

BROWN

ESTABLISHED 1830

TOWNSHIP

Fall 2009

Town Center Master Plan Process to Start

The Big Darby Town Center Master Plan process is about to begin. Under a participation agreement among Franklin County, the City of Columbus, Prairie Township, and Brown Township, Urban Design Associates (UDA) of Pittsburgh has been selected to lead a team of consultants in the months-long process to produce a master plan for the Town Center area identified in the Big Darby Accord.

One of the implementation initiatives identified in the Accord was to initiate a master planning process for the Town Center to establish a more specific vision for development of the Town Center and provide a detailed set of recommendations including level of development, infrastructure requirements, design guidelines, and phasing.

The proposed Town Center area straddles Brown and Prairie townships generally between U.S. 40 and I-70. The Town Center concept is consistent with the goals of smart growth, principles of which include a mix of land uses, compact building design, a range of housing choices, walkable neighborhoods, a variety of transportation options, and the preservation of open space.

The master plan will be conducted in an open, participatory design process and will include three phases:

- “Understanding” – in which the UDA team will gain a detailed understanding of the opportunities and the goals of the stakeholders
- “Exploring” – in which the team will use plan and perspective drawings in a design workshop format to create and evaluate a number of possible plans
- “Deciding” – in which the UDA team and stakeholders will narrow the choices to arrive at a consensus plan.

UDA will be at the center of a multi-disciplinary planning team that includes urban designers, landscape architects, ecologists, civil engineers, traffic consultants, market analysts, and attorneys. Sub-consultants include Design Workshop (for landscape architecture); Applied Ecological Services (for ecology); STV, Incorporated (for civil engineering); Walter Kulash (for transportation planning); Robert Charles Lesser Co (for market analysis); and Bricker & Eckler (for land use regulation).

Many public input and feedback opportunities will be provided in a variety of formats, including one-on-one interviews, public meetings, design workshops, and an advisory

committee to work with the jurisdiction representatives and consultants throughout the process.

Project manager for the Town Center Master Plan process is Lee Brown, Planning Administrator, Franklin County Department of Economic Development and Planning. He will serve as the day-to-day contact person between the jurisdiction representatives and consultants.

*Contributed by:
Elizabeth A. Clark, AICP
Executive Assistant to the Brown
Township Board of Trustees*

Brown Township Trick or Treat

Trick or treat will be observed in Brown Township on Thursday, October 29 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., on the same schedule as the City of Hilliard.



Franklin County Establishes Buffer Zones to Protect Darby

Last year, Franklin County passed a regulation that establishes buffer zones around the small streams that feed into the Big and Little Darby Creeks. The new regulation adds to the already-existing 15-year-old buffer zones along the Big and Little Darby Creeks themselves.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency required the county to establish the buffer zones to help keep the Darby's water clean and its fish and other creatures healthy. If too much pollution reaches the creek, the endangered species that call the Darby home will be unable to survive.

For the smallest streams, the buffer zones are 100 feet from the middle of the stream. For larger streams, the buffer zone is generally 100 feet from the middle of the stream or the 100-year floodplain, whichever is greater.

Within the stream buffer zone, it is illegal to dump, pave, dig, dredge, and place buildings. New stream crossings are forbidden, except when a property would otherwise not have access to a road.

The new regulation applies mostly to new development. Existing homes, gardens, parking areas, and crossings are largely grandfathered. Farming and other agricultural activities are exempt from the regulation, as required by Ohio law.

Few properties in Brown Township are affected by the regulation. The majority of properties have no stream buffer zone areas. Some properties have small areas within the buffer zone, mostly in backyards or wooded areas. A few undeveloped properties have larger no-build buffer zone areas. If owners want to build on those properties, any development would have to be outside the buffer zone.

Keeping a no-build buffer zone around streams, large and small, helps the waterways stay healthy. The buffer zones filter pollution from water runoff before it reaches the waterway.

Allowing water to trickle in along undisturbed ground rather than rushing off hard surfaces keeps water from moving too quickly once it is in the stream. This helps prevent stream bank erosion.


Clean waterways with healthy creatures and abundant plants help preserve your property values – and the Darby – for future generations of Brown Township residents.

