire:



- ◆ Before using the pump, touch metal or the car door with your bare hand. This will discharge static electricity on your body and will prevent possible fire.
- ◆ Once the gasoline is pumping, do not get back into your vehicle. This can recharge your body with static electricity. If you must get back into your vehicle, discharge static electricity again before touching the pump nozzle.
- ◆ Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. Some cell phone manufacturers have cautioned their customers to switch off their cell phones while pumping gas because of the remote possibility that the cell phone could act as a source of static electricity.

New rescue units are welcome addition to Fire Department

The Plymouth Community Fire Department has put three new rescue units into service—one at each of the fire stations (Station 1 on Ann Arbor Rd., Station 2 on Wilcox, and Station 3 on Beck Rd.). The new vehicles replace aging units that required costly repairs and services.



Among the many advantages to the new rescues are the larger interior, made to accommodate more

equipment now that the Firefighters are certified as paramedics, trained in Advanced Life Support procedures. The vehicles are also reported to be easier to handle and have a much smoother ride—good news for both paramedic and patient.



Water rates low by comparison

The rising cost of water supplied by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is a big concern for all of us.

Plymouth Township has always strived to keep rates as low as possible. The chart at right is a comparison of water and sewer rates for various communities. These are the rates the communities charge you— their customers. Note that Plymouth Township has some of the lowest rates for communities in this area.

Water and sewer rates (as of January , 2003)

Community	Water	Sewer	Total per 1000 gallons
City of Northville	\$4.19	\$3.78	\$7.97
City of Plymouth	\$2.97	\$3.92	\$6.89
Northville Township	\$3.06	\$2.89	\$5.95
Canton Township	\$2.00	\$3.06	\$5.06
City of Wayne	\$1.97	\$3.07	\$5.04
City of Westland	\$2.09	\$2.86	\$4.95
Plymouth Township	\$2.20	\$2.72	\$4.92
City of Livonia	\$1.90	\$2.21	\$4.11
Dearborn Heights	\$1.75	\$2.29	\$4.04
Redford Township	\$1.63	\$2.04	\$3.67

Family Travel Safety Tips

Whether you are planning a winter getaway or looking ahead to spring break, it pays to consider your personal and home security before you even leave the house. The Plymouth Township Police Department offers the following advice.

Before you leave

Preventing crime during family travel starts with making sure your home is protected while you are away. The key is to make it look like you never left:

- ◆ Keep shades and blinds in their normal positions.
- ◆ Stop mail and newspapers, or ask a neighbor to pick them up every day.
- ◆ Put several household lights on timers so they turn on and off at appropriate times.
- ◆ Arrange to have snow shoveled while you are gone.
- ◆ Make sure all your door and window locks are in working order—and use them.
- ◆ Activate your home alarm (if you have one).

You might even leave a radio on—or put it on a timer. Ask a neighbor to park in your driveway overnight—anything that might suggest someone is home. Don't forget to lock all doors and windows when you leave.

Packing your bags

Preparing for a family trip requires a lot of planning. You need to decide where you are going, where you will stay, and how you will get from one place to another. You also need to decide what to take with you. Planning can decrease the chances of crime joining you on your journey. Some tips on what to take:

- ◆ Clean out your wallet or purse before you go: take only essential credit cards. Plan to use credit cards or traveler's checks instead of cash whenever possible.
- ◆ Carry your purse close to your body, or wallet in an inside front pocket. Better yet, take a "fanny pack" or wear a money pouch under your clothes.
- ◆ Pack as lightly as possible. Lots of heavy, cumbersome bags will slow you down and make you more vulnerable to getting robbed.
- ◆ Expensive, designer luggage can draw unneeded attention to your belongings. Pack your things in inconspicuous bags.



- ◆ Keep a separate record of the contents of checked luggage. Keep anything of value such as medicine and jewelry in a carry-on that stays with you.
- ◆ If you are going on an extended vacation, consider shipping large bags to your destination in advance. For the return trip, mail bulky new purchases home, or ask merchants to do it for you.

Out and about

Your home is secured and you're packed. Now it's time to go. While you and your family are traveling, it's important to remember that tourists make tempting targets for thieves. Often lost or distracted, weighed down with bags, and carrying cameras, plane tickets, money, and other valuables, unsuspecting travelers can attract crime like a magnet.

The best advice for you and your family is to do all you can to blend in with the crowd.

- ◆ Don't display expensive jewelry, camera, bags, and other items that might draw attention.
- ◆ Check maps before you go out so you can tour confidently.
- ◆ Stick to well-lighted, well-traveled streets at all times—no shortcuts.
- ◆ Always lock your car when parked, even if the stop is brief. Keep valuables out of sight, preferably locked in the trunk. Don't advertise that you are a tourist by leaving maps and guidebooks on the seat or dashboard—keep them in the glove compartment.

Traveling safely with your family also means sticking together and keeping an eye on your children at all times. Make sure they know where you're staying (name and address), and teach them what to do if they get lost or separated. You might want to agree on a meeting place, just in case. By all means, make sure your kids know not to accept rides or favors from strangers. Make your family vacation a memorable one for all the right reasons!

More information regarding safety and crime prevention is available from the Community Resource Office of the Plymouth Township Police Department, 354-3243.

REMINDER: The Plymouth Township Police Department has a crime tip hotline.
Call **414-7518** and follow the voice prompts to leave a recorded message.
For crimes in progress, please call **911**.



