

THE PROFILE

*PLAINFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXIX NUMBER 3

PHONE 364-8466

JULY 2004

In the most recent issue of *The Profile*, I attempted to summarize and characterize the nature of Plainfield Township as a local government organization. Visit www.plainfieldchartertwp.org to read that article. With this issue, I will begin a series featuring various components of our organization.

What is “planning” in our local context? To simplify, planning is the ability of local government to organize the use of the land within our 36 square mile jurisdiction and to guide the development of infrastructure to serve, access, and manage these uses. Confined to the basics, public infrastructure consists of roads, water, sewer, and drainage – the “big four.” Development of vacant land should address these features. While *public* roads, water, sewer, and drains do not serve all developments, those functions must be considered. Private driveways and private roads connect to public roads.

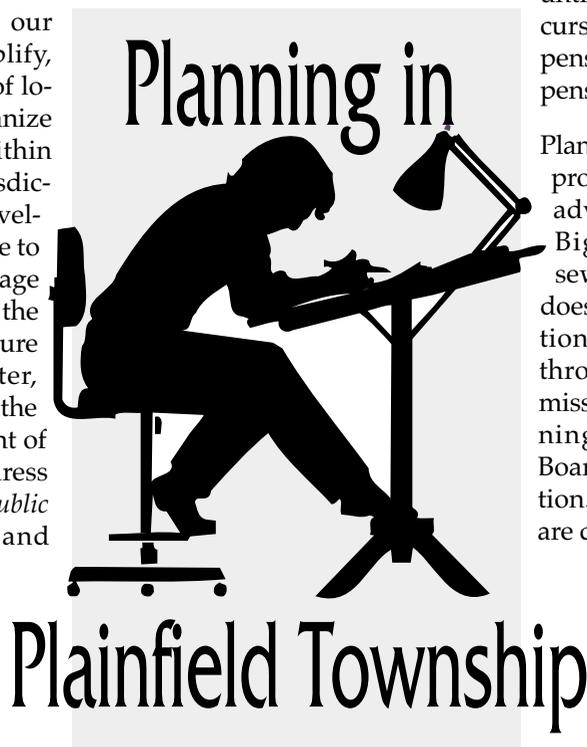
New private wells serving new neighborhoods are the exception rather than the rule in Plainfield Township. The same is true with septic systems on individual lots within new neighborhoods. Public water and sewer have

played a very large role in making Plainfield Township what it is today. Except where farm fields need drainage, storm water management is largely neglected in rural areas. Public drainage systems and storm water management are functions of more dense development. Typically, no one really pays attention to drainage until noticeable flooding occurs. Waiting until that happens can be difficult and expensive.

Planning future development properly requires attention – advance attention – to the Big Four: roads, water, sewer, and drainage. Who does this – who pays attention? Plainfield Township, through its Planning Commission, its engineer, its Planning Department, and its Board of Trustees pays attention. How well these issues are dealt with is a function of good regulations, good design, good people, and the application of adequate public resources (that would be money) to ensure the building of

a community that works. For better or for worse, there are no formulas or recipes that guarantee that everyone will be happy and that there will be no problems. Gradually, we be-

continued on page 2



Planning in Plainfield Township

continued from page 1

come more sophisticated and wiser in the business of planning. We discover what works and what does not work. We look at what other units of government have been doing, we read the literature, we attend seminars, and thereby we refine the process to improve the collective product of community development.

Every unit of local government has a great deal of leeway in determining how the community will develop. If it is done rationally, it begins with a Comprehensive Development Plan (often called the Master Plan). The rules for implementing the Plan are found in the local Zoning Ordinance. Other regulations, such as those dealing with infrastructure are found in separate ordinances like the Water, Sewer, Subdivision Control, Site Condominium, Storm Water Management, and Private Road Ordinances. Planning brings all these together and applies them to each development proposal brought to the Township for review, discussion, and approval.

