

# **City of Wadsworth Building & Planning Department Annual Activity Report 2010**



# PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITY

**TABLE I  
MEETING SUMMARY  
2006 - 2010**

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Number of Meetings	21	20	21	20	23
Total Time (Hours)	18	20	28	30	24
Average Meeting Length (Hours)	0.86 (52 mins)	1.0	1.3	1.5	1.0
Staff Reports Prepared	76	63	90	121	92
Preliminary Plat Applications	0	1*	3*	4*	1*
Final Plat Applications	0	3	1	5	0
Minor Subdivisions (lot splits, declaration & consolidation plats)	6	4	6	5	7
Conditional Zoning Certificates	22	8	10	9	7
Zoning Text Amendments	8	1	6	7	4
Zoning Map Amendments	1	1	3	3	5
Site Plan Reviews	21	3	7	10	12
Condominium Declarations	0	1	1	5	5

\* Includes re-approval of subdivisions whose original approval was set to expire since Planning Commission approval of a preliminary plat is valid for one year unless construction has commenced.

**TABLE II  
2010 RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS**

SUBDIVISION NAME/DEVELOPER	LOCATION	PUBLIC WATER	PUBLIC SANITARY	PRELIM. PLAT APPROVED	FINAL PLAT APPROVED	BLDG LOTS PER FINAL PLAT
NONE						

No major residential subdivisions were platted in 2010. The subdivision activity reported in Table I was for minor subdivisions (those creating 5 or less new lots, a.k.a., “replats”); dedication & consolidation plats; condominium declaration plats and renewal/extension of previously approved preliminary plats.

## BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

**TABLE III  
MEETING SUMMARY  
2006 - 2010**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>No. of Meetings</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Total Variance &amp; Appeals Applications Received</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>No. of Variance &amp; Appeals Applications Withdrawn by Applicant</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>No. of Variances &amp; Appeals Approved</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Pct. of All Variances &amp; Appeals Approved</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>84%</b>

**TABLE IV  
VARIANCES BY LAND USE TYPE - 2010**

	<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>COMMERCIAL</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>	<b>PUBLIC – QUASI/PUBLIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>No. of Variance Cases</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>No. of Cases Approved</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Approval Percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>87%</b>

BZA activity has decreased significantly in recent years, reflecting the general economic downturn and its impact on development.

## CONSTRUCTION AND PERMIT ACTIVITY

In 2010, new single-home growth fell to its lowest level since 2007. Likewise permit fees collected decreased in all categories, except for Development Permits, which more than doubled since 2009. This reflects an increase in the amount of non-residential development that occurred, including: two dental offices projects; a new day care center on Akron Road; Dunkin Donuts; additions at Summa Wadsworth-Rittman Hospital; a new CVS; and commencement of the new Steiner Community Center. Even as the number of permits issued decreased, Table VII shows that the value of all new construction increased by fivefold in 2010, primarily driven by commercial projects, specifically the Steiner Community Center, which has a construction value of greater than \$83 million.

**TABLE V  
RESIDENTIAL GROWTH COMPARISON 2006 – 2010**

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Ave. One Family Structure Cost	<b>\$153,018</b>	\$159,305	\$157,583	\$186,478	\$177,245
Avg. One Family Floor Area	<b>1,850</b>	1,991	1,948	2,312	1,990
Total Single Family Dwelling Units (including condominiums)	<b>48</b>	75	68	50	94
Total Multi-Family Dwelling Units (4 or more units in one building)	<b>0</b>	101	0	144	108
Total New Dwelling Units (A)	<b>48</b>	176	68	194	202
Approved Final Plats (Major Residential Subdivision) – No. of Lots Platted	<b>0</b>	0	42 s.f. lots	206 s.f. lots 3 duplex lots	0

