

# Newsletter

July 2018

## Rebel Magnolia Flea Market Returns

Roberts Park was the “place to be” the weekend of May 11th and 12th as Rebel Magnolia brought their “Flea Market” back to Thomas Township for its second year.

The event had vendors from Michigan, Ohio and Indiana offering eclectic fare which included jewelry, clothing, antiques, homemade soaps, candles, woodwork items and so much more. Several food vendors were also on hand to offer homemade BBQ, kettle corn, pizza and other scrumptious delights. A “bouncy house” and face painting entertained the kids.

Thousands attended the two day event in spite of some inclement weather. Fridays preview was a VIP event where tickets had to be purchased in advance with Saturday admission being available at the park.

Rebel Magnolia, who hosts the event, operates a store in Thomas Township located at 7679 Gratiot Road. They held the flea market twice in 2017, in May and September. They will return with a fall flea market in 2018 taking place September 7th and 8th.



### DDA BOARD MEMBERS:

*Tom Radewahn, Chairman*

*Fred Gray, Vice-Chairman*

*David Duclos, Secretary*

*Lauren Husen*

*Lynn McCoy*

*Bill Martin*

*Dr. Michael Dense*

*Don Emeott*

*Robert Weise*

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249 NORTH MILLER ROAD  
SAGINAW, MI 48609  
(989) 781-0150

[www.thomastwp.org/dda](http://www.thomastwp.org/dda)

Editor: Connie Watt



## A Message From The Chairman.

It’s been an interesting year. The new project funding that is available is quite small as a result of the original street light project with the installation of 98 poles from the Tittabawassee River to Meijers. With about a year and a half left in monthly payments to satisfy our bond, we have still managed to accomplish some projects. One of these was the new welcome sign on the West side of the Tittabawassee River. The delays to this project ended up being worth the wait. The sign and flag display really turned out well and we are proud of this new addition.

We also completed the pocket park just West of Burger King, with the support of Lucas Isom’s family, with benches, water fountain and a trash receptacle where the old Consumers natural gas station was located. A new great spot to take a break or have some lunch. Soon to be constructed is the new Consumers gas line that will be buried along less congested areas of the Township and going North towards Freeland.

The DDA also worked with the Township to mow the medians from Meijers to Graham Road. We felt this was important as the State only mowed twice per year and the medians became very trashy looking throughout the summer. The additional four cuttings really help clean up our Gratiot Road corridor.

Perhaps you’ve seen the new “Thomas Township Trail” sign where the trail connects to the Saginaw County Rail Trail helping to identify Thomas Township as a progressive leader in trail development and maintenance. Also to be completed is the new trail extension from the trailhead building going North along the Consumers right of way. Certainly, if you walk or ride your bikes on the trail systems you will see this valuable addition for our community. We are currently working on a “Businesses in Thomas Township” sign that will direct trail users to our business community.

We will also be purchasing new vertical banners for the street light poles along Gratiot that will look great and help display activities and points of interest in the Township. Keeping up with these replacement banners keeps us looking good.

New business in the Township is always exciting and the construction of a new O’Reilly Auto Parts store will soon begin at the corner of Gratiot and Swanson Roads. Thank you O’Reilly Auto.

Your DDA Board is already making plans for our next big project which could likely be an extension of street lighting Westward on Gratiot. We are having considerable discussion on this and welcome your thoughts and ideas on new projects that you feel would contribute to the business district in Thomas Township. Please call Connie Watt at the Township Office with those ideas.

Your DDA Board has also gone through some member changes with the departure of Diane Doyle and Ellen Ryder-Petre. These two have made a significant positive impact on the Board and we want to thank them for their service to our Township. You may not be aware that these are volunteer positions so the time given by these Board members is greatly appreciated.

Filling these vacancies are Lauren Husen, of Rebel Magnolia, which brought the Gypsy Culture Flea Market to Thomas Township and Dr. Michael Dense, of Shields Chiropractic. We welcome and look forward to working with them.