Without these tools, private developers would pretty much do as they please. After all, most developers are not artists; they are business people who are motivated by profit. This is not a negative criticism; it is a fact. Developers, for the most part, do good work, because people will not buy shoddy work. If this were simply about housing – four walls and a roof, we could simply rely on the consumers' good judgment – and, of course, the building code. Planning is really about everything else – infrastructure, density, building setbacks, open space, and appropriate use of property. Those who have the responsibility to make sure these things are done right are the planners.

Who in the Plainfield Township organization does this noble work? Primarily the Planning Department – assisted by other staff people from other departments. Bill Fischer has been the Township Planning Director for nearly six years. He reports to the Township Manager

organizationally, but the people to whom he brings development proposals are the Planning Commission, an official group of seven individuals appointed by the Township Board for terms of three years. They expect Bill, ably assisted by Peter Elam, Assistant Planner, and Jackie Wiltzer, Administrative Assistant, along with a summer intern, to take care of the details and present them with recommendations and comments on development proposals that the Commission reviews at their twice-monthly regular meetings. In addition to the nitty-gritty of blueprints, presentations, and debates over individual development proposals, the Planning Department is constantly refining the process, recommending better standards and procedures, and proposing new approaches to this critical function. This small staff has their hands full. They work hard, and it seems like everyone is demanding their time. Their work, dedication, and commitment make a huge impact upon the ultimate well being of our community. What they produce will affect generations.

Without a planning department, we would muddle along, and the Planning Commission would do the best they could without able assistance and administration. I have seen the results of poor planning, inadequate planning, and amateur planning, and I am so pleased that Plainfield Township has continuously made the commitment to keep that scenario in the rearview mirror. Every local government is special, different – unique. Every one of them finds its way, hopefully, into a better future. Better planning helps to ensure that better future. So we should thank Bill, Peter, and Jackie for the work they do, the Planning Commission for exercising their vital responsibilities, and the Township Board for recognizing the importance of planning by allocating the necessary resources to enable them.

Robert Homan, Township Manager



HYSER MUSEUM NEWS

After a rainy and very wet spring stone-work has been installed on the back and front sides of foundation of the museum. Shortly after, the floodwaters of the Grand and Rogue Rivers found their way into the basement. Thanks to the Plainfield Township Building & Grounds personnel and some of the museum members for putting artifacts up on higher ground and sandbagging the back door, which kept the flood waters to a minimum.

The Hyser Rivers Museum was chosen by the *Michigan Traveler Magazine* to be featured in "Historical Places to Visit" in a future issue. A 3

reporter will be stopping by to take pictures and tour the museum for this article. It is very exciting that they picked the museum for this special spot in their magazine.

If your family has historical ties in Plainfield Township, stop by and share your information, pictures, and memorabilia on the first Sunday of each month from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m., or on the fourth Tuesday of the month at Historical Preservation Committee meetings at 1:30 p.m. Any donations of artifacts and memorabilia relating to Plainfield Township are greatly appreciated.

The following activities are planned for the next several months:

- August 1 The Dulcimer Players — a popular event
- September 5 Children's "make & take home" craft day
- October 3 Open House
- November 7 Harvest Festival with apple bobbing and other activities
- December 5 Christmas Ornament Making.

Refreshments will be served and all events are from 2:00-4:00.

New Precinct Location:

Precinct 4 has been moved permanently from the Plainfield Library to the Plainfield Fire Training Center, 4383 Plainfield Ave, Grand Rapids. New voter registration cards were mailed to all registered voters in Precinct 4.

Am I Registered?

Voters may use the Internet to check their voter registration and precinct location. Please go to www.plainfieldchartertp.org and click the link to check voter registration. There are also instructions for using the touch screen election equipment.

Special Thanks:

Many responsible township residents have been hired to serve as election inspectors for the Primary Election. Being an inspector requires one day of training and a full day of work at the polls. If anyone is interested in being an inspector for the General Election on November 2, 2004 please call the Clerk's office for an application. Our community thanks the people who will serve on August 3 for their dedication to the election process.

