

Northville Matters

www.ci.northville.mi.us

City of Northville • 215 West Main Street • Northville, Michigan 48167

New agreement reached for shared fire and emergency services

With City Council approval on March 20, the cities of Northville and Plymouth have renewed a second 12-year contract, which will continue to provide quality fire and emergency services for both communities. Since 2011, the two cities have shared a single fire department – the Northville City Fire Department (NCFD). Northville Fire Chief Matt Samhat has led this effort for almost two years. The Northville Plymouth Fire Advisory Board provides input into departmental operations and consists of the two city managers, one elected official from each community, and an independent member with a firefighting background.

NCFD hires and manages a staff of up to 60 part-time, paid on-call firefighters who are assigned to one of the two cities as their primary station. In addition to firefighting, they provide basic life support (BLS) services.

Continued on page 3

Northville welcomes new city manager

George Lahanas was sworn in as city manager at the March 6 City Council meeting by City Clerk Mike Smith. George's wife, Shelley, and daughters, Eleni and Marina, witnessed the formal yet celebratory event in a packed council chambers. The mayor, council and many in the audience welcomed Lahanas to his new role. They also thanked Interim Director Mark Wollenweber, who served for three months.

The city has a Council/Manager form of government. The City Manager's Office provides general administrative services for the management of the city to ensure that all City Council policies and directives are implemented.

He serves at the pleasure of City Council. Lahanas will coordinate the work of all city departments and employees. He is responsible for the enforcement of all ordinances and expenditure of funds in accordance with the budget and the City Charter.



George Lahanas took an Oath of Office – a solemn promise to uphold the laws and regulations of the office of city manager. Photo by Liz Cezat.

Continued on page 3

Historic District design guidelines are being updated

Detroit-based architectural firm Kraemer Design Group held a kick-off presentation/public engagement session on new design guidelines for the Historic District at the Historic District Commission's March 15 meeting. Kraemer architectural historians Cassandra Talley and Lillian Candela discussed the purpose, process and timeline of the project.

The revised guidelines will provide new methods of maintaining historic properties, which will benefit homeowners, business owners, local architects and developers, and the Historic District Commission and the city, which make decisions based on design guidelines. The document will have separate sections for business and residential historic properties. There will also

be guidelines for demolition, landscaping and new construction in the Historic District, which has more than 400 historic structures.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will review the guidelines. The public can attend all HDC meetings, with additional public engagement sessions.

Kraemer's Brian Reban is the principal on this project; City Planner Sally Elmiger is the city's point person. The entire process will take approximately 1 ½ years. The final product will be presented to City Council for adoption. Now through summer, the Kraemer team will conduct field work to evaluate properties in the district and take photos.

In the 24 years since the previous guidelines were developed, there have been new composite materials and environmental adaptations for historic structures and updated national standards. The new guidelines will be searchable. The project cost of \$58,740 will be offset by a \$48,000 grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Michigan Strategic Fund of SHPO.

The consultant has set up an email address at LetUsKnow@TheKraemerEdge.com for citizens who want to send written comments and attachments relating to their input. The city has a web page for this project in the Historic District section. (See map, reports and studies.)

NOTICES

Special Election on May 2

The city of Northville is holding a Special School Election on May 2 for voters' consideration of a Northville Schools bond proposal. Details are on the Northville Public School's website.

All registered voters in Michigan have the right to vote by mail without providing a reason. To obtain an absentee ballot for the May 2 election, you can complete and submit your application online through this link: <https://mvlc.sos.state.mi.us/avapplication>. Applications are also available in the City Hall 24-hour vestibule. The deadline to have a ballot mailed is 5 p.m., April 28. Apply earlier to avoid mail delays. You can also pick up your own ballot in person at the City Clerk's Office through 4 p.m. on May 1. The photo ID requirement is in effect.