Steve Mann

Supervisor's Corner:

With winter approaching the half way point many of us are making plans for spring: landscaping, gardening, and home improvement. The same is true for your Township government.

I am looking forward to the opening of our new sprayscape and being able to take my son over to enjoy this new feature at Township Park. I also know from the feedback Miller Park friends have passed along that many families in that neighborhood are looking forward to sunny Saturdays and watching their children enjoy this new park.

I am also looking forward to working with our Township Board as we make plans for a new Township Hall, to replace a maze of buildings that are outdated, falling apart, and quite

frankly are taking too much time and maintenance to justify keeping them. Our residents shouldn't have to traverse the cold, icy parking lots of Township Hall during the winter to transact business between buildings. Nor should our employees, who find this a daily challenge.

Just as you and I work hard to improve the outside of our homes, taking pride in our beautiful neighborhoods, so too is your Township working to improve the condition, esthetics and upkeep of our Township properties. Our Township Hall should be reflective of the great community we have and how proud we are to live in Plymouth Township.

Over the next thirty days I will be collecting feedback, asking your input, and completing the studies necessary to make the final decision; a decision that will be made by the entire Board

of Trustees and taken to the voters for a final determination.

I am of the opinion we must have a new Township Hall, but that we also must work to make our government more efficient while keeping our tax rate one of the lowest in Wayne County.

Just as you and I work to balance our checkbook while working to improve our property, so too should our government work in the same manner. I am committed to that approach and to making your Township government something you can be proud of.

Hope to see you out and about as the weather starts to warm up this spring.

2003 Township calendar contains contact info for elected officials

The 2003 Plymouth Township calendar was mailed to residents in mid-December. This year's calendar is called "Images of Plymouth Township" and includes some photographs submitted by Township residents. Scenes depicted in some of the chosen photographs include children enjoying Plymouth Township and Miller Family Parks, flower gardens, nature scenes and holiday decorating, to name a few. If you did not receive your calendar and would like to have one, you can pick one up at the Clerk's or Treasurer's Offices, or contact the Supervisor's Administrative Aide at 354-3203 and a calendar will be sent to you.



The new calendar also includes contact information for elected officials at the federal, state, county and local levels. However, some information was not available when the calendar went to print. That information is included here.

State Senator Bruce Patterson (R) District 7

505 Farnum Building, P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 373-7350
Toll-free: (866) 262-7307
E-mail: senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov

United States Senator Debbie Stabenow

702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4822
Mid-Michigan Office: 280 East Saginaw Hwy.
East Lansing, MI 48823
Phone: (517) 203-1760
E-mail: senator@stabenow.senate.gov

U. S. Representative Thaddeus G. McCotter (R) District 11

17197 North Laurel Park Dr., Ste. 161
Livonia, MI 48152
Phone: (734) 632-2667
415 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2211
Phone: (202) 225-8171
Website: www.house.gov/mccotter

Plymouth Township government meetings:

Meeting times are 7 PM, unless otherwise shown.

February:

Wednesday, February 19: Planning Commission

Tuesday, February 25: Board of Trustees

March:

Thursday, March 6: Zoning Board of Appeals (5 PM)

Tuesday, March 11: Board of Trustees

Wednesday, March 19: Planning Commission

Tuesday, March 25: Board of Trustees

April:

Thursday, April 3: Zoning Board of Appeals (5 PM)

Tuesday, April 8: Board of Trustees

Wednesday, April 16: Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 22: Board of Trustees

May:

Thursday, May 1: Zoning Board of Appeals (5PM)

Tuesday, May 13: Board of Trustees

Wednesday, May 21: Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 27: Board of Trustees

Charter Township of
Plymouth
42350 Ann Arbor Road
Plymouth, MI 48170-
4394

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Visit Plymouth Township government on
the Internet at www.plymouthtwp.org

Five fun things to do in Plymouth this winter

1. Strap on your skates and go to the frozen pond at Plymouth Township Park. The park is open year-round and is located on Ann Arbor Trail between Sheldon and Beck Roads. Entrance to the park is free! 
2. While you're at the park, check out the sled hill! Call the Park Hotline at 453-3567 to see if the pond and hill are open for recreation.
3. Take in a performance of the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra. Don't miss the hottest ticket in town! Get ticket information by phone at (734) 451-2112 or visit their web site at www.plymouthsymphony.org. 

4. Witness the excitement of the Ontario Hockey League by going to see the Plymouth Whalers at the Compuware Sports Arena. The arena is located on Beck Road at M-14. For more information call (734) 453-8400 or log on to www.plymouthwhalers.com.
5. Visit the Plymouth Historical Museum and discover the wonderful history of this area. The museum is open year-round. For more information call (734) 455-8940 or log on to their web site at www.plymouthlibrary.org/~history. 

Look for more fun things to do in the next issue of this newsletter!

Plymouth Township website, cable TV message board keep you informed

Looking for ways to stay informed about Plymouth Township government? In addition to sending quarterly newsletters and the annual calendar to residents, Plymouth Township frequently updates our official website and offers a mailing list. This is a service for anyone wishing to receive periodic e-mail updates on items related to Township services, government and events in the community. Log onto www.plymouthtwp.org then click on the reference desk to sign up.

If you have cable television service through either Comcast or WideOpenWest, you can view recent Township announcements, get information from the various departments, check park hours, etc. The message board is shared with the City of Plymouth and the Plymouth District Library. Information is shown in a continuous loop.

Customers of Comcast Cable Company should tune in to Channel 12, Wide Open West customers to Channel 10.