**TABLE VI  
FEES COLLECTED  
2006 - 2010**

<b>FEES COLLECTED:</b>	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Building Permits	\$41,237	\$59,737	\$50,052	\$46,094	\$70,647
Zoning Certificates	\$7,482	\$9,193	\$6,881	\$ 8,574	\$12,039
Development Permits (A)	\$18,809	\$7,407	\$4,474	\$ 9,324	\$15,511
Sanitary Sewer Capacity	\$142,712	\$320,174	\$141,426	\$264,499	\$330,320
HVAC Permits	\$16,704	\$21,000	\$17,556	\$19,252	\$26,044
Electrical Permits	\$19,312	\$24,295	\$23,000	\$22,949	\$35,731
BZA & Planning Commission Applications	\$2,250	\$2,150	\$2,350	\$ 5,810	\$4,416
Subdivision Review (B)	\$660	\$1,610	\$1,170	\$ 4,860	\$ 2,100

**Notes:**

(A) Fees for the construction of commercial, industrial and multifamily development projects.

(B) Subdivision Review Fees include major subdivisions (residential and commercial); minor subdivisions (those creating less than 5 new lots), replats, dedication plats, consolidation plats and condominium declaration plats.

**TABLE VII  
CONSTRUCTION & PERMIT ACTIVITY - 2010**

	\$ VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION					
	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>						
Single Family	48	75	66	\$ 7,625,572	\$ 11,947,853	\$ 10,448,116
Two Family*	0	1	2	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 220,000
Three Family**	0	1	0	\$ -	\$ 240,000	\$ -
Multi-Family***	0	8	0	\$ -	\$ 4,200,000	\$ -
Remodel/Alteration	95	64	67	\$ 1,005,916	\$ 478,815	\$ 518,685
Additions/Garages	78	88	70	\$ 618,745	\$ 715,249	\$ 834,582
Demolition	2	10	5	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>\$ 9,250,233</b>	<b>\$ 17,741,917</b>	<b>\$ 12,021,383</b>
<b>Total Less Demo Permits</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>205</b>			

\*2009 - 1 Two Family (2 separate permits) \*\*2009 - 1 Three Family (3 separate permits) \*\*\*2009 8 Bldgs x 12 units (96 Units)

	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>						
New Construction	7	2	5	\$ 88,304,206	\$ 1,450,000	\$ 9,328,416
Additions/Alterations	5	5	2	\$ 4,078,211	\$ 535,000	\$ 53,700
Demolition	6	0	1	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Commercial</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$ 92,387,417</b>	<b>\$ 1,985,000</b>	<b>\$ 9,382,116</b>
<b>Total Less Demolition Permits</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>			

	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>						
New Construction	0	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Additions/Alterations	1	1	0	\$ -	\$ 775,000	\$ -
Demolition	0	0	1	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Industrial</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 775,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total Less Demolition Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>			

	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
<b>PUBLIC/QUASI PUBLIC</b>						
New Construction	0	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Additions/Alterations	1	0	0	\$ 62,000	\$ -	\$ -
Demolition	0	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Public/Quasi Public</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$ 62,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total Less Demolition Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$ 62,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

<b>TOTAL -ALL BLDG PERMITS</b>	243	255	219
<b>Total - Less Demo Permits</b>	235	245	212

	TOTAL VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION					
	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
<b>Building&amp;Zoning Permits</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>\$ 101,699,650</b>	<b>\$ 20,501,917</b>	<b>\$ 21,403,499</b>
<b>HVAC Permits</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>124</b>			
<b>Electric Permits</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>155</b>			

<b>TOTAL PERMITS</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>603</b>
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<b>Electric Inspections</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>510</b>
<b>Building Inspections</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>925</b>

<b>Demolition Permits:</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
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2 SFH -- 409 Crestwood & 334 Leatherman (fire-will rebuild)

6 Commercial - 367-369 Main, 367 School Drive, 799 High, 135 Great Oaks, 473 High & 820 High

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

Table VIII is a categorized comparison of the type and number of code violation issues addressed in the year 2010 relative to previous years. Based on recent years' averages, 8% more code violations were issued in 2010 than in the previous five years, but fewer notices than in 2009. Generally, the decrease in Weed Notices accounted for the decrease in the total number of notices sent.

