

Extension of Little Miami Scenic Trail Plan Options Under Review for Newtown Road Through Business District

Great Parks of Hamilton County and Columbia Township engage in potential path discussions

A suggested one-mile extension of the Little Miami Scenic Trail further into Columbia Township is in the planning stages, with a topographic and feasibility study currently underway to determine options for the trail.

Great Parks of Hamilton County and Columbia Township have both agreed to collaborate to create a pathway from Newtown Road through the township's Wooster Pike business district. The link now being considered would traverse from the current path off Newtown Road, up the hill and end at the Mariemont Public Library (Pocahontas Drive).

In future weeks, Columbia Township and Great Parks of Hamilton County will discuss potential pathways from Newtown Road through the township's Wooster Pike business district.

Administrator Mike Lemon noted Great Parks has long owned a swath of property from the river to an area behind the Columbia Township Kroger store. What is in question is the path the bike trail will take up the hill. Lemon noted that the topography up the Wooster Pike hill makes the plans more challenging, therefore several alternative alignments are being considered.

Great Parks' Chief Executive Officer Jack Sutton said that the project's consultant continues to gather field data to determine various alternative alignment options. Park officials and their consultant will begin communicating with stakeholders including adjoining property owners in the upcoming weeks, he said.

A public meeting will also be hosted in the next several months to solicit public comment. Once public suggestions are collected and incorporated, a preferred alignment will be identified and probable construction costs estimated, Sutton said. The final report is expected to be completed later this year.

Noted Trustee Vice President Susan Hughes, "The interest in getting this project completed seems to grow by the month, so we are anxious to get the extension moving quickly."



Did You Know? Your Trash Service Costs Less Today than Seven Years Ago

Rumpke waste collection costs

2011	\$291,465
2012	\$297,368
2013	\$227,175
2014	\$227,175
2015	\$227,175
2016	\$246,984
2017	\$251,904
2018	\$265,680
2019	\$270,994
2020	\$276,504

Good news for residents! Columbia Township residents are paying less for trash service than in 2011.

According to Administrator Mike Lemon, the township's negotiated contract with Rumpke for trash hauling services, including recycling, is providing a savings to residents over charges by the same company seven years ago.

Lemon noted that until 2012, Rumpke was the only bidder on Columbia Township's trash contract. A serious competitor challenged Rumpke's business in 2013 and prices fell, and residents are still enjoying a lower rate.

Columbia Township is one of a few communities that contracts directly with Rumpke to provide waste collection once a week for all residents. Money for the service is supplied by a dedicated trash levy, Lemon said.



5686 Kenwood Road • Cincinnati, OH 45227-1306

Presorted Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, Ohio
Permit No. 4959

Change Announced for Leaf Compost, Wood Chip Recycling Delivery to Homes

Trustees announce three dates for free delivery this year

Columbia Township residents who use compost and wood chips supplied free by the township, please take note. The township is changing its policy on leaf compost and wood chip delivery. This year residents can request either the first Monday of April, May or August for a free delivery.

"No other days of delivery will be available than the three dates announced, so we request residents plan ahead and communicate their needs," said John Servizzi, township road superintendent.

"We will call before delivery to verify your request."

"Changing this practice will eliminate the guessing of when to do yard work and telephone calls asking for updates on delivery," noted Township Administrator Mike Lemon. "It will simplify and streamline the process for everyone."

Reminder dates and signup will be announced on the township's website, www.columbiatwp.org.



Important Phone Numbers in Columbia Township



Trustee President
David Kubicki
272-7870
dkubicki@columbiatwp.org



Trustee
Chris Kritikos
272-7871
ckritikos@columbiatwp.org



Trustee Vice President
Susan Hughes
272-7872
shughes@columbiatwp.org



Fiscal Officer
Caroline Heekin
272-7867
cheekin@columbiatwp.org

Township Administration

Administrator
C. Michael Lemon
561-6046
MLemon@columbiatwp.org

Administrative Assistant
Kimberly Gray
272-7877
kgray@columbiatwp.org

JEDZ Tax Administrator
Jane Fette
272-9954
JFette@fairfaxoh.org

Property Maintenance Code Enforcement
792-7256
columbia@sycamoretownship.org

POLICE PROTECTION—Emergency- 911

Columbia Township—
Non-Emergency
825-2280

Hamilton County—
Non-Emergency
825-1500 www.hcso.org

City of Cincinnati—
Non-Emergency
765-1212
www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cpd

FIRE PROTECTION—Emergency- 911

The Little Miami
Joint Fire & Rescue
District
271-3636
Golf Manor Fire District
531-2022
<http://lmfr.org>

Deer Park—Silverton
Joint Fire District
791-2500
www.dpsjfd.org

the Voice

WINTER 2018

A PUBLICATION OF COLUMBIA TOWNSHIP

Medical Pot Update: Dispensary Could Come to Township

Trustees Ok Measure to Allow It Here If State Approves

A medical marijuana dispensary could be coming to the township, if the state of Ohio grants permission.

