

Michael J. DeVries
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Edward J. Robinette
Clerk

David A. Van Dyke
Treasurer



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David M. Pierangeli
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Philip D. Yeiter
Trustee
Vasiliki Christopoulos
Trustee

2017 Year in Review

Whether you are a resident or a frequent visitor to Grand Rapids Charter Township, you have probably noticed that 2017 brought several significant changes.

Development:

While not quite ready for move-in, The Springs at Knapp's Corner, located just south of Three Mile Road on the east side of East Beltline Avenue, is one of the most visible new developments in the Township. From the first proposal to final elements of construction, the 230 unit apartment complex has gone up without a hitch, according to Township officials. Final approvals for the Wisconsin-based development company were gained in early 2017, with final completion of the complex expected in first half of 2018.



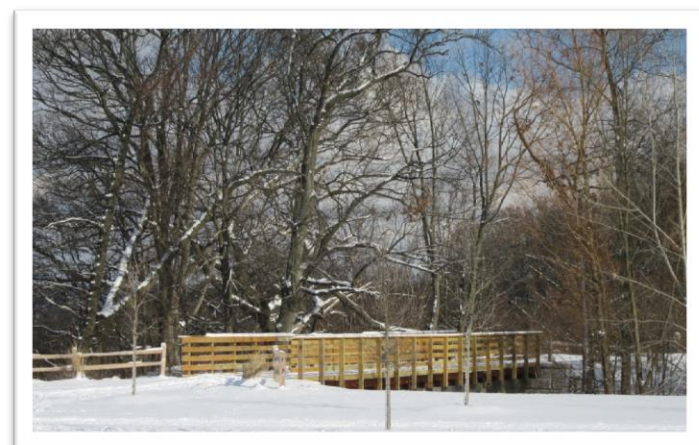
New connector between Forest Hill Ave. & Crahen Rd. alleviates traffic

Another highly visible project completed this past year was the street connector between Forest Hill Avenue and Crahen Road, which eliminated the need for a full turn onto Fulton Street (M-21) to proceed north or south. "It called for major changes in traffic patterns and the Township is grateful to MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation) for continuing to monitor it until we worked out the issues," said Supervisor Michael DeVries.

In order to accomplish the connector road, the Township purchased the entire triangular landmass on the northeast corner. The land is zoned for office use and is earmarked for sale for development. Due to a pending sale of 3.5 acres and the payment from MDOT for the road right of way, the Township has already recouped nearly 65 percent of its initial investment of \$1.2 million.

Another Township development people are talking about is the opening of NOCO Provisions on the site of the former Forest Hill Inn. History tells us that the site on the corner of Forest Hill Avenue and Cascade Road was an eatery for over a century, first serving as a stage coach stop along the "Indian Trail" now known as Cascade Road. With the popularity of the NOCO Provisions, the Township recently rezoned two residential parcels to allow for more parking for both the restaurant and Kennedy Floral.

Likely not as noticeable to those passing by, but an important development nonetheless, is the completion of a major water/sewer main project along Michigan Street which will enable development of 70 residential homes west of Crahen. "We know how important it is to be connected to the public utilities" said Supervisor DeVries.



Recreation opportunities:

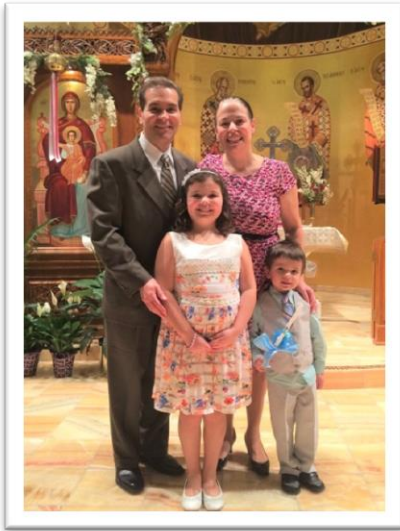
Improvements to Crahen Valley Park have continued to be a top priority for the Township.

One 2017 accomplishment that might not be obvious to the casual park user is the accelerated progress made on reclamation of the former sand mining operation site, which lies within the 205 acre park land. When safe, clean fill became available, the Township was ready to make the best use of the opportunity.

Due to major construction of the Crahen connector road, improvements made at the Catholic Athletic field site and construction of the apartments near Three Mile Road and the East Beltline, the Township acquired fill for restoration of the site at minimal cost.

Regular park goers will notice new signage, a completed bridge over the ravine, and a new parking lot at Crahen Valley Park. And while the Township Park will remain closed from November through April, Crahen Valley Park will not only be open for hiking and winter sports, but the Township has purchased a snow trail groomer for use this year to practice and learn with short cross country ski trails near the Leonard entrance to the park and down in the valley.

Township officials also continued work on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and hired a design firm to map out future park plans in anticipation of applying for a Department of Natural Resources grant for future amenities.



Trustee Vas Christopoulos with her family

People make the difference:

The year brought a major shift on the Board of Trustees with the unexpected death of trustee Beverly Wall in early summer. She served the Township for 18 years on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Commission before she became a trustee.

Vasiliki Christopoulos was appointed to replace her, bringing another woman with exceptional accomplishments to the board, according to Supervisor DeVries. Christopoulos formerly served as the Chief of Staff to a United States Senator.

With no major elections in 2017, the Township was busy preparing for future elections. Clerk Ed Robinette announced changes in precinct boundaries, due to recent and anticipated population shifts. Affected residents were notified by United States mail and received new voter registration cards, but anyone with questions can check the Township website at www.grandrapidstwp.org or call the Township offices at 361-7391.

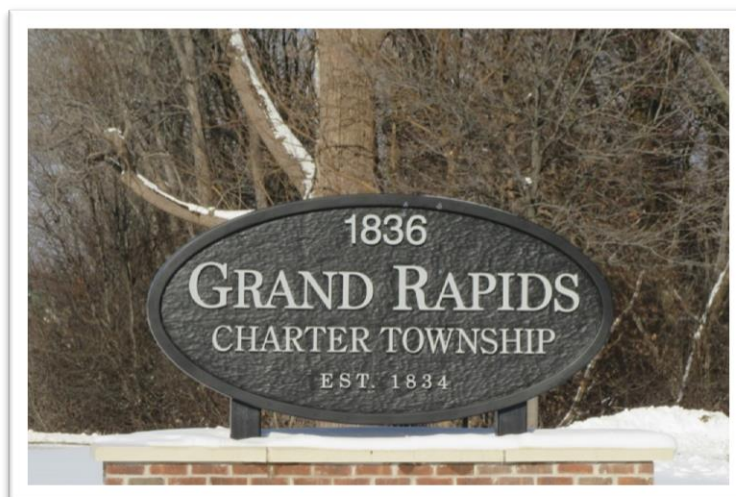
In addition, Michigan recently updated voting equipment and Robinette has spent time in 2017 to test and ready new equipment for the 2018 busy election year.

2018 Preview

The roads in two neighborhoods will be replaced this summer: Castle Hills, which is south of Cascade Road at Kenmoor; and Eastmont, which is south of Cascade Road east of Forest Hill.

The Trail Network sections that were some of the first to be built will be repaired or replaced this construction season.

The new GRT Fire Pumper will be delivered in March, and we will begin design work on remodeling or replacing the 3 Mile Road Fire Station.



Watch for more about 2018 happenings in the next issue!