

Portland Township News

Winter 2022

773 East Grand River

P.O. Box 314

Portland, MI 48875

www.portlandtownship.org

What's Happening in Portland Township?

Master Plan Updates

The Planning Commission is currently updating the Township's Master Plan in accordance with the Planning Enabling Act of 2008. The act requires townships to review their Master Plans every five years. Because of Covid, ours is a little over due.

The Master Plan provides a vision of what Portland Township will look like in the future. It will help guide decisions on land use, development, and preservation. The survey that was presented in the last newsletter gave insight into what our residents want for the Township. Once the updates have been adopted by the Planning Commission, the Master Plan will be available on the Township website.



Results of Survey

The overwhelming majority of respondents to the summer survey enjoy the rural characteristics of the Township and would like to see them be maintained. In addition, the majority would like to see:

- Roads maintained/improved
- Sidewalks/paths along busy roads
- The nuisance ordinance enforced
- No more expansions at Sunset Ridge



Complete survey results are available on the Township website or by using the QR code above

Nuisance Ordinance Updated

The summer survey indicated that Township residents are not satisfied with the way our nuisance ordinance has been enforced. Because of this, the nuisance ordinance has been updated. The updates will allow the Township to fine unresponsive offenders more quickly and also to deal with repeat offenders more effectively.

Cutler Road Bridge Project

According to John Niemela, Ionia County Road Department Director, though the contractor is working diligently, it is possible that the Cutler Road bridge might not be ready to reopen on the scheduled date of December 1. Every attempt is being made to stay on schedule, but hold ups that are out of their control are having an effect.

Emergency Care Plan

The Portland Ambulance Service offers an Emergency Care Plan to citizens of Portland Township. Subscribers to the service are not billed for their ambulance runs. The cost is \$60 per year, and it covers all members of your household. The fiscal year runs from July 1-June 30, but enrollment is open all year and new subscribers will be accepted.

In the event a subscriber uses the Portland Ambulance Department for a medical emergency, the department bills the insurance company for the subscriber and the subscriber does not receive a bill. The Ambulance Department accepts what the insurance companies pay as payment in full and the subscriber is not responsible for any remaining balance.



<https://www.portland-michigan.org/149/Ambulance-Department>

Online Payment

Don't forget! You can now pay your taxes online!

CREDIT CARD



➤ Convenience Fee
3% (minimum fee \$2.00)

E-CHECK

➤ Convenience Fee
\$3.00 Flat Fee

To pay online go to
www.portlandtownship.org
and click on ONLINE PAYMENT

What is a Public or Private Road or Driveway?

In talking to residents, we realize that there is a lot of confusion about what constitutes a public road, a private road, and a private driveway. According to Michigan law:

Public Road means any road, street, or right-of-way dedicated or maintained for public use. In addition to the paved and gravel roads in Portland Township, there are seven subdivisions whose streets are public; this was determined when each subdivision was built. They are: Stillmeadow Subdivision, Spohn's Subdivision, Riverest Subdivision, Plainview Subdivision, Chinook Subdivision, Jennifer Lane, and Meadowrue/Chicory Lane. These public streets used to be maintained by the Ionia County Road Department, but over the past two decades, as road funds became scarce, the Road Department stopped that maintenance, though they do still plow the snow. In order that the streets not deteriorate back to gravel, Portland Township now partners with the residents of those subdivisions to crack seal/chip and fog seal them. Currently, the Township pays 1/3 of the cost; the residents pay 2/3.



Private Road means a privately owned and maintained road, allowing access to more than one residence or place of business, which is normally open to the public and upon which persons other than the owners located thereon may also travel. Examples of private roads in Portland Township are Grand Ridge Subdivision, Cottonwood Creek, Divine Highlands, Cedarbrook Trail, Industrial Drive, Abbey Road, etc. Maintenance and snowplowing of these roads is handled privately, oftentimes through Home Owner's Association fees.

Private Driveway means any piece of privately owned and maintained property which is used for vehicular traffic, but is not open or normally used by the public. In Portland Township, only two properties can share a private driveway; if three or more properties share it, it must be upgraded to a private road.

Township Hall Update

Though the Township Board has not yet chosen an architect or builder, we have been working diligently with Progressive AE to develop a plan for the new Township Hall. A site plan was discussed at the October 12 meeting, the tentative plan includes:

- An access road from Grand River Avenue
- The property along Grand River Avenue being reserved for future commercial sites
- The Township Hall and recycling site being built behind the commercial properties
- The property south of the hall/recycling area to remain agricultural land for the near future

Township residents and others who are interested in the project, are invited to attend the December 14 Township Board Meeting, where the project will be further discussed.

In addition, Portland Township is selling 4.45 acres of land on Barnes Road. The property was purchased to build a new Township hall, before the Grand River Avenue property became available. This property is currently zoned Agricultural; a residential home could be built on it. It has been perked and surveyed. Asking price is \$125,000. Contact Portland Township Supervisor Chris Jensen for information--989-289-4071.

Portland Township Board Meets 2nd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

Supervisor, Chris Jensen
portlandtscjensen@gmail.com
(517) 647-2479

Clerk, Charlene Keilen
portownship@att.net
(517) 647-6643

Treasurer, Shelly Schneider
ptowntreas@gmail.com
(517) 647-2075

Trustee, Sue Vanlente
suevanlente@gmail.com
(517) 575-8000

Trustee, Mark Simon
mgsimon@wowway.com
(517) 647-4892

Planning Commission Meets first Wednesday of March, June, September and December at 7:00 pm

Chair, Cindy Selden
Vice Chair, Ross Schneider
Secretary, Sue Vanlente (Township liaison)
Andrew Huhn
Tony Dixon
Marcy Lay
Evelyn Walkington-Jensen

Zoning Board of Appeals Annual Organizational Meeting second Wednesday of each January at 6:00 pm, then as needed.

Chair, Kris Bond
Vice Chair, Tom Klein
Secretary, Evelyn Walkington-Jensen
Mark Simon (Township liaison)
Nic Schneider
Alternate, Theresa Iskra

Board of Review Meets in December, March, and July

Chris Jensen
Cindy Selden
Nick Sandborn
Matt Robertson
Alternate, Keith Baker
Alternate, Vacancy

Zoning Administrator
Jeanne Vandersloot
(616) 897-4242
zoningadmin@msn.com

Assessor
Jason Kohagen
(989) 383-0306
jkohagen@bsasoftware.com

PAMA Board Representatives
John Baker & Marcy Lay

PAFA Board Representatives
Chris Jensen & Bill Stegenga

Library Board Representatives
Kathy Cook & Robert Weller



@Portland Township MI