So you see, even when the budget does not allow for big projects, your DDA Board has been aggressive in our attempts to keep Thomas Township growing and looking good. A big thank you also goes out to our Township Manager, Russ Taylor and Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer, Connie Watt. Without their efforts and knowledge of the various governmental entities we deal with, your Board could not be as effective or progressive.

Please be a participant in the good things we have going on in Thomas Township. You’ll be glad you did.

Thomas Radewahn-DDA Chairperson

## Welcome New DDA Board Members

Lauren Husen was recently appointed to the Thomas Township Downtown Development Authority Board. Lauren is the co-owner of Rebel Magnolia located at 7679 Gratiot Road along with her business partner, Hailey Cannon. The boutique offers unique items for the home, gifts and clothing. Rebel Magnolia opened along the business corridor in 2016.



Dr. Michael Dense of Shields Chiropractic has also been appointed to serve on the DDA Board. An Ohio native, Dr. Dense earned his doctorate of chiropractic degree at Palmer College of Chiropractic in Iowa. His office is located at 7261 Gratiot Road where chiropractic care is offered as well as massage therapy.



We would like to thank Lauren and Dr. Dense for their willingness to serve on the board and welcome their business and community skills to the DDA.

## Welcome to these new DDA businesses!

- ◆ Magical I Do's  
6881 Gratiot
- ◆ Night Life Entertainment  
6879 Gratiot Road
- ◆ Splendid Events  
6879 Gratiot Road
- ◆ Sweet Detailing  
125 S. Miller Road
- ◆ Darcey's Furniture & Home Décor  
7916 Gratiot Road
- ◆ Shady Brook Gifts  
7907 Gratiot Road
- ◆ Garber Chevrolet  
8800 Gratiot Road
- ◆ My Gentle Touch Healing  
7585 Gratiot Road
- ◆ Hadleybrows Microblading  
8075 Gratiot Road, Ste D

My how we've changed!!



*Photo of Thomas Township circa 1890*

## Shields Festival Comes to an End

A long standing tradition, the Shields Festival, has come to an end in Thomas Township. Some fifty plus years ago, the Shields Men's Club purchased the property on South Miller Road and each year provided a festival for the community that included live entertainment, chicken dinners, rides, games and more.

The Men's Club which was started back in 1956, had originally brought the community together with the Shields Homecoming, knot hole baseball and the Letterman's Banquet. These events grew into the Shields Festival which continued for 61 years.

The Thomas Township Parks and Recreation operated their soccer program at the property for many years prior to the new fields being built.

A difficult decision was made to discontinue the festival this year and to sell the property where it was held. Thomas Township has purchased the land to add to Roberts Park.

A huge thank-you goes out to the Shields Men's Club for providing this community event for so many years and all the memories it has made for us.