A Primary Election is very important.

The purpose of the election is to narrow down the candidates within each party in preparation for the General Election scheduled for November 2, 2004. There are nine candidates for Township Trustee on the Republican ticket on the ballot for August 3, 2004. This number will be narrowed to four and these four will oppose other candidates, if there are any, in the

General Election with four to be elected. There are five candidates for State Representative on the Republican ticket. This field will be narrowed to one in the Primary Election.

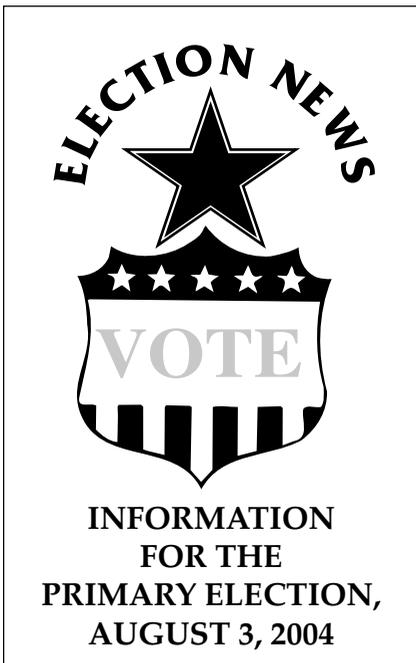
If voters do not participate in the primary election process your favorite candidate may not even make it onto the General Election ballot!! Primary elections are **very** important.

This Primary Election is also important because of the three County proposals: The Wildlife Park (zoo) Proposal, Library 1 (millage renewal) proposal, and Library 2 (millage increase) Proposal.

A copy of the ballot is available on our web page, www.plainfieldchartertp.org or you may pick one up in the Clerk's office. Each precinct has a different ballot because precinct delegates are being elected. Please be sure to review the ballot for your individual precinct.

Absent Voter Ballots:

Applications for an Absent Voter Ballot are available by calling the Clerk's office, 364-8466 or visiting the township web site. After an application is received, the signature is verified, and the ballot is mailed. Voters may use the application to apply for the Absent Voter Ballots for both the Primary Election and the General Election on one form. The use of voting as an Absent Voter assists with the reduction of lines at the precincts and affords the voter as much time as they desire to review the ballot before casting their vote. No need to worry about weather or emergency events. The absent voter ballot is identical to the screens at the precinct and is processed



under strict state laws. Please vote absentee if you are over the age of 60 or expect to be absent from the community on Election Day.

Saturday Hours:

The Clerk’s office will be open July 31, 2004 to process absentee ballots. Please come to the office, complete an application and receive your ballot. Voters who wish to vote the ballot at that time will be provided a private place to vote.

Questions ???

Please call the Clerk’s office as soon as possible...364-8466 between 7:30 am and 4:30 pm.

Please vote August 3, 2004. It is our right and our responsibility.

August 3: Kent District Library Millage Election

Kent District Library is comprised of 18 branches and a Service Center, serving 26 municipalities in Kent County.

On August 3, Kent District Library will be asking for a total of 1.0 mill for ten years, in two questions (0.88 and 0.12). If both questions pass, KDL will be able to maintain enhanced library programs and services that meet the needs of your growing community.

If only the 0.88 rate (Question 1) passes, all KDL branches will stay open. However, it is projected that Kent District Library will have to cut operations. For example, the book budget, open hours, and support services for local library building projects would be reduced.

If a millage initiative does not pass in 2004, KDL could not continue services, and would close all 18 branches.

