

Strategic planning continuing

By [GARY BUDZAK](#) August 28, 2023



GALENA — Harlem Township's Strategic Planning Committee has continued to meet and work this spring.

On April 18, Harlem Township Fire Chief Tom O'Brien and Assistant Fire Chief Michael McKeen met with the committee.

The minutes reflected that they said "development in the township and changes in the Zoning Resolution could greatly increase the demand for Fire Department and EMS services which would require increased staff, more equipment, a larger fire station or outlying substations and closer coordination for mutual aid with surrounding Fire Departments and EMS units. As a result, sources of additional funding and the timing of construction and major acquisitions are all issues that require good communication and coordination. Harlem Township has adopted the latest Ohio Fire Code in order to address some of these issues. The Fire Department uses a database of inhabited structures in the township which may help the Zoning Department in their work."

The committee asked for help "to get an estimate of how much excess sewer capacity the Village of Galena has that could be used to serve residential development in the northwest corner of Harlem Township and whether the Village would be willing to sign a non-annexation agreement with the township in return for the township absorbing a portion of the unused sewer capacity."

It was noted that AEP has announced that it will install high tension power lines at Vassell-Green Chapel, the City of Columbus will proceed with construction on the Big Walnut Sanitary Sewer extension phase 2, and ODOT plans to add lanes to state Route 161.

The committee next met on May 2. Guests included Pat Tiberi, president and CEO of the Ohio Business Roundtable and Dana Saucier Jr., vice president for economic development of JobsOhio to give Harlem "their take about what they see as the opportunities for economic development in the township and how the township should make its voice heard in the planning process."

Also attending was Delaware County Commissioner Gary Merrell and Jamie Greene of Framework Licking County.

"The first and most important step in planning for life after Intel is bringing folks together and sharing information within a public-private partnership," Tiberi said in the minutes. "Are there state funds to help in the planning process? No, but there are some state funds for developing infrastructure around high potential sites. Tiberi suggested we reach out to Scott Ryan, Chief, Community Engagement at the Ohio Department of Development whose office is in Newark, Ohio."

In addition, Saucier said in the minutes, "JobsOhio maintains a very large database of potential sites in Ohio that served as a resource for businesses looking to locate or expand in the state.

JobsOhio works with 6 regional partners. In this area, their partner is One Columbus. We should be talking to JobsOhio and to One Columbus, among others, to understand the pipeline of development projects. Not every development project has the same requirements in terms of site size, road and rail access, utilities, and available workforce and housing.”

Saucier was quoted as saying, “The ‘Intelers’ will live all over.”

The committee next met on May 16. The committee's consultants met with the Village of Galena (extending wastewater treatment service to the northwest quadrant of the township without annexation), Delaware County (about the extension AEP high tension power lines through the township) and Licking County.

The minutes said the committee approved creating an overlay district in the eastern edge of the township along South County Line Road north of Evans Road and an overlay district along the eastern edge of the township broken down into three separate sub-areas: sub-area A from Evans Road north to Montgomery Road; sub-area B from Center Village Road to south of Needles Road; and sub-area C from south of Needles Road to SR 37 and north to the corner of the township.

Next, they approved establishing a Joint Economic Development District in the township.

The committee consists of Mike Cannon (director of zoning and development), Steve Eisenbrown (at large representative of Harlem Township residents), Bruce McClary (at large), Tom Nied (Zoning Commission), Carl Richison (trustee), Molly Snodgrass (at large), Jim Steelesmith (Board of Zoning Appeals). Holly Mattei and Molly Ridge of Crossroads Community Planning, LLC are consulting with the committee.