



# WARD 6 NEWSLETTER

## Fall, 2018

### Councilman Bob Shimits

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### To Ward 6 Residents: Happy Fall!

There has been a summer full of activity in the City since my last newsletter. It has been a pleasure meeting with residents, listening to concerns and doing our best to resolve issues that have come up. This should bring everyone up to speed with the current issues we are facing.

### Information

In my last newsletter I encouraged residents to take on some of the responsibility to be informed. Regular Council, Planning Commission, and Committee meetings are video archived on the City website ([Solonohio.org](http://Solonohio.org)) along with the posting of minutes and agendas. Everyone has access to the internet by phone, iPad or home computer. You can also get online for free at the library. Nextdoor.com, The Solon Sound Board on Facebook and the local paper (Solon Times) are also great sources of information. Take advantage of these resources and be informed!

### November 6<sup>th</sup> is Election Day!

This is a reminder that the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections has moved our Solon Ward 6A and 6B polling stations to Grantwood Golf Course, located at 38855 Aurora Road. **NOT CITY HALL**

There are three rezoning issues on the November 6<sup>th</sup> ballot but none are as controversial as **Issue 110**. This Issue

would create a new zoning classification on 103 acres located at 39350 Bainbridge Road (former Luczek property). This new zone would be a mixed use development that could include a winery, small commercial shops, a boutique hotel with rooms above the retail and villas. Currently, this area is zoned R-1-D for single family homes.

There is a process that developers must follow when proposing to rezone property. The process starts with presenting the plan to the Council who would refer it to the Planning Commission to review, ask questions and provide input to the plan. Public hearings would be scheduled for residents to voice their opinions and concerns regarding the project. The Planning Commission may request a traffic study, which would need to be reviewed by the Safety and Public Properties Committee as well as input from the Public Works Committee.

Once all requested input from public hearings is received, the Planning Commission could recommend placing the rezoning on the ballot and refer the plan back to the Council for further review. The Council would then follow a similar process.

The developer was seeking approval in time to place this issue on the November ballot. In order for this to happen, all public hearings and approvals (both Planning Commission and City Council) would have

needed to be completed by August 6<sup>th</sup> in order to place the rezoning on the ballot. The Planning Commission determined there was not enough information to schedule a public hearing and the review was tabled pending further information. In June the developer decided to proceed with an initiative petition instead of following the normal procedure and signed petitions were received by the City.

Once the Board of Elections verified the signatures on the petitions, the issue was placed on the Council's August 6<sup>th</sup> agenda. Solon's City Charter states that each ordinance or resolution shall, before its passage, be read on three separate days unless the rules are suspended by at least five Council members. Although the developer requested the Council waive the rule and vote to place the issue on the November ballot, the Council unanimously agreed not to suspend the three reading rule (which would have allowed for the issue to be placed on the November ballot) and left the Ordinance on first reading.

The very next day after this vote, the developer filed a lawsuit with the Ohio Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled against the City and ordered the City to pay the developer's court costs in the amount of \$107,000! This developer has made substantial records requests and has bypassed the City planning procedures by writing his own "What would be permitted language" for this zone.

Councilman Zelwin hosted a Town Hall meeting that explained the issue on the ballot and what is permitted in each sector of the zone. To be an educated voter, I strongly recommend going to the City website and watching the archived video of the meeting to see for yourself what could potentially be built on this property.

**Issue 92** would create a new Industrial Auto Service Zone in the area of Aurora Road and Old South Miles Road. This is a great area for this zoning which was supported by the Council and this type of business already exists in this location.

**Issue 93** would create an area in the I-2 (Industrial Manufacturing) District that would allow certain medical facilities to establish offices and offer limited services. This is also a good idea that would assist the building owners by allowing these types of businesses to rent in this zone. This request was approved by the entire Council.

### **Fall Leaf Collection**

Starting on October 15<sup>th</sup> the City will begin collecting leaves from the neighborhoods. This will continue as weather permits. I want to remind residents that you must get your leaves to the curb if you want them removed by the City. If you wait until spring to put them out, they will have to be in bags. **The City will not pick up loose leaves in the spring.**

### **Bike Paths/Rails to Trails Project**

The City has not received any word about receiving the \$500,000 grant that was applied for back in February. Until we know that we have secured this funding, there will be no discussion about the plan. To remind everyone what is proposed, this plan would include the installation of a paved all-purpose trail on the former Chagrin Falls and Southern Railroad right-of-way. This right-of-way passes immediately north of Carter Lumber and runs approximately two miles to the Village of Bentleyville border. The trail would eventually continue into Chagrin Falls. The other path being considered would use the Norfolk and Southern Railroad line that runs through the center of Solon and could connect to trails already established in Portage County. The City expects to get an answer before the end of the year.

### **Aurora Road Reconstruction Project**

Solon was awarded \$1.5 million in safety funding to add a two-way left turn lane on Aurora Road from the Burger King/Giant Eagle drives to Liberty Road. The project will begin this year with the soon-to-be installed temporary traffic signal at Portz Parkway that would allow left turns out of Portz Parkway.

### **SOM Center/Aurora Roads Intersection Project**

The SOM Center/Aurora Roads Intersection Project was delayed because bids received for the project were too high in comparison to the Engineer's estimate for the project, twice. This created a no bids issue that has delayed the project. This project will add lanes at the intersection to eliminate the split phasing of the traffic signal, and allow the intersection to operate more efficiently. The project will be rebid and we do expect to award the contract this time. Construction should begin in the spring.

### **SOM Center Road Bridge Project**

The SOM Center Road bridge re-facing project should be completed soon with the decorative fence being one of the last parts of the project to finish.

### **Briar Hill Drive Culvert Replacement**

The replacement of the Briar Hill culvert was delayed due to poor soils that were found during the planning stage. It was recommended by Engineering to use a different method to create the culvert by using a custom made precast concrete culvert. The project will be delayed until spring.

### **Economic Development**

There have been ongoing discussions with developers about the former Sears and Liberty Ford sites with nothing definite as of this newsletter.

Chick-fil-A is still on track to begin demolition of the existing building on the corner of SOM Center and Solon Roads with construction of the new restaurant soon after. The owners of the former Dino's property on the corner of SOM Center Road and Station Street are close to an agreement that will add a 3,900 sq ft BBQ restaurant without drive thru facilities on that site. The owners of the Mobile/Nahra Shell property on the corner of Aurora Road and Solon Boulevard are close to signing closing documents that will result in a new facility on that corner. Rita's Salon has applied for building permits to start construction in the former D & R Bagel building on Aurora Road.

### **Carrington Apartments**

A couple of months ago I had a meeting with the Mayor, the Engineering Department and the owners of the Carrington Apartments to discuss the future of the development. The owners are looking into adding another, smaller apartment building and eliminating some of the home sites. During this discussion I brought up the fact that the residents are having an extremely difficult time getting in and out on Aurora Road and it was creating a safety issue. We also talked about creating a paved walking path that would connect the apartments to the Giant Eagle. Engineering brought in a preliminary proposal that would connect the existing road to Portz Parkway. This proposal would require acquiring some property from the owners of Park East. Additional meetings are planned. Stay tuned.

### **Contact Me**

I was elected to be your representative to the City. If you have any questions, concerns or problems, please feel free to contact me at (440) 248-3586 or email me at [bshimits@solonohio.org](mailto:bshimits@solonohio.org). You can also follow me on Facebook at *Bob Shimits Solon Ward 6*.