Polling Locations	
PLAINFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP	
PCT #	LOCATION
1	Plainfield Charter Township Offices 6161 Belmont Ave NE, Belmont
2	Pine Island Elementary School 6101 Pine Island NE, Comstock Park
3	West Oakview Elementary School 3880 Stuyvesant NE, Grand Rapids
4	Plainfield Fire Training Center 4383 Plainfield Ave NE, Grand Rapids
5	Northview High School 4451 Hunsberger Dr. NE, Grand Rapids
6	Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church 4610 Belding NE , Rockford
7	St. Luke’s Lutheran Church 3215 Four Mile Road NE, Grand Rapids
8	Northview Highlands Middle School 4645 Chandy Drive NE, Grand Rapids
9	Comstock Park High School 150 Six Mile Road NE, Comstock Park
10	Assumption Church 6390 Belmont Ave NE, Belmont
11	East Oakview Elementary School 3940 Suburban Shores NE, Grand Rapids
12	Plainfield Community Center 5255 Grand River Dr NE, Grand Rapids
13	St. Stephen’s Church 6070 Kuttshill Dr NE, Rockford
14	Rockford Freshman Center 4500 Kroes Dr. NE, Rockford
15	Plainfield Christian Church 7255 Pine Island Drive NE, Belmont

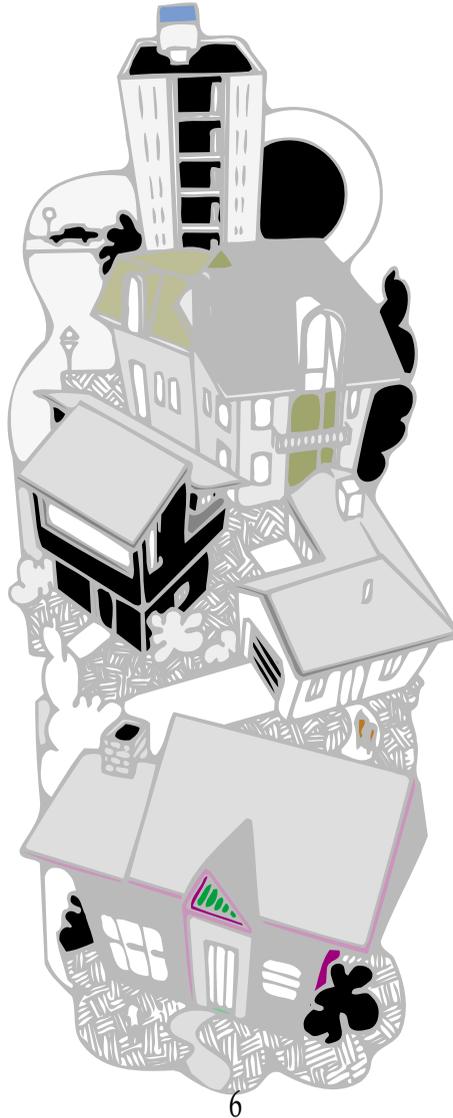
Plainfield Township is beginning the process to develop a new Township Master Plan. A Master Plan is an important document that the Planning Commission, Township Board, and land owners use as a guide for growth and development decisions. The Township Planning Commission and staff will be working with the planning consultants at Williams & Works to carry out the planning process, in conjunction with a citizens' advisory committee and significant public input.

The process to develop the Master Plan will include four inter-related phases and will run through the late summer of 2005:

- The Community Profile will assemble an overview of key features, growth trends, population and economic analyses and transportation and utility information to describe the community today and identify implications for the future.
- The preferred future for the Township will be established through a consensus-building element involving open houses and visioning workshops and a community opinion survey. These will be

used to develop a set of goals and objectives for the next twenty years, or so.

New Township Master Plan



- The Master Plan itself will include a detailed evaluation of current conditions and a future land use plan based on the preferred future established in the previous phase. This will include extensive mapping and narrative to provide policy and land use guidance for the Planning Commission and Township Board.
- The final element will be a set of implementation strategies that will outline the work necessary to make the plan a reality in the community.