Voter Registration: April 18 to 8 p.m. on Election Day

Register in person at Northville City Clerk's Office, 215 W. Main. Residency verification is required. You may vote by absentee ballot or at your polling place on Election Day. Residency verification documents must have your name and current address. Digital copies are acceptable.

Facts at a glance:

Polls open: 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Precinct 1 (Wayne County voters): Northville Community Center, 303 W. Main St.

Precinct 2 (Oakland County voters): Amerman School, 847 N. Center St.

Am I registered to vote? Do I need a photo ID?

To learn the answers to these questions and more, visit the Elections and Voting section of the city website. In addition to checking your voter information, you can also view and print a sample ballot.

Household Hazardous Waste events

Sponsored by Wayne County

Only household generated products from Wayne County residents will be accepted. Visit www.WayneCounty.com for more information. Fliers will be posted in City News and on the city website (DPW page) closer to each event.

April 1, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Wayne County Community College
9555 Haggerty Road, Belleville

Aug. 26, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Westland Shopping Center
35000 W. Warren, Westland

June 17, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Henry Ford College
5101 Evergreen Road, Dearborn

Oct. 21, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Wayne County Community College
21000 Northline Road, Taylor

Plan to connect city walkways, paths to regional trails

The Greenway Collaborative was selected to update the city's Non-Motorized Plan this year to connect paths and walkways in the city with regional trails and paths. TGC has extensive non-motorized experience in Southeast Michigan, including the city of Novi.

City consultant Nate Geinzer worked with city administration, Parks & Recreation, and members of the Mobility Network to assess the two consultants that bid on the project. A SEMCOG planning grant for FY 2023 will reimburse approximately 90% of the \$40,000 contract cost.

The last non-motorized plan for the city was developed in 2013. Since then, the Mobility Network and Walkability sub-team (of the larger Sustainability Team), reviewed the work on routing, connectivity, and traffic, and issued

reports. They appear on the city website's Sustainability Team page. (Note: These task forces consist of volunteer citizens, many of whom work in professional capacities that align with their volunteer effort.)

TGC consultants will build on the findings and recommendations of the task force and sub-teams, which helps streamline the development of the non-motorized plan. They will ensure that new or improved connections for pedestrians, bicyclists, and those with special needs align with ordinances and policies, such as ADA requirements. In some cases, ordinances may need to be changed. With new mixed-use developments planned at Foundry Flask and the Downs, and additional parks, there will be plenty of new walkways and paths to connect.

Siren tests/alerts

The outdoor warning sirens are tested on the first Saturday of each month from March through November, at 1 p.m. If the siren sounds at other times,

take notice and take action. Every year, people are injured or killed by tornadoes or high winds, which can bring down trees and power lines, and also cause serious structural damage to your home.

The National Weather Service will issue a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch when weather conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, including the possibility of tornadoes. Put away small objects such as garbage cans or bicycles, which could become dangerous if tossed around during strong winds. A Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Warning will be issued when a tornado has been sighted or when a tornado or severe thunderstorm is indicated on radar.

The city of Northville has three outdoor warning sirens that can be activated to provide advance warning of impending severe weather. They are located on Cady Street by the library, on Taft Road north of Eight Mile Road, and in the vicinity of South Main Street and Seven Mile Road. These sirens will be activated by Dispatch in the event of a Tornado Warning, or a Severe Thunderstorm Warning with winds of 70 miles per hour.

The sirens will sound for three minutes, and this is your signal to immediately seek shelter. Go to an interior room, away from windows, on the lowest level of your home or in a sturdy building. When safely inside, check weather reports to learn what's happening. Do not call Dispatch for weather information. Stay alert, seek shelter and stay safe. Oakland County has information on its website about emergency preparedness: <https://tinyurl.com/2xsjzey2>



Series on Historic District homes in Northville

Perhaps you live in one of the lovely homes in the Historic District's residential section or maybe you simply appreciate the character, charm, and magnetic draw of these historic beauties. Either way, we invite you to read the special series reported in City News and on the city website (Historic District section). The series is intended to inform and inspire all residents of Northville and the broader community about the benefits of houses in the Historic District and the realities of owning one.