**TABLE VIII  
TOTAL 2010 CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY**

	<b>2010</b>	<i>5 Year Avg.</i>	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Building	<b>60</b>	73	62	61	39	119	84
Zoning	<b>6</b>	19	6	18	13	17	43
Property Maintenance	<b>44</b>	32	29	50	29	29	25
Public Nuisance	<b>1</b>	2	0	6	2	0	2
Weeds	<b>125</b>	102	189	167	45	52	59
<b>Total Notices</b>	<b>236</b>	219	286	302	128	217	213
<b>Total Resolved</b>	<b>194</b>	180	234	257	95	151	164
<b>% Resolved</b>	<b>(82%)</b>	(77%)	(82%)	(85%)	(74%)	(69%)	77(%)

Table IX breaks down violation notices by code chapters and shows the rates of compliance with notices sent. Overall, a relatively high number of code violations were satisfactorily resolved.

**TABLE IX  
2010 CODE ENFORCEMENT COMPLIANCE**

<b>Type of Violation</b>	<b>Total Violations</b>	<b>Referred to Law Dept.</b>	<b>Resolved by Law Dept.</b>	<b>Abated by City</b>	<b>In Non-Compliance</b>	<b>*Total Resolved</b>	<b>Percent Resolved</b>
Building	60	0	0	0	25	35	58%
Zoning	6	0	0	0	1	5	83%
Property Maintenance	44	1	1	1	10	34	77%
Public Nuisance	1	0	0	0	0	1	100%
Weeds	125	0	0	25	6	119	95%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>82%</b>

\* "Total Resolved" Includes cases abated by the City, and resolved by legal action.

- The number of Building Code violations issued for dated building projects lacking final inspection approvals and for failure to obtain building permits was about average. Compliance numbers are traditionally low for these notices as many projects may not be completed, properties changed ownership, or owners are reluctant to respond.
- Complaint driven Zoning Code violation notices were lower in 2010 and included changes of use, signage, lack of zoning permits, and illegal parking issues. All but one permit issue was resolved.
- The majority of Residential Property Maintenance Code violations related to junk in yards, lack of exterior maintenance of houses, tenant complaints, and junk vehicle/vehicle parking issues. The number of notices was higher than average. The majority of the pending issues involve interior tenant complaints.
- The two Public Nuisance Abatement issues were resolved with the owners' cooperation. Both issues were the result of fire damage.
- Weed Notice totals were again high, and required the services of private contractors to abate 25 of the tall grass/weed nuisances. All but six properties were eventually mowed by the owners, or abated by the City. The great majority of complaints involved vacant housing and vacant lots.

## GRANT ACTIVITY

The Building & Planning Department administers two types of grants funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which itself is administered by the Ohio Department of Development:

- 1) **Small Cities Formula Grant:** – This grant is awarded annually based on a “formula” established by the Ohio Department of Development that factors in population and other census data. This is a non-competitive grant, meaning that the City will receive a predetermined allocation provided that a grant application is submitted by the established deadline and the proposed projects meet a national objective of the CDBG program. CDBG formula funds have been used for water, sanitary & stormwater upgrades, street and sidewalk improvement, and improvements to various parks.
- 2) **CHIP Grant:** CHIP stands for Community Housing Improvement Program. It is a competitive housing rehabilitation grant that provides various forms of housing assistance to qualified low and moderate-income residents. CHIP grant awards have ranged from \$450,000 to \$600,000. The City has been awarded CHIP grants in 1993, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007. The FY2009 CHIP application was not funded but, the City was successful with its FY2010 application and has been awarded \$500,000 in new housing funds. More information on the CHIP program can be found on the City’s website.

Since 1999, the city has received more than \$2 million from the CHIP, which have been used to provide down payment assistance, emergency repairs and housing rehabilitation for both owner-occupied and rental properties. More than 60 household have been assisted through this program.