This will be an important activity in the community, and residents are encouraged to participate in this planning process. The open houses and visioning workshop(s) should take place this fall, and we will use several media to give you advance notice so that you can participate. If you would like further information, please contact the Township's Planning Department at 364-8466. Also, please watch the Township's website at www.plainfieldchartertp.org for more information on the planning process.



WHITE PINE TRAIL UPDATE

SPRING 2004

By Richard Granse, Friends of the White Pine Trail

The Trail has again experienced a busy spring providing easily accessible recreation during a very rainy season. Major new information on the trail includes:

- Root damage repair between Belmont and Rockford is scheduled to be completed in September.
- Contract for repair on the Stegman Creek Historic Trestle will be placed out for bids in August by the DNR.
- Completion of the above projects will enable Kent County Parks to take over trail management in the County.
- Paving from Russell Road to Sand Lake will be facilitated by County management as they will be able to administer the paving contract. Funds are still needed for the local match to

the Federal Grant for the paving. This was greatly helped by a recent pledge of \$10,000 from the City of Cedar Springs and the DNR, who is now doing the trail layout/engineering for the section.

- The Friends of The White Pine Trail have raised nearly \$40,000 towards the above match and their fund raising continues. *Individual and business donations toward the paving would be very helpful and may directed to the Friends.*
- The Friends are doing the majority of maintenance on the trail exclusive of the City of Rockford and Plainfield, who is performing the mowing from Belmont Road to 5/3 Ballpark. More volunteer assistance is always welcome.

Dick Granse, Friends of The White Pine Trail

FRIENDS OF THE WHITE PINE TRAIL INFORMATION

Website: www.whitepinetrail.org . Information line: 616-866-8464

Address: Box 159, Belmont 49306

Become a member for \$5 per year and receive e-mail updates & newsletter

Scheduled Workdays: meet at Rockford Parking lot near Arnie's Restaurant—8:45 am: August 7th and September 4th. Volunteers are welcome.

Other workdays as needed.

Check the information line, the website, or the kiosk at Belmont for other activities.

Meeting Schedule; Wednesdays 7 pm.

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|--------------|--|
| July 14: | Comstock Park Library—West River Dr. at Lamoreaux |
| August 11: | Pierson Township Building—just off 131 at Pierson exit |
| September 8: | Plainfield Township Building |
| October 13: | Algoma Township Building |

The Kent District Library welcomes everyone to stop in to visit all of our 18 branches during our Fall Color Tour, sponsored by the KDL Alliance of Friends. Visiting just four branches will make you eligible to win prizes! Experience the rich world of books, audiobooks, videos, CD's, magazines, computers, exciting programs, and much more—all yours, supported by your tax dollars!

For Young Children and Families (to register please call the library)

Fall Laptime programs begin the week of September 14. Stories, music and rhymes for babies, toddlers and their parents.

Plainfield Branch –

Thursdays at 9:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Comstock Park Branch –

Mondays at 10:30 am

Fall Storytime programs also begin the week of September 14. Stories and crafts for ages 3-6.

Plainfield Branch –

Thursdays at 9:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Comstock Park Branch –

Mondays at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Other KDL programs for children include Family Storytimes, Pajama Storytimes, Sponge Bob Squarepants, Explorers, Blues Clues and Polar Express. The Plainfield Branch will also offer “Harpbeat of America” interactive musical fun for the whole family.

Just For Teens

Fall programs include Teen Advisory Board meetings at both branches, as well as a Grossology Workshop. At the Plainfield branch, come enjoy the Halloween Teen Café in October.

Especially for Adults

Both branches welcome you to join our monthly “no-pressure” book discussion groups, where you can relax and talk about books with other avid readers. Call your branch for a list of upcoming titles and dates—give it a try!

Upcoming fall adult programs include “Introduction to Digital Photography” and a Holiday Greeting Cards and Gift Tags workshop. In October bring your prescription bottles to Plainfield’s “Brown Bag Medication Checkup” where pharmacists provided by Spartan Stories will be available to answer all your questions about medications you are taking. In addition, the Friends of the Plainfield Library will sponsor a fly fishing program by Glen Blackwood in September, and Larry Plamondon, Native American speaker and storyteller in November.

PLAINFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY

2650 5-Mile Road NE • Phone: 647-3930

HOURS

Mon. through Thurs. 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday, Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Free Online Databases

The Kent District Library, through its website, www.kdl.org, continues to offer access to numerous online databases, including LegalTrac, which allows searching of 1,300 different legal publications, 109 of which are available full text. Through KDL you can also search your family history using HeritageQuest and AncestryPlus.

Plainfield Library Friends Update

Want to join an interesting group that values their members? Come and join the Friends of the Plainfield Library, a 501 C3 non-profit organization that "loves" its library. We raise money for furnishings, programs, and other incidentals not in the everyday operating budget. Meetings are held the second Monday of each month. Questions? Call the library and a staff member will put you in touch with a Friends Board Member. The following are some of our upcoming events:

- Used Book Sale: August 27-30
- Annual Arts and Crafts, Silent Auction, and Bake Sale: October 23 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Silent Auction items will be on display and open for bidding one week before the show.

Millage Vote

Because KDL's 4-year millage contract expires at the end of 2004, on August 3 all voters in the Kent District Library area will be asked to decide whether or not to continue supporting the library with tax dollars. If you have questions, you may email millageinfo@kdl.org, or call 784-20007, ext. 2240. Information is also available at any KDL branch. Please remember this important election!

COMSTOCK PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
3943 West River Drive • Phone: 647-3860
HOURS

Monday	9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Thursday	12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday, Saturday	12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Library Millage Election

continued from page 5

How much will the millage cost?

In 2000, taxpayers approved a 0.88 millage rate for four years.

At 0.88 mill, the owner of a \$100,000 home will pay \$44 a year, or about 12.5 cents a day.

At 1.0 mill that same homeowner would pay \$50 a year, or about 14 cents a day.

Your 1.0 mill funds will ensure ongoing, enhanced library service:

- All library materials will be free, including videos, DVDs, and music CDs.
- More bestsellers will be purchased, so waiting lists are shorter.
- The book and materials budget will be increased by 50%, over the life of the millage.
- KDL will increase "Self Checkout" to deliver fast, convenient service.
- KDL will support local library building projects with staff, materials, and computers.
- KDL will continue to offer early literacy programs, such as laptime and storytime, for children 0-5.
- KDL will increase programs and services, such as computer classes, geared to older adults.
- KDL will continue to fund the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- KDL will provide new technology, such as more PCs and high-speed Internet access, that effectively delivers library service.

This millage will not be used for buildings.

Kent District Library provides the books and materials, staff, and computers to operate the branch libraries. This millage request is for general library operations. Local communities provide the buildings that house branches.

Questions?

E-mail millageinfo@kdl.org, or call (616) 784-2007, extension 2240.

PLAINFIELD FD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Work is finally completed on the new fire station and training center on Plainfield Avenue at 5 Mile! That was a major undertaking — the second largest project for the fire department in the past eleven years. Now that we are finished working *on* the building we can concentrate on working *from* the building. I want to thank the people involved:

- **The Township Board**, who had the foresight and determination to approve this project, borrowing money to do it.
- **Paradigm Design**, for providing a functional, yet unique, design.
- **Constructors, Inc.** I'm sure that their efforts to achieve quality sometimes came at the cost to their profit margin, but they resulted in excellent buildings.
- **The Public Safety Committee**, including the members who started out on this project but are no longer serving.
- **The Planning Commission**
- **The Planning and Building Departments**, who provided us with significant advice.
- **All of the other Township departments**, for their support and encouragement. Comments such as the "Taj Mahal" helped to keep us grounded. Historical footnote: The Taj Mahal is the burial vault of an Indian Empress who inspired the King to acts of charity and benevolence towards the weak and the needy.