In November, Columbia Township Trustees passed a resolution that clears the way for a medical marijuana dispensary to operate in the township, if Columbia is chosen as one of three licenses to be allowed in Hamilton County.

Trustee Chris Kritikos noted that the township has restricted the potential marijuana dispensary to a limited business zone, not near residential areas. The zone established in the resolution is the Ridge and Highland commercial area, a Joint Economic Development Zone. Kritikos said one reason he voted to approve the measure was to reap the economic benefits of a dispensary, instead of having the tax funds go to another jurisdiction down the road such as the city of Cincinnati, which has also approved medical marijuana dispensaries in the city.

According to information provided by the state on medicalmarijuana.gov/ohio, there will be 60 dispensaries allowed in Ohio. Late last year the township was approached by dispensary operators seeking a location in the township.

Clinics have projected they could do as much as \$50 million in business over a three-to-five-year period, noted Administrator Mike Lemon. "That's a significant contribution to our township's economy, should it occur," he said.



Kritikos and Lemon both noted that the marijuana dispensaries are only for medical use, not recreational use. "A dispensary will only permit entry to individuals with proper credentials and paperwork. There will be no loitering or casual observers allowed in the dispensary," Lemon said.

"Medical marijuana has been associated with benefits for cancer patients, individuals suffering from seizures and others with chronic pain," noted Trustee President David Kubicki. "This would be a resource for individuals who suffer from these ongoing conditions."

Kritikos said he was surprised to learn about the level of restrictions placed on dispensaries in the state, monitored by the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program. "There are very aggressive controls put in place" to regulate the dispensaries, including a restriction noting dispensaries cannot be located within 500 feet of a school, playground, church, public park or community addiction service provider, he said. Trustees have banned the cultivation of marijuana in the township.

Medical marijuana has been legalized in 26 states and the District of Columbia. The Ohio medical marijuana program is scheduled to start in September this year.

Positive Results in Township in 2017 will Grow in 2018


Trustee
Chris Kritikos

It never ceases to amaze me how quickly the calendar year flies by, and 2017 was no different. When we kicked off 2017, Columbia Township set off some ambitious goals. Our dedicated team, along with ideas and assistance from residents, worked together to accomplish results we can be proud of.

These results included the study for expansion of the Little Miami Bike Trail, reconstruction of Roe Street, the Comprehensive Plan Update, Madison Place Parking Study, Ridgewood and Cliff Ridge repaving, Christmas lighting on Plainville, and adding new businesses to the community. I speak for many when I say we're just getting started. The prospects that lie ahead for us remain connected to our vision of making Columbia Township an even better place to live, work, and play.

One our most critical additions to Columbia Township in 2017 was our "Town Talks" sessions which were conducted in several locations with the stated goal of seeking public commentary on what's happening in our township, the challenges and issues we might be facing, and also to listen to ideas for how we can be better. Public discussion is essential to our future, because it will be impossible to grow together if we don't communicate and work together. To keep the conversation going, we will be scheduling future "Town Talks" where your voice can be heard on all issues.

As a trustee, it is personally very satisfying to watch our community come together. It inspires a sense of pride for the place we call home. I saw many other friends and neighbors experience that same feeling when we hosted our first Columbia Township Tree Lighting ceremony just a few weeks back in the beautiful neighborhood of Madison Place. The event drew nearly 400 people and allowed us to celebrate the excitement of the holiday season together. This



A Columbia Township Holiday Tree Lighting drew some 400 people in December to an outdoor event including entertainment, food and the celebration of the tree lighting.

would have been impossible if not for the collaborative efforts of dozens of residents and volunteers. With such an outpouring of interest for these types of events, we are in the process of adding more community events to the calendar for 2018 and welcome suggestions.

We expect to see a continuation of our strong momentum in 2018. This effort includes a continuing focus on road improvements, neighborhood cleanliness and safety, and better signage throughout all areas of the township.

The recent merger of Golf Manor Fire Department with Little Miami Joint Fire & Rescue District will support sustainability and strengthen the quality of fire and EMS services. There will be better recruitment of qualified personnel, an improved equipment replacement program and hopefully lower taxes in the long run. We expect this change to be a long term benefit to our residents served by the new district.

The trustees will be working diligently to serve as ambassadors for our community, which will include increased efforts to bring new and thriving businesses into Columbia Township. We passionately believe



that Columbia Township is one of the hottest up and coming communities in Southwest Ohio, and we will be looking for any opportunity to continue to grow together.

