



Planning, Zoning, and Development in Scio Township

This article will try to explain the relationship between planning, zoning, and proposed development in the Township

First we should review the “key” documents that are used in land use decisions in Scio Township:

- ▶ Township of Scio Master Land Use Plan
- ▶ Scio Township Zoning Ordinance
- ▶ Miscellaneous reports and studies.

Township of Scio Master Land Use Plan

The Scio Township Master Plan is the only officially adopted document, setting forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It is a long-range statement aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township of Scio. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner, which permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

The Master Plan provides the long-term vision for the future of the Township with regard to land use. It is important to note that the Master Plan is a guide that seeks to look forward approximately 10 to 20 years and doesn't represent the actual zoning class of a property. It is used to guide decisions on zoning or changes to land use. Consistent use of the plan to support decisions improves credibility. Residents and landowners can see that decisions have a basis and are not just made randomly. Zoning decisions that consistently use a well-

prepared plan can also increase the likelihood of support by the courts in litigation.

State law requires that communities have a Master Plan as the foundation for, and to legitimize, the zoning ordinance and other regulations that shape the physical and social development of the community. A Master Plan is required if a community has a Zoning Ordinance but the two are completely separate documents that are drafted under separate enabling legislation.

Scio Township Zoning Ordinance

The Township Zoning Ordinance differs from the Master Plan in that it is the “law” regarding allowed land use and related restrictions, while the Master Plan is the “guide” regarding land use and the basis for zoning regulation.

Zoning requirements are described in two major documents: the official zoning map and the zoning ordinance. The map shows the boundaries and labels of the zones into which the community has been divided. The ordinance defines the regulations on use, lot size, density, setbacks and building height, general development regulations, processes, standards for development and procedures. The Scio Township Zoning Ordinance also

contains regulations on woodland management, stormwater control, and a variety of other topics. Both the Master Plan and the Township Zoning Ordinance are available at the Township Offices for viewing or purchase. The Zoning Ordinance is available on-line at www.twp.scio.mi.us.



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From the Supervisor's Desk

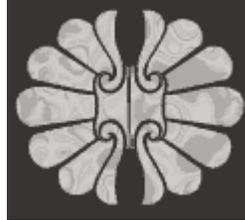
Its time for a little trash talk! No, I am not talking about a little competitive conversation on an athletic field or court. Actually I am not talking a little trash, but a lot of trash. To be more accurate, I am talking about recyclables.

The Scio Township Board heard our residents say they wanted the return of recycling in our township. It had been discontinued a few years ago due to abuse by the public, so we choose a different format. Recycle Ann Arbor now sets up camp in Scio Township Hall's parking lot at 827 North Zeeb Road on the **third Saturday** of each month from **8:00 am till Noon**. In **May** and **September** the hours are **9:00 am to 2:00 pm**. The "regular" Saturdays are for recycle material such as paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and certain plastic containers. We can also take Styrofoam, household batteries, and textiles. The May and September events also allow for larger items like computers, small appliances, etc. Some items do require a small fee to drop off. Frequently, Washtenaw County's Home Toxics drop off program runs concurrently to ours and right next door, so you can visit them in the same trip. When residents drive up to the bins they are approached with the enthusiasm of a race car pit crew. Staff from Recycle Ann Arbor, local residents, and Scio Township officials will provide you with smiles, and help unload your car.

When I mentioned a lot of trash talk, this is what I was talking about. Below are some numbers from our November 19 event:

- ▶ Plastic, metal, and glass containers: 1.5 tons
- ▶ Mixed paper: 3.5 tons
- ▶ Cardboard: 350 pounds
- ▶ Plastic bags: 25 pounds
- ▶ Household batteries: 70 pounds
- ▶ Styrofoam: 50 pounds
- ▶ Textiles: 75 pounds
- ▶ Hardcover books: 10 pounds

As you can see, this has been a very successful program. But we can handle more. So bring us your stuff and we will give it the toss for you; and you will be doing your part in helping to preserve our environment. This is also a fun event to participate in. It is light exercise, and you get to meet a lot of your neighbors in a happy and worthwhile setting. If you are interested in helping, please call Scio Township at 734-665-2123, or email to: sciogeneral@twp.scio.mi.us. It would be a pleasure meeting you there; and doing some trash talk together.