Franklin County has an on-line tool that allows anyone to see where the buffer zones are. Visit www.franklin-countyohio.gov/edp and click on "GIS" on the green bar at the top, then click on the "Big Darby Creek Riparian Setbacks" link.

Having Internet trouble? Call the Franklin County offices at 462-3094 and tell them you have a question about the Big Darby Creek stream buffer zones. You can also email your question to planning@franklin-countyohio.gov.

The full text of the regulation is available on-line.

*Contributed by:
Ben Weiner, Planner, Franklin County
Economic Development & Planning*



Clean waterways with healthy creatures and abundant plants help preserve your property values – and the Darby.

Streamside buffer zone

Franklin County Sponsors Stormwater Management Plan and Utility Study

The first of a series of articles on the Franklin County Drainage Engineer's Stormwater Management Plan and Utility Study

In September 2008, the Franklin County Drainage Engineer (part of Franklin County Engineer Dean Ringle's office) contracted with local consulting firm EMH&T to conduct a two-phased project focusing on establishing a stormwater management business plan and utility. The first phase of this study involved an assessment of the drainage needs both within the existing petition ditch program and within the unincorporated townships throughout the County.

The first phase, completed in March 2009, documented extensive need for both capital improvements and for drainage maintenance of the stormwater infrastructure, including the tile, open ditch, and storm sewer systems across the County. One of the goals of the Phase I Study was to quantify the potential benefits to the townships and the County residents from expansion of the stormwater management program of the County Drainage Engineer.

The Phase I Report clearly indicated that there are significant drainage problems throughout Franklin County and that the existing budget is not adequate to finance the full improvements needed within the townships or within the County petition sys-

tem. The study indicated that the townships alone have a large backlog of drainage improvement needs.

These needed improvements are related to the age of the system, as a good portion of the township and petition systems are well beyond the useful life for such infrastructure. Maintenance and/or replacement will be required for the existing drainage infrastructure system to continue to convey the stormwater as designed. Without improvements, increased flooding problems may be anticipated on a county-wide basis.

The second phase of the project is currently underway. The Phase II study has included an evaluation of the cost associated with an expanded county-wide stormwater management program, as required to address the drainage service needs identified during Phase I. A stormwater utility funding program has been identified as the most likely solution to provide the stable

and consistent funding source required to meet the identified service needs. Details of a potential stormwater utility and its creation will be fleshed out in the remainder of Phase II.

The photos indicate the need for an expanded and more aggressive capital improvement program both for the safety and protection of the residents and natural resources of Franklin County.

For additional information, contact Lisa Jeffrey, Project Manager, EMH&T, at 614-775-4520 or ljeffrey@emht.com.

Contributed by:
Lisa Jeffrey, EMH&T



Existing stormwater problems in Franklin County



Neighborhood Crime Watch

Efforts are underway to compile an email distribution list of neighbors interested in being contacted about break-ins or suspicious activities in the township.



If you are interested in being a contact person for your street or road, please get in touch with Trustee Pam Sayre.

Pam_Sayre@Brown.Twp.Franklin.oh.us

Want to be Added to Our Mailing List or Have a Change of Address?

Please use any of the following:

- Fill out the **name, address, additions and corrections form** on the Brown Township website under “Newsletters”
- **Call** the Township Fiscal Officer (614-876-2133)
- Via **fax** to the Township Office (614-876-2421)
- Or by **mail** to the return address above.
- To have your newsletter addressed in your name instead of “Brown Township Neighbor,” please visit <http://www.Brown.Twp.Franklin.oh.us/newsletters.htm>.



Clockwise from left: Gary Dever, Ronald Williams, Pamela Sayre and Barbara Bloxam

Brown Township Administration Office

2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio 43026 876-2133

Website

www.brown.twp.franklin.oh.us

Fiscal Officer

Barbara Bloxam 876-2133

Trustees

Mr. Gary Dever 876-4768

Mr. Ronald Williams 876-6118

Mrs. Pamela Sayre 878-0199

Norwich Fire Department

David Long, Chief 876-5367

Brown Township Board of Trustees Meeting

When: 3rd Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m.

Where: 2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio

For Police, Fire and Medical Emergencies, Dial 911