If we learned one lesson from 2017 it's that Columbia Township has a wellspring of potential. It's our privilege to tap into that and unleash opportunities that will serve to better the lives of every resident. As we continue to work hard day in and day out in 2018, I look forward to where we will be at this time in 2019.

Columbia Named as Best Township Recycler in County for 2016

Columbia Township might not be one of the biggest communities in Hamilton County, but there is an area in which it shines. It's home to some dedicated recyclers who helped the township reach a milestone in recycling for 2016.

Columbia Township posted a higher rate of recycling than of any township in Hamilton County in 2016 with an 18.35 percent recycling rate. That's according to statistics from the Hamilton County Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District.

The county agency compiles yearly rates of recycling to provide awards for communities with excellent recycling statistics. Columbia's first place win was followed by Symmes Township (second) and Anderson Township (third).

Columbia Township, unlike most other township, directly contracts with Rumpke to provide waste collection once a week for all residents. Recycling bins are provided at no cost. In addition, residents of Columbia Township can put out one large item such as a piece of furniture or an appliance with their weekly pickup.

If you need more recycling room, a large 65-gallon green toter recycling bin on wheels is available just by asking. Contact Kim at the township office at 561-6046 to receive your bin. The bin will be delivered to your home at no charge.

Other recycling program available to Columbia Township residents include free leaf, brush and Christmas tree pickup.

Acceptable Recycling Items for Your Curbside Pickup

- Glass bottles and jars (all colors)
- Metal cans - Aluminum, steel, empty aerosol cans with lids/tips removed

- Plastic bottles and jugs - Soda bottles, milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles, water bottles, shampoo bottles, and contact solution bottles

- Paper - Newspaper, magazines, cardboard, mixed office paper and envelopes, cereal boxes, clean pizza boxes, telephone books and catalogs

- Cartons - Milk, juice, soup, wine, broth, and other food and beverage cartons

Recycling Tips

- Mix all items together - no separation required

- Keep items loose: Do not bag your recyclables

- Empty all bottles, jugs, and cans

- No need to remove labels

- For plastic bottles, empty, crush, and reattach lids

- For cartons, remove plastic caps and straws



Recycling Rates for 2016 Townships

Community	Tons Landfilled	Tons Recycled	Recycling Rate
Columbia Township	1,254.35	281.84	18.35%
Symmes Township	3,950.80	727.39	15.55%
Anderson Township	16,252.99	2,908.67	15.18%

These items cannot be set out on the curbside:

Plastic bags, cassette tapes, bed sheets, clothing hangers, metal chains, garden hoses, batteries, needles, syringes, electronics, polystyrene foam, buckets, butter tubs, yogurt containers, car parts, food, yard waste, light bulbs, drinking glasses, ceramics, pots and pans, and scrap metal.



How Will You Be Notified of an Emergency?

Knowing how you will be notified of an emergency of a disaster before it happens is key to keep you and your family members safe. Consider having more than one method of receiving alerts and warnings, including a NOAA Weather Radio, weather app, as well as local media and trusted social media accounts.

The most reliable way to receive weather alerts and warnings is to invest in a NOAA weather radio, which can be purchased online and at most hardware stores.

Do you rely on the Outdoor Warning Sirens to alert you about tornado warnings? Because the sirens remain outdoors, they are constantly exposed to the elements and other hazards that may cause them to malfunction.

Outdoor warning sirens are intended to alert people who may be outside, to take shelter indoors and seek additional information. Sirens should not be relied upon to provide sufficient warning indoors or in noisy areas.

Because the sirens ensure that you can receive weather alerts by



NOAA Weather Radio

obtaining a NOAA weather radio, turning in to the local media, enabling your phone's Wireless Emergency alerts or downloading an app- such as the Hamilton County EMHSA app, available on iTunes App Store and Google Play Store. To find this app, search for "Hamilton County EMA." This app has a multitude of safety tips to help you and your family prepare for threats that may impact your community. It also sends weather alerts

for the county. Check the traffic and weather features of the app so you are prepared for your day. Coming soon: NOAA Weather Radio features!

Information provided by Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency.

Check with Hamilton County Before You Build

Spring home improvements planning is right around the corner

Unlike some larger townships in the Cincinnati area, Columbia Township does not handle its own zoning needs but uses Hamilton County to administer zoning regulations.

As a small community of less than 5,000, Columbia Township does not have the staff or resources to administrate zoning and building matters, so it defers

this responsibility to the county.

Whether you plan to add a garage, new fence or deck, or open a new business or want to learn more about zoning requirements for installing a swimming pool, Hamilton County is the authority for helping you meet zoning and permitting conditions.

An interactive website geared to answer questions is available at: building.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/. This site shares answers to common questions, step-by-step directions for many projects and provides forms needed to apply for necessary permits.