The Scio Township Board of Trustees recently received the report from our Transportation Committee. I commend all the committee members for their hard work and dedication to the township. The report was thorough, and frankly, beyond my expectations. The committee focused on what the most public transportation needy required, and where they lived. Several committee members went out to locations in the community and held public meetings to listen to our citizens. Several different levels of bus service were proposed, but sadly all were extremely expensive. Although the Board could not find a way to afford this service at this time, the effort is not over. We are still looking at possible alternative funding methods, and are open to many other ideas. More on this later if we can find a way.

In December, Scio Township signed an agreement with Washtenaw County for Police Services for the next four years. As many of you may have read in the Newspapers, this is a controversial contract since the price for the last two years is unknown at this time. That number should be available this spring, but we already know it will be a much larger increase than the typical and regular increase we have been paying each year. Already the cost has risen above what the township budget can bear, even before adding any more Police Officers to compensate for our ever increasing population. There will be more to come on this subject as we approach the warmth of spring.

On one last subject; Scio Township has received state funding for improvements to the Baker Road/I-94 overpass, similar to work done on the Zeeb Road overpass a few years ago. Construction will be facilitated through the Michigan Department of Transportation and should begin around August of this year.

*Charlie Nielsen
Supervisor, Scio Township*

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Review and Coordination during Development

The Township staff and officials rely heavily on the documents noted above when reviewing any proposed land use and development planned for Scio Township. These are the “rule-books” that we play by. Developers as well review these documents when preparing plans for submission to the Township. It is important to note that Scio Township does not propose development projects. The projects are the result of submissions made to the Township Offices by land owners or their agents. The Township must accept applications even when it would seem that approval for the project is unlikely. People have a right to submit plans and make their case for approval or change in requirements. The Township has no ability to stop an applicant from submitting a development proposal and must process it. The plans are reviewed in light of the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other supporting documentation to determine if the project warrants approval or denial. Public comment is an important part of the review of some projects. Public comment is most beneficial when information that may only be known by someone who lives near the project, i.e. drainage issues, traffic issues, or something else that Township Officials would not know is presented. In closing we would note that development review is a “process.” The process is clearly defined and must be followed by the various Township Boards and Commissions according to ordinance and state law. During the review process the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, miscellaneous documents, as well as public input (in some cases) are considered. The process takes time, in most cases months, to render a final decision. All views must be considered and the Township always tries to avoid a “rush-to-judgment.” Ultimately those making the decisions are just like you. They are residents of Scio Township who care for the future of their community. The ultimate decisions may not always be popular, but are made with the whole Township in mind.

Credits: Some of the descriptive information for the article was taken from the “Basic Training Program” of the Michigan Association of Planning, as well as the Scio Township Master Plan.

**By: Douglas J. Lewan, AICP, PCP
Township Planner**

Condominium Associations The New Local Government?

You may not be able to tell the difference between a site condominium and a subdivision by looking at the houses pictured in this article, but the type of ownership will make a substantial difference in the owner's and the neighborhood's lifestyle for years to come. A “traditional” subdivision is created under Public Act 288 of 1967, as amended, through a process that is very specific, detailed and formal. A property owner in a “traditional” subdivision may have to deal with restrictions and covenants attached to the deed. In many cases, these requirements may be enforced by a subdivision association, but in some cases no formal body exists.



A condominium is the division of property and related spaces by contract under Public Act 59 of 1978, as amended. The unit of ownership could be a lot, a building, the floor of a building, or even individual rooms within a structure. Condominiums vary greatly in the terms of the contractual arrangements. Those areas that are privately owned and common areas that are jointly held are clearly spelled out. In a residential site condominium, the unit lots resemble “traditional” subdivision lots and are subject to the Township zoning ordinance, but often have been granted modifications as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).