City Clerk Mike Smith begins role in Northville



Mike Smith became the city clerk for the city of Northville in January. In that role, he serves as election manager, maintains city records, processes FOIA requests, and manages membership of boards and commissions. He is the administrative liaison to City Council and also oversees the Building Department.

“I enjoy the day-to-day tasks and processes of working with residents, staff, and elected

officials on a myriad of projects,” he said.

He has a Bachelor’s Degree from Grand Valley State University in Liberal Studies with an emphasis on Leadership and Diversity, and a Master of Public Administration from Oakland University along with a Post Masters Certificate in Local Government Management from OU. He is committed to ongoing education.

A Certified Municipal Clerk, Smith has worked in municipal offices for nearly 19 years with positions in Oakland County Clerk’s Office; the city of Clawson, where he began as deputy city clerk, rose to city clerk, left and returned as the city manager; and as an administrator/clerk in the village of Wolverine Lake. He most recently was assistant to the city manager in Berkley.

He is committed to working with residents and staff to continue to operate the City Clerk’s Office with professionalism. “It is my goal to maintain the sound leadership, good governance, accountability, honesty, and integrity that all residents are accustomed to in this office. I hope to bring some positive changes as well.”

Mike and his wife, Jennifer, live in White Lake with their children, Natalie and Andrew, and their dog, Dexter Jr.

Allen Terrace has new director



Jolyn Gismonde joined the city of Northville in December as the housing director at Allen Terrace. She is managing several facility projects and presents reports, updates and funding requests to members of the Housing Commission and City Council. She is getting to know the 100 residents who live at the city-owned senior apartment building, in part by

hosting activities around the holidays.

With 17 years of property management experience and nearly 23 years as a real estate agent, Gismonde has worked in many different venues – from houses and apartments to communities with manufactured homes. She knows how to process leases, appreciates quality construction, and works well with staff and residents. She credits her small but capable staff with maintaining the facility and providing top-notch services.

She welcomes the activities that are managed by the Allen Terrace Residents Council, which include Bingo, Wii bowling, card games and summer BBQs. Residents also have a say in how the facility is run and one resident serves on the Housing Commission.

The major projects at Allen Terrace involve replacing interior doors in the apartments and the front sliding door; installing new boilers and an internal garbage collection system; and adding two walkways at side doors for safe exits. She recently signed a contract with a new internet/cable service provider.

Gismonde enjoys interacting with seniors. “They are easy going. They have good stories and a lot of history, which are good to share with other seniors and those who are decades younger.”

Gismonde lives in Belleville with her husband, Rich, and they have two daughters, ages 19 and 22.

City Manager ... continued from page 1

For a small town of only 6,000 residents, Lahanas has multiple projects to manage and many people to meet and work with. He noted, “It’s a special community with a vibrant and lively downtown, strong neighborhoods and engaged residents. I look forward to building on those strengths that have made Northville one of Michigan’s premier communities.”

Lahanas was the former city manager of East Lansing for 11 years. His work on complex developments in East Lansing through public/private partnerships made this experience attractive to City Council members, as new mixed-use developments come to Foundry Flask and the Downs.

Lahanas holds a Master of Public Administration from Northern Michigan University, with a concentration in Personnel and Labor Relations, and a Bachelor of Science degree, cum laude, from Northern Michigan University, with a major in Criminal Justice.

Fire Dept ... continued from page 1

Each city maintains their respective fire stations and engines. Two separate dispatch centers field calls for service. The agreement saves costs operationally and for long-term capital equipment. When a major structure fire occurs in one city, backup comes from the other city, as well as from nearby municipalities as part of a mutual aid agreement.

