

CITY OF ST. JOHNS/CITY MANAGER NEWSLETTER
SUBMITTED TO CLINTON COUNTY NEWS
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AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: The multi-unit residential development being proposed for low to moderate-income senior citizens for the downtown district has received site-plan approval. At its March 9, 2015 public meeting the St. Johns City Commission adopted the Planning Commission's findings and recommendations. At both the Planning Commission and City Commission meetings citizen opinions were voiced and taken into consideration. Dialogue between citizens and city staff concerning parking issues resulted in the developer making significant modifications to the proposed site plan. City staff continues to work on a comprehensive public parking plan for this area of downtown so that local businesses are not negatively affected. Proposals include increasing on-street parking on Higham Street by converting parallel parking spaces to angle parking as well as possibly expanding the public parking lot just south of the Briggs Library (east of Gill-Roy's Hardware). Both the City Commission and City staff want to thank those members of the public who engaged in productive dialogue concerning this development and offered suggestions how to make it "fit" the downtown community. Given the growing demographic of baby-boomers both nationally and in Michigan, providing affordable housing for seniors is a matter of sound public policy. The demand for this kind of housing is being seen across the country. We feel fortunate that Phil and Garrett Seybert of PS Equities, Inc. have selected St. Johns as a site for one of their fine senior housing developments. Over the years Mr. Seybert's development company has successfully built 15 separate senior housing projects of a similar nature in communities such as Clare, Spring Lake, Fenton, Mt. Pleasant, Chelsea, Lansing, Jackson and several others. Mr. Seybert continues to have an ownership interest in each of these facilities. PS Equities has also developed family apartment complexes, office buildings and commercial facilities across the state.

During the City Commission meeting Dru Mitchell, Executive Director of the Clinton County Economic Alliance, read a letter of support into the record from the Supervisor of Dewitt Township, Rick Galardi. The CCEA commended the city for its efforts to support senior housing, and stated, "The Executive Committee of the Clinton County Economic Alliance (CCEA) applauds your vision and hard work in moving forward with the pursuit of a senior housing opportunity in downtown St. Johns. The PS Equities project could well be the catalyst needed for re-development of the downtown area. For seniors on limited incomes, safe, healthy, and affordable housing that is well connected to community services is a deep and profound need in Clinton County and the Tri-County Region". Assuming Mr. Seybert's application is approved by the Michigan State Housing Authority, construction could begin during the 2015 construction season.

LIFT STATION: Significant upgrades in the Townsend Road lift station will commence in April. Robinson Electric & Mechanical, Inc. will construct the building addition and replace construction on a schedule in a way that minimizes interruption of daily

operations of the lift station. This upgrade will be closely monitored by the city's wastewater division staff.

CONSUMERS ENERGY GAS PROJECT: Again this spring and summer, in conjunction with the City's street reconstruction projects for 2015, Consumers Energy will be in neighborhoods upgrading underground natural gas lines. CE will make every effort to minimize any inconvenience to private property owners during this important project. We are pleased that we can coordinate our street improvement efforts with Consumers' work upgrading their supply lines to residences and businesses.

CDL CLASSES: The demand for truck drivers with commercial endorsements (CDLs) has outstripped supply in the central Michigan region. Local distributing companies have expressed some frustration finding qualified semi-truck drivers to transport their product. To provide a vocational track for this well-paying career, local officials have been meeting with area community college administrators and private sector business leaders to develop a possible plan for a CDL training program sited in Clinton County. The City of St. Johns has a "seat at the table" through the considerable efforts of City Commissioner Robert Craig, who recently participated in a roundtable discussion that included both Baker College and Lansing Community College officials. We will keep residents apprised of any developments in this area.