The purchaser of a condominium unit lot becomes a co-owner in an association whose power is defined by the master deed and by-laws. These documents are unique for each development. An association board assumes responsibility over important day-to-day concerns and has more direct control over land use issues in the project than any formal governmental jurisdiction. The condo board is subject to appointment or election per a process described in the documents.

Responsibility for items like architectural review, site maintenance and improvement for private roads, sidewalks, lighting, drives, storm water retention/detention, drainage patterns, sanitary sewers, utilities, parking, outside storage, fences, noise levels, and landscaping are

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vested in the association board. The level of enforcement activity is up to the policies of the association board. Condominium owners tend to pay many more dollars to their association in the form of dues than are paid in Township tax (which is a very small portion of the total annual property taxes).

The concept of condominium co-ownership and related responsibilities will become more evident as projects age and costly maintenance or replacement of the infrastructure is required. The solution to problems with most of these issues rests with the association. If you live in a condo, you should familiarize yourself with the documents to which you are a party. The Township cannot interpret or enforce these. It is an agreement between you and your neighbors. If you have issues with restrictions, enforcement activities, or maintenance standards set by your association board, you should seek personal legal advice. And remember, you can always become directly involved by serving on the condominium board. (By the way the condo is the larger all-brick structure.)

---Darrell A. Fecho, AICP, Township Manager

Don't Veer For Deer!

When a deer jumps in front of your car there is little time to think. If you can remember this rhyme,

DON'T VEER FOR DEER!,

you have a much better chance of staying alive.

Many drivers instinctively try to avoid hitting the deer. We don't want to hurt the deer or damage our car. **The problem is that most injuries and deaths involving car-deer crashes are caused by fixed objects such as a tree, telephone pole or other vehicle that a driver hits while trying to avoid the deer.** Nobody wants to hurt the deer, but continuing to drive in a straight path while attempting to stop is the safest way to handle these events.

Deer population in Scio is growing rapidly. Please tell your friends and loved ones

"DON'T VEER FOR DEER!"

You may save a life.

Remember:

- ▶ If you see one deer there will probably be more
- ▶ The most common times for car-deer crashes are in the spring and fall, and at dawn and dusk.
- ▶ Stay awake, alert, and sober, and wear your seat belt.

(Adapted by Trustee Ream from "The Vehicle", newsletter of the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study)



Regular Scio Township Meetings:

Planning Commission

2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees

2nd Tuesday and Wednesday two weeks following at 7:00 p.m.

Scio Township Phone Directory:

General Offices	665-2123
Sewer & Water Utilities	665-2606
Fire Dept.	665-6001

Washtenaw County

Sheriff	
-- Scio substation	994-8105
Road Commission	761-1500
Drain Commissioner	994-2525
Building Inspection Services	222-3900
Environmental Health	222-3800

Scio Township Board of Trustees:

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Charles Nielsen

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Kathleen Knol

Treasurer

Donna Palmer

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Jim Dries
Jean Leadwith King
David Nacht
Charles Ream

Township Manager

Darrell A. Fecho

Advertising

The Scio Township Newsletter is mailed to approximately 6,000 homes and businesses 4 times a year. Just send your business card and \$60 to be included in this section.

We mail the newsletter on or about the first of February, May, August and November. We need your materials two weeks in advance.

