



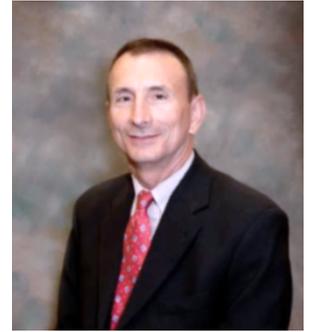
## WARD 7 NEWSLETTER

January, 2017

**Councilman Bill Russo**

Phone: (440) 349-4980

E-mail: [brusso1202@aol.com](mailto:brusso1202@aol.com)



Hope you and your family enjoyed the Holiday Season and that you get off to a great start to the New Year.

It was a busy second half of the year with surprising results in the National Election. While there may be change nationally, locally things continue to move in a positive direction.

### 2017

We are fortunate to have such a strong industrial base that continues to get stronger each year.

This has enabled the City to keep up its infrastructure and continue ongoing building maintenance. The upcoming budget will be allocating over \$24 million to Infrastructure, Equipment, Buildings, Technology and Water Reclamation.

As for Ward 7, Copley Avenue is scheduled for reconstruction in the 2017 budget. Once the bid is awarded, Engineering will schedule a meeting with residents that will be affected by the project. At this meeting, information will be provided to explain what the project will entail and what to expect. There will be temporary inconvenience but it will provide long-term benefits.

### Economic Development

Energy Focus and Nestlé USA will be bringing over 80 jobs each to Solon in the near future. Nestlé will be investing over \$4 million as it brings these jobs to Solon and Ohio. On Enterprise Parkway, a portion of the retail strip will be demolished. Renovation for the existing portion will take

place with the remainder making way for construction of Townplace Suites by Marriott.

Primrose Schools, an early childhood center/pre-school had their site plan approved. The site is adjacent to St. Vincent Medical Center.

Burger King is renovating the exterior of their building. Several new restaurants have opened or will be opening soon. They include Red Bowl, Munch a Simple Kitchen, 56 Kitchen, Butcher's Pantry and Simply Greek.

The owner of the property that housed Panini's and Paco's Tacos has had some discussions with the City about future plans on that corner.

One of the biggest complaints that we receive concerns the commercial areas such as the former Sears property and the strip centers along Aurora Road. As long as these properties meet the Zoning Code, there is nothing the City can do to make the owners improve the look of their properties. The City has made the owners aware of the incentive programs available to businesses that spend money to upgrade their property.

Businesses in the industrial area and ECHO Development (Market District) have used this incentive program to enhance the look of their property. Unfortunately, we have commercial property owners that choose not to invest in their properties.

The City cannot force a property owner to fill a vacancy on their property. In some cases, if a tenant leaves a location before their lease is up, they are still responsible to pay

rent. This may be a reason why some locations stay vacant.

### **Liberty Ford**

The City has worked with Liberty Ford over the past three years approving plans and requests without Liberty Ford ever breaking ground for a new showroom. The plans for this showroom were approved in 2013.

I do not have the space here to go into all of the details but rest assured the City did everything on their end to accommodate Liberty Ford but could not put the rezoning on the ballot without a development agreement or site plan. We have not done that in the past. We did not have a signed development agreement for the Central Park proposal and that was not put on the ballot.

### **Longview Drive**

The long awaited road project was finally started and completed in 2016. It is a dramatic improvement. There was some inconvenience during the construction phase but it was worth it.

### **IT and Finance**

The City has hired Jim Gibbs as Director of IT and Matt Rubino as Director of Finance. We have already seen some changes and more are coming.

Jim is in the process of changing the web format and operating system so that things are more user friendly. He has a number of changes he would like to implement but they will take time.

Matt has already made one major change. The City budget was prepared and approved before the year started. In prior years, the Budget was not finalized until March.

### **Using "Notify Me"**

If you are interested in receiving alerts from the City, sign up for "Notify Me". You can do this by going to [www.solonohio.org](http://www.solonohio.org). On the home page, click on "**How do I**" and scroll

down to "**Sign Up For**". Click on the link "**Emergency Alerts**." Once you get to the next page, scroll down to "**Sign up for emergency conditions/road closure Notify Me**." Next, enter your email address and click "**sign in**". A message will be sent to your email address for verification. You must follow the steps in the email message in order to specify which alerts you would like to receive.

There was an issue in December when Cleveland Water put out a precautionary boil alert. The areas impacted were north of Solon and Aurora Road. Unfortunately, the City was never notified by Cleveland Water or Cuyahoga County so we were not able to immediately put out an alert. The initial release that went out did not include Solon. It was only after the Mayor received a call from a resident that she became aware that there was a precautionary alert. At that point, the alerts were triggered. A programming problem was discovered and has since been corrected. Some who signed up did not receive the alert and others received multiple alerts. Fortunately, this was only precautionary and not anything more serious.

The "**How Do I**" link also allows you to report street light or sidewalk problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service to you. Please let me know if you have questions or concerns. I can be reached at 440-349-4980 or [brusso1202@aol.com](mailto:brusso1202@aol.com). Please put Ward 7 in the Subject Line. This will assist me in letting me know if your email gets in my Spam Folder that it should be read and not deleted.

I wish you and your family a healthy, prosperous 2017.