## O'Reilly Auto Parts Store Gets Approval

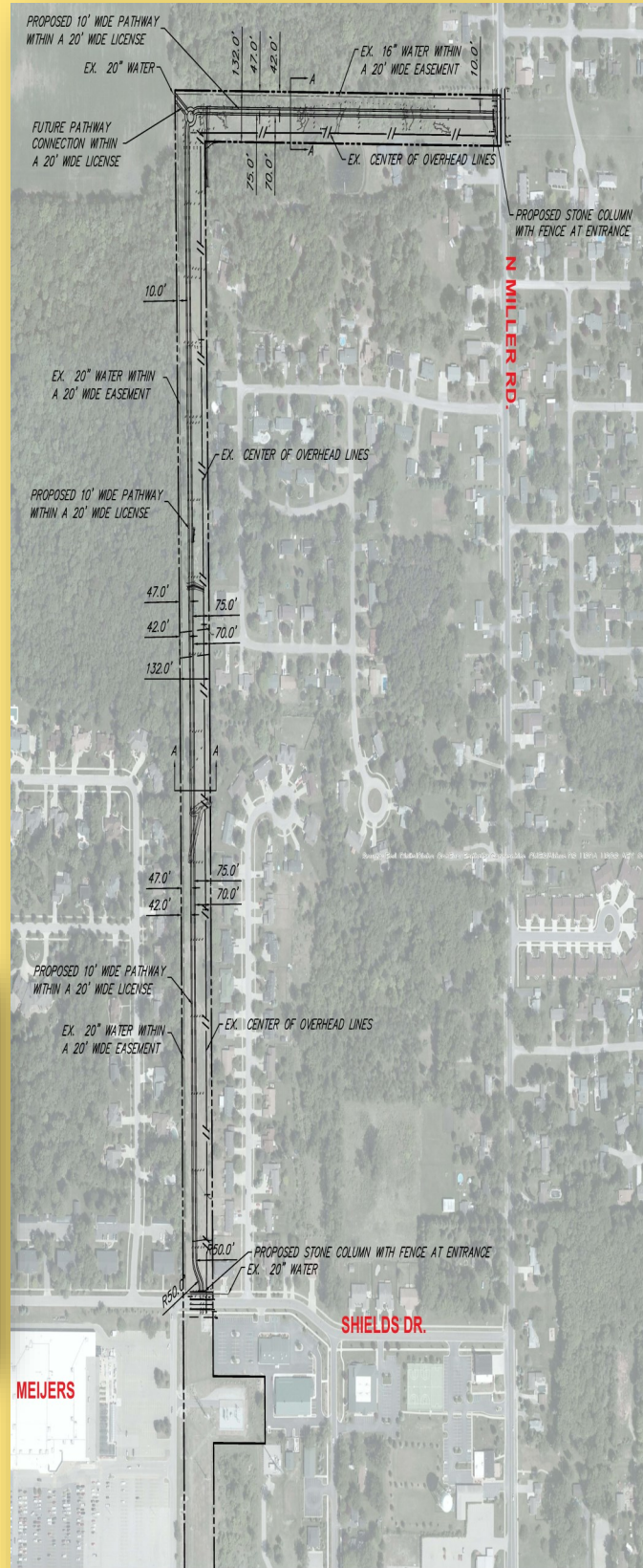
The Thomas Township Planning Commission approved the site plan for a new O'Reilly Auto Parts store at their March meeting. The store is expected to be constructed at 7235 Gratiot Road. A demolition of the existing structure at the site is scheduled to take place making way for the construction of the 7,600 square foot store. Once started, it is anticipated that completion of the project will be three months.



## Thomas Township Trail Extension

An extension is being constructed for the Thomas Township Trail. The extension begins near the Trailhead Pavilion located on Shields Drive and heads north along the Consumers right of way. It will then end at North Miller Road. The ten foot wide path will connect the residents along North Miller Road and will be .83 miles making 3.1 miles of trails to enjoy in the Township.

Construction of the new trail has begun and is well underway. The project is part of the continued commitment by Thomas Township to provide its residents with opportunities to walk, cycle and simply get out and enjoy the community.

