

The Village of Ostrander

newsletter; Nov. 11, 2015

Dear Residents:

From the Revolutionary War, through eight generations to the present, Americans from the Village of Ostrander have answered the call of our Nation and served those causes greater than themselves.

Take a moment to thank those who have served as well as those who are serving. We do appreciate it.

Fighting in a war 18,000 miles away from home was tough for me but not as tough as waiting at home when my son served half way around the world. For that reason please hold a special place in your heart for those families who have sons, daughters, husbands and wives wearing the uniforms of our services. I assure you, waiting is as difficult as serving. Thank you.

Ostrander is growing: *Admittedly, there is a part of me that wants to resit that; I am a product of the 60s' where our Village was a tiny little neighborhood with two grocery stores, two gas stations and an active mill and railroad. Scioto Valley High School and Junior High were combined and with three churches formed the very heart of the community. We had a part - time voluntary government, minimal zoning and a general notion that the only rule we actually needed was the Golden Rule. Our property tax was 1.3 mils and we always seemed to break even. The elected officials over the past fifty years took those policies as a challenge and we have been able to maintain that status right up to the present.*

But consider this; Central Ohio is one of the fastest growing areas in the entire Country and Powell, Dublin, Hilliard and Jerome are within a few miles of



Ostrander. They are some of the highest taxed communities in the region and we are one of the lowest.

Ten years ago the number of households in Ostrander was around 172. That number hadn't changed in the entire 100 years prior. Today we have nearly 290 with an additional 60 to be added in the next few years. That is roughly a 70% increase in 10 years and over a 100% increase on the immediate horizon.

Why is that? *Cost. That should be obvious but even more significant is the very nature of the community. We offer a unique alternative based on family, a great school and a wonderful sense of "neighborhood" as evidenced by the families moving in. For that, I think we should all be proud. But that secret is out. We have been approached by three different developers, all exploring the notion of "single family housing". I believe one is close to beginning the required application process.*

What about the challenges of the past? *In 2004, the Village of Ostrander passed the Ordinance modifying the Zoning Code by adding the Planned Residential District (PRD) Meadows of Millcreek. Circumstances involving things like the "housing bubble", general economy, bankruptcies, regulations and permits as well as others affected the progress of that project.*

We had two major concerns: First, ODOT suggested improvements to the entrance on 36. And second, there were questions concerning some tree removal as well as stream and wetland mitigation. Those issues are resolved and not one word of the Development Plan (law) has changed.

Westport Homes has bought the entire project from the Delaware County Bank and will be the Developer. To that end, the Preliminary Plat application is in compliance with the Development Plan and includes the engineering plans for the entrance modifications. The streams, wetlands and woodlands on the west side of the property are removed from the proposed project and approximately 20 acres will be deeded to the Village for a Preservation Park.

During the last few months the Village has been able to work very well with the Delaware County Bank and Westport Homes and we look forward to the continuation of an already great addition to the community.

Turning the Page: *The very nature of government is the protection of the citizens. The widening of 36 and the introduction of the turn lanes should advance that objective. The Village has a very rich history of protecting the environment. We have been awarded the title of "Tree City" by the Arbor Day Foundation and we practice what others simply preach. That undeveloped twenty acres borders Blues Creek at the base of the old rail road trestle and should be developed as a Community Park with picnic areas, walking trails and whatever else our collective imagination can create. That park will serve also to enhance that sense of community, personal property value and make Ostrander even more attractive than it already is. I, for one am looking forward to the challenge.*



Election / Government: *There were two open Council positions and as a result of the vote Bob Taylor will remain in his seat and Julie Guy will be our newest member. Julie has been to nearly every Council meeting in the past year and is very well versed on our issues. She brings a good insight and talent that we hope to put to good use. The remaining four members are Kelly Osborne, Tracy Stojkov, Renee Kuhn and Joe Proemm (appointed to the one vacant seat). Dorothy Wilcox is the anchor of our team as Fiscal Officer and Clerk with myself as Mayor.*

The Board of Public Affairs remains as in the past with Jerry Ball, John Bowden and Dick Voght. It is their conservative attention to detail that has managed to keep your bill lower than nearly all others in the area. The Sewer Plant is near completion on an overhaul and upgrade of the equipment on the technical / processing end of the treatment system.

The Planning Commission is chaired by Joseph Proemm and is up to speed on the general operations of the Village. It is their responsibility to evaluate those growth issues such as zoning areas, density, traffic patterns, building projects, economic development as well as the day to day needs of the Village. They have their work cut out for them.

Our Zoning Officer ran for Township Trustee in his district and won the election. Great for them but unfortunate for us. He resigned so the Village will be advertising for a replacement. If you have an interest, please contact myself, Dorothy or one of your Council members.

Civic Association: *It doesn't make any sense at all to bring this up as we head into the winter but we are already beginning the fundraising for the Fourth of July fireworks. All help is appreciated whether it be ideas, participation, work or good old fashion money. You can find all the information on the website or talk to Harla at the Library.*

We have a number of groups in the Village that contribute throughout the year. Our thanks to the Hump Day Helpers, 4 - H and the Scouts for all their efforts. Great work.

Maintenance department / issues: *Winter ... ugh ... We are as ready as we can be and will react as needed. We managed to do rather well last year. I don't believe we hit one mailbox and I also believe we did a great job keeping the school busses on schedule. Our issues in this department go to growth and the increase in roads. We will be dealing with that in Council and Planning in the months to come to plan for that increased demand.*

We have one large road improvement project in the works. It would be a repair and overlay of Main Street. That project will be funded by a grant which is in the review process with OPWC. It will be awarded in the early spring. We will hope for the best.

Police Department: *The Village officers continue to perform above and beyond. There was a major accident on 36 a few weeks ago. It had traffic blocked for nearly three hours. A car, leaving the Midway Market was "T Boned" by a truck. The driver was pinned in the car, eventually removed by our Fire Department and "Life Flighted" to the hospital. As of this time the young man is alive and has been moved to re-hab.*

The immediate response was Ostrander PD and the scene turned over to Ohio Highway Patrol because of their expertise but it happened in Ostrander. 36 in that area is Ostrander. Growth pushing north increases the east - west traffic on 36. The traffic studies done by ODOT in conjunction with the road improvements to be implemented only reinforce the safety concern. The 36 corridor seems to be the most likely region for Village growth in the next few years and as the population increases, traffic increases generating more activity on and around (crossing) 36. We will be re - evaluating the part time / auxiliary status of our department as well as looking for opportunities to work with ODOT and the State.

Conclusion: *I am as nostalgic as the next guy and definitely appreciate the past and that simple notion of growing up in the "Mayberry RFD" lifestyle. Not so long ago we had a mannequin dressed as a police officer sitting behind the wheel of an inoperable police car. We towed him from location to location and he was enough of a deterrent to hold the speed down in the Village. We had no Maintenance Department to speak of. Everyone simply did what they thought needed to be done.*

I didn't run for re-election to while away the time and lament the good old days (as nice as that sounds). I ran because I have had a front row seat to what is playing out right over the horizon and heading this way. I truly believe that if we don't acknowledge it, plan for it and put policies in place that might help control it we will be overwhelmed by it.

I encourage any and all participation from the residents. I firmly believe we make better decisions when we all understand the details, agreements, codes, costs and laws that relate. Take the time to get the information, contact your representatives, offer your suggestions, pitch in where you can and help make Ostrander as great a place in the future as it is now and was in the past.

Enjoy the Holidays!