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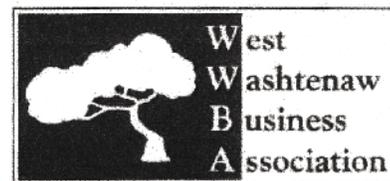
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The East Delhi Bridge Legacy February 15 to June 7 2006

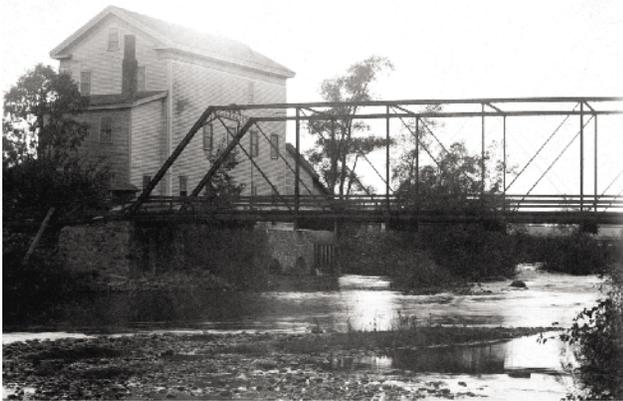


Exhibit is at the Museum on Main Street

Sponsored by the East Delhi Bridge Conservancy. Historic photos from local resident's photo collections, the Mosher/Poppenger Family and the Moore Family were scanned and digitally enhanced by EDBC member, Scott Hedberg.

Bill VanCleave, a Scio Business owner with Foto One - Ann Arbor assisted with the printing of seven historic photos for the exhibit. A print done by local artist, Jean Lau was donated to the EDBC and Randy Parrish, Fine Framing for his work.

Township Qualifies for Federal & State Funds from HUD

During the summer of 2006, Scio will be participating with Washtenaw County and other member area townships in the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) programs for the first time since the Congress created the grant program in 1974. The Washtenaw area became eligible for entitlement funding in July of 2003. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) makes funding available through these block grants for projects in various categories, most of which must be targeted to benefit low and moderate income households or senior citizens. The Washtenaw County Office of Community Development administers the programs and implements qualified projects with substantial input from local community officials.

The demographic and economic profiles of participating communities are combined to determine the annual available funding. Projects are currently underway in the other townships that agreed to participate in previous years. Contractual arrangements and the funding cycles are such that Scio will qualify this summer. After July 1st, this program will be able to assist low-to-moderate income residents with needed home repairs and improvements to eliminate code violations, increase safety, and lower energy costs. Also eligible human services and public improvements targeted in areas with low and moderate income residents.

For more information on this program, go to the internet at www.ewashtenaw.org and click on the Community Development Department or contact Annette Rook at (734) 622-9015.

A Young Resident To Be Proud Of

BLUE LAKE FINE ARTS CAMP - 2006
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Michael's Musical Adventure



A young musical talent living among us came to my attention recently, in the name of Michael S. Sullivant. Michael has lived in Scio Township with his family for the last three years. He is a bass clarinet player with tremendous talent. Enough so that he has been invited to the prestigious Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp this summer. The Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp International Exchange Program is dedicated to the promotion of goodwill and understanding among the people of the world through cultural exchange and the universal language of music. This program consists of a highly select group of talented young people from all over the United States, Canada, and 10 European Countries. This summer they will embark on a tour of central Europe, staying in homes with host families in each community they visit. These young people are selected not only for their musical talent, but are also closely screened for excellence of character. This is a carefully organized and highly educational tour, and I am proud to have Michael Sullivant representing Scio Township. Check out his website at:
<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~sssulliv/bluelake>

Charles Nielsen
Township Supervisor

What is Township Government?

Michigan's government structure at the local level can be a bit bewildering. Cities, villages and townships operate under differing mandates. Michigan's 1,242 townships govern the vast majority of state's land area and now include over fifty percent of Michigan's population. Whereas cities and villages operate under a specific charter approved by vote of the people within their boundaries, townships operate under generalized principles enabled by state law for areas that don't otherwise incorporate under a charter.

Township government was conceived by Thomas Jefferson and the concept was created long before Michigan became a state. Andrew Jackson's philosophy of direct democracy further shaped the local township government structure that survives and thrives today. Obviously, each resident cannot directly vote their opinion on each issue, but more than any other level of government, the township embodies the values of "grassroots' government." In our township, many of your neighbors contribute their time, talents, skills and ideas to preserve the quality of life, implement a future vision, and deliver important programs and services.