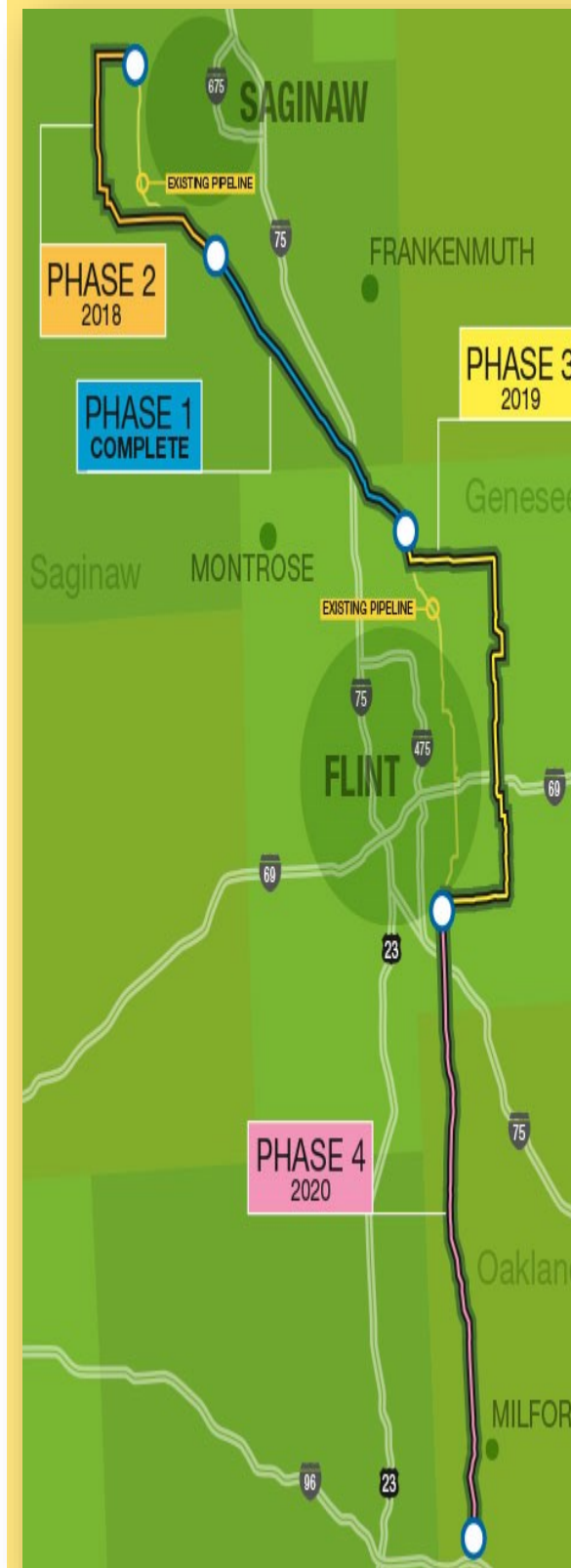


## Consumer's Energy Pipeline Project

Consumers Energy started its Saginaw Trail Pipeline project in 2017 and are expected to finish the work in 2021. This project is to improve the safety and reliability by replacing transmission pipeline in three counties. 78 miles of vintage transmission pipeline is being replaced with 94.4 miles of new pipeline. Four phases of work will be completed. Phase 1 is already done and Phase 2 consists of an 18.5 mile stretch of pipeline work in Saginaw County in 2018.

Improvements will also be taking place at the Consumer's site along Dutch Road in relation to the project as well as new valve site along Schomaker Road.

Currently Consumers is utilizing an area on Gratiot Road as a "staging Area" as they work on the areas of pipeline in Thomas Township.



# Thomas Township Habitat Week

## We Need Your Help

**Join Thomas Township and Saginaw-Shiawassee Habitat for Humanity  
For  
our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Neighborhood Revitalization Project Week  
July 30 – August 3**

Thomas Township will be joining forces with Saginaw-Shiawassee Habitat for Humanity to improve the lives of some of our residents during our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Neighborhood Revitalization Week. This will be taking place the week of July 30 – August 3. We are looking for volunteers to work alongside of the Thomas Township employees and Habitat for Humanity employees/volunteers to do home improvements and landscaping within our community. We are also in need of support providing/serving morning coffee/snacks and lunch for the volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering or providing meals or know of someone who may be interested in participating please contact Deidre Frollo, Thomas Township, 989-781-0150 or email [finance@thomastwp.org](mailto:finance@thomastwp.org).



Thomas Township Downtown  
Development Authority

249 North Miller Road  
Saginaw, MI 48609

Phone: (989) 781-0150  
Fax (989) 781-0290  
Email: [planner@thomastwp.org](mailto:planner@thomastwp.org)



### 2018 DDA Meeting Dates:

- ◆ September 25, 2018
- ◆ November 27, 2018

The Thomas Township Downtown Development Authority Board meets the fourth Tuesday of every other month. Meetings are held at the Thomas Township Public Safety Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, Michigan 48609 at 9:00 a.m.

**Welcome to Downtown Thomas Township. Thomas Township offers a quality of life and sense of place that welcomes the spirit and invites you to stay.**

**Downtown Development Authority projects are solely for a public purpose and are designed to create a friendly and inviting atmosphere to encourage businesses and residents alike to remain within our Township and to attract new businesses and residents as well.**