Fire Chief Samhat said, “The agreement between the two cities is extremely valuable. Not only is it financially beneficial for both cities but it also creates opportunities to strengthen and increase the services we provide. For instance, the number of runs we total as a joint department makes us stronger candidates for grants and justifies reliable staffing.”

Recently the two cities engaged the services of The Center for Public Safety Management to conduct a survey and analysis of how the department provides fire and emergency services to both communities. In addition to a thorough review of their policies and procedures, CPSM will inform the fire chief and his team about new industry standards that could improve and/or build on their current operations.

 Like us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/northvillecityhall/>

 Follow us on Twitter
<https://twitter.com/NorthvilleCity>

City reviews street safety plans

The DPW and The Mobility Network met with Fleis and Vandenbrink (F&V) in mid-March to review their report of traffic patterns and pedestrian safety in and around the closed streets of Downtown Northville (Center and Main). F&V also conducted a neighborhood traffic management plan for the non-arterial roads between 7 Mile and 8 Mile and between Rogers and S. Main/Northville Road. F&V's report will be integrated with Grissim Metz Andriese's design work for a pedestrian plaza on the closed sections of Main Street and N. Center. An action plan to improve traffic flow is coming together and will be presented to City Council soon.

Summer sounds sizzle in the social district

The sound of acoustic music will be a big draw in Downtown Northville on Friday and Saturday evenings from Memorial Day weekend through October. New this year are a variety of bands, including the Shawn Riley Band, Jive Turkey, and Motor City Soul, performing in Town Square on the second and fourth Saturday in June, July and August. See the full line-up here: <https://tinyurl.com/bm3v24a4>

Downs project gains HDC approval on condos, apartments; city/DDA details being worked out

Hunter Pasteur Northville presented plans for review of the Cady Street apartment building and condominiums at the Historic District Commission's Feb. 15 meeting. The HDC accepted the application as complete and granted a Certificate of Appropriateness, with the condition that the metal balconies be supported by metal turnbuckles. Only a portion of the apartment and condo buildings is located in the Historic District: along Cady Street and a portion behind the buildings. (See Historic District map on city website.)

The HDC review is part of the process for HPN to secure final site plan approval of the 48-acre Downs redevelopment project adjacent to Downtown Northville. The city and developer are working out details on the development agreement. The DDA is working on expanding the DDA boundary around a portion of the new development.

City Council unanimously approved HPN's preliminary site plan and PUD on Nov. 21, 2022, with 10 conditions, adhering to contingencies set by the Planning Commission. Once all of these conditions are met, Council needs to review and approve a PUD agreement for the project concurrently with the final site plan being submitted to the Planning Commission.

Northwest site condo, north elevation; supplied by HPN.

City Directory

Allen Terrace.....	248-349-8030
Assessor.....	248-305-2704
Building Department.....	248-449-9902
Cemetery.....	248-305-2702
City Manager.....	248-449-9905
City Clerk.....	248-349-1300
Communications (print, online).....	248-305-2703
Community Center.....	248-349-4140
DDA.....	248-349-0345
Finance Department.....	248-449-9907
Fire Department.....	248-449-9920
Parks and Recreation.....	248-349-0203
Police Dispatch (non-emergency).....	248-349-1234
Police.....	248-349-5100
Public Works.....	248-449-9930
Tax Department/Treasurer.....	248-449-9901
Youth Assistance.....	248-344-1618

Frequently Called Numbers

Art House.....	248-344-0497
Chamber of Commerce.....	248-349-7640
Civic Concern.....	248-344-1033
Historical Society.....	248-348-1845
Library.....	248-349-3020
Mill Race Village.....	248-348-1845
Post Office.....	248-349-2062
Waste Management.....	800-796-9696

Northville Matters editor: Liz Cezat
lcezat@ci.northville.mi.us

City News

of Northville

Find out what's happening around town.
Subscribe to our free weekly e-newsletter.
<https://tinyurl.com/tld3opz>