The nickname seems somewhat appropriate. This project was a true "team effort" for the whole township organization.

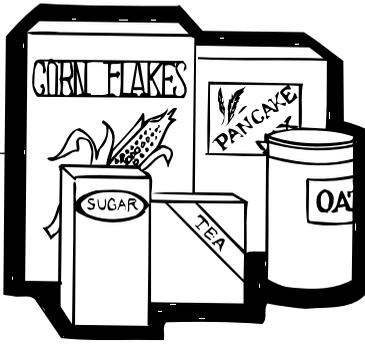
- **The members of the Fire Department**, who provided valuable input.

I need to single out a few people.

- The dedication committee, consisting of **Sue Morrow, Jeff Hawkins, Kathy Timmerman, Jennifer Lautenbach, and Dan Kanauz.**
- **Township Manager Bob Homan** who helped champion this project and then supporting me during construction and letting me and my staff do their job of making sure we got a quality product.
- **Chief Jack Bridges**, who built such a fine fire department and actually initiated this project over eleven years ago.
- **Deputy Chief Don Bigger**, who spent many hours helping to make sure we got it just right and won't get anywhere near the credit he deserves.

I would certainly be remiss if I left out the reason that there is a fire department — the residents of Plainfield Charter Township! If you weren't able to attend the open house, please stop by and ask someone to show you around. This is really *your building*. Thanks!

David Peterson, Chief



About TEFAP

WHAT IS THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)?

The TEFAP is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. Under TEFAP, the US Department of Agriculture makes commodity foods available to state distributing agencies that have been selected, such as Plainfield Township. Jim Granzotto has managed the program in our township since 1996. The program serves 170 – 200 families in our area.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Households must meet State of Michigan eligibility criteria based on income. The state regularly adjusts the income criteria to insure that assistance is provided only to those households most in need.

WHAT FOODS ARE AVAILABLE?

More than 60 products were made available for fiscal year 2003. Included were dried fruits, canned vegetables, fruit juice, frozen ground beef and other meats, rice, pasta, peanut butter, cereal and more.

A WORD ABOUT WORKERS AND PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP.

Volunteers administer the program. The building site for the distribution and storage of food is provided by Plainfield Township. Thanks to our volunteers and Plainfield Township for making this program available to our community.

Jim Granzotto

Commodities will be distributed to qualified low-income persons on these dates:

September 2, 2004

December 2, 2004

To qualify you must reside between 4 Mile Road and 10 Mile Road.

Distribution is at
6156 Belmont Avenue
(Rogelio's Pizza).

Hours are 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

New families wishing to qualify may call Jim or Peg Granzotto at 784-5249, or come to our distribution site on the above dates.

TOWNSHIP/ OFFICERS

TOWNSHIP HALL SUMMER HOURS

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 364-8466

TOWNSHIP BOARD

David Groenleer, Supervisor

Susan Morrow, Clerk

James Stover, Treasurer

Wendell Briggs, Trustee

Robert Heindrichs, Trustee

William Parris, Trustee

Charles Weldon, Trustee



MANAGER

Robert Homan

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETINGS

7:30 p.m.

First and Third Mondays

www.plainfieldchartertwp.org

FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

If you live in our targeted areas for this summer (Colonial Park, Summer Meadows, Rockhill), you may have already noticed our appraiser knocking on doors and leaving door hangers at individual homes. The State Tax Commission advises us to visit each property in the township on a five-year cycle. The purpose of this is to update our records and correct them if necessary. In keeping with safety and security procedures, all personnel from the Assessor's Office will be carrying a picture ID and driving a marked Township vehicle in the residential areas. Letting our appraiser inspect your property thoroughly will insure that we have correct records and avoid mistakes. Thank you for your cooperation.

Judith LaFave, Assessor

THE PROFILE

Plainfield Charter Township

6161 Belmont NE

Belmont, MI 49306

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT NO. 1