Scio residents are represented by an elected seven member board consisting of three officers – (supervisor, clerk and treasurer) and four trustees – all of which are elected at large every four years. Your elected officials live in Scio and stay in touch with ever changing issues. Limited by law in the amount of taxes that can be levied without voter approval, township officials must be creative in delivering quality services with the least possible burden to taxpayers. The limits of township authority are defined by numerous state and federal laws along with legal precedents created by the courts through the years.

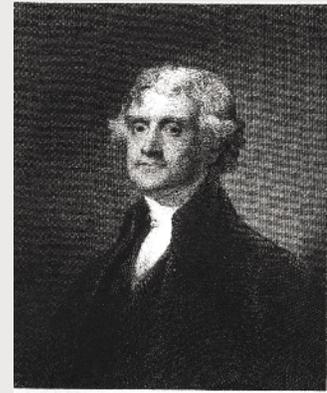
Scio Township has an outstandingly high quality of life that is a key priority of all township officials to maintain. The planning commission creates and maintains a long range land use document (master plan). They review site plans for new construction sites and implement the zoning ordinance as adopted by the township board.

Scio is entrusted with the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. An important component of this function is the operation of the township's paid on-call fire department. In addition to providing emergency services, the department provides fire safety education and periodic inspections of commercial businesses.

The township treasurer collects property taxes on behalf of all tax jurisdictions. The township retains a very small percentage of the total tax dollars collected. The assessor maintains assessments on properties. Water & sanitary sewer operations, maintenance and billings are the responsibility of the utilities department.

Scio is a participant in several cooperative efforts to efficiently provide services to our residents. Law enforcement is provided through contractual arrangements with the Washtenaw County Sheriff.

The Washtenaw County Building Services Department processes building permits, inspects construction, and enforces adopted building codes. Scio has no authority over roads and drains; it cooperates with the County agencies of the Road Commission and Drain Commissioner to reach the common goals relating to a better community.



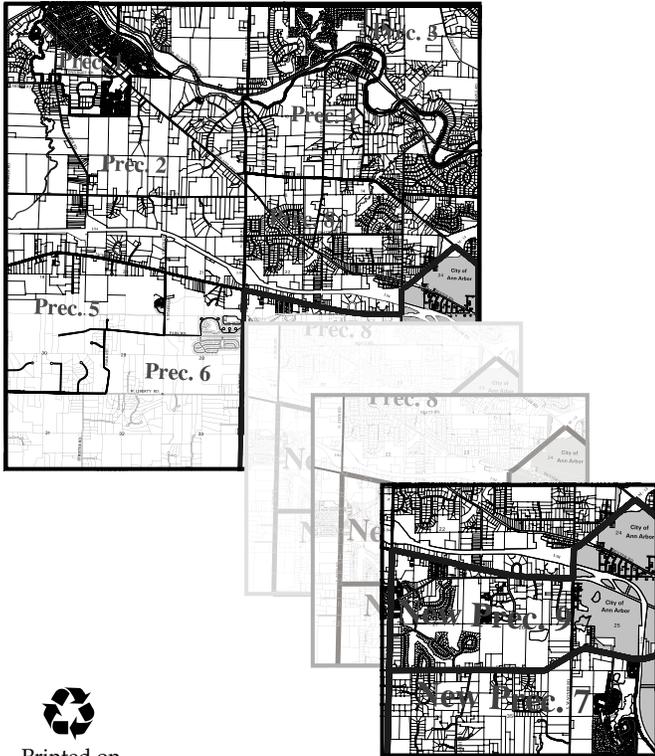
Portrait by 1770 and reworked by J. M. Smith.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1743-1826

Th. Jefferson

"The will of the people... is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object." -- Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Waring, 1801. ME 10:236

New Precinct 9 Created



Previous precinct 7 has been divided and new precinct 9 has been created. Voters residing north of Liberty Road will vote in the Polo Fields clubhouse. Voters residing south of Liberty Road will continue to vote at WISD. This will contribute to shorter voting times during busy elections.

Kathleen Knol
Scio Township Clerk



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