CDBG funded programs such as the Formula and CHIP, can only be used to assist low to moderate income (LMI) households, which are defined as those with household incomes of 80% or less than the median income. As noted earlier, Formula funds can be used for infrastructure improvements in census tracts where more than 50% of the total households are identified as LMI households.

### Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

As part of the Federal Housing & Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA), the Medina and Wayne Counties and the cities of Brunswick, Medina, Wadsworth and Wooster collectively received \$1.8 million in funding through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP).

The purpose of the NSP is to help communities deal with the increasing number of foreclosed and abandoned homes caused by the recent downturn in the housing market. Funds can be used in a variety of ways, mainly to demolish abandoned or foreclosed properties, or to provide down payment assistance and rehabilitation to potential homebuyers interested in purchasing a foreclosed home. Unlike CDBG Formula or CHIP, the NSP can be used by any person or household whose median income is equal to or less 120% of the region’s median income. The NSP is funded by the CDBG program and is overseen by the Ohio Department of Development.

The City of Wadsworth’s original share of the NSP funds was approximately \$222,000. Because of our success in utilizing the funds to provide down payment assistance/rehabilitation (DPA) to individuals or families interested in purchasing foreclosed or abandoned homes, additional funds from the other regional entities were transferred over to the City. By the time this program is wrapped up at the end of this year, the City will have obtained nearly \$341,000 in NSP funds (approximately 53% more than originally planned) to help prevent at least 11 foreclosed homes from becoming nuisance properties by finding and providing financial assistance to new owners.

Table X summarizes grant activity undertaken in 2010:

**TABLE X**  
**GRANT ACTIVITY – 2010**

<b>Grant Name</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Activities Undertaken</b>	<b>Grant Funds Awarded/Spent*</b>
FY2008 NSP	CDBG	Provided downpayment assistance to ten purchasers of foreclosed homes & began the rehabilitation work on two of the homes. Rehabilitation work on remaining homes has been bid and will be completed in 2011 .	Original Award: \$222,860 Amended Award: \$341,018  Funds Spent: \$139,520
FY2009 Formula	CDBG	Original application included funding for slum & blight clearance of vacant commercial property on Main Street. Project was amended for two downpayment assistance (DPA/Rehab) projects when property owner razed the vacant structure at their own expense. The grant completion date was extended until April 30, 2011 to allow for DPA projects to be completed. Only the required “fair housing” program was completed in 2010.	\$60,000/\$2,500
FY2010 CHIP	CDBG/HOME	Grant awarded in September 2010 & approved activities include: emergency home repair; owner-occupied rehabilitation, and downpayment assistance/rehabilitation. Estimate that nine households will receive assistance. Work to commence in 2011.	\$500,000/\$0

\*Most grants are multi-year projects. Not all funds are awarded are expended in the same calendar year.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other major activities undertaken by the Department in 2010 but not reported elsewhere in this report include:

**Comprehensive Plan Update:** The first full-scale comprehensive plan update since 1996 began in 2009 and continued into 2010. Based on information received via community feedback and meetings of a steering committee a draft plan was prepared in November 2010. The draft was reviewed by the steering committee in early December and based upon that meeting some additional modifications are being prepared. The goal is to have a draft plan before Council by the first quarter of 2011.

**Transportation Study:** The City received a \$40,000 grant from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Committee's (NOACA) *Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative* (TLCI) program to study several transportation related activities. The grant was used to:

- Study the feasibility of transit services for the City
- Develop concept plans for improving the public parking lot at Watrusa & Mills Street as a potential multi-modal hub
- Develop plans for a multi-purpose trail from the Watrusa/Mills parking lot/multi-modal hub to the southeast corporation limit following an abandoned trolley line.
- Develop a list of funding sources to implement the improvements.

URS Corporation was hired to oversee the planning process and a steering committee was established to assist in drafting the plan. The end result of this planning effort was a document called the *Multimodal Transportation Plan*, which was adopted by City Council in September 2010.

This document forms the basis on which the City will file an application for Clean Ohio Trail Funds in 2011. These funds are administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resource and if the application is successful, would cover 80% of the engineering and construction costs needed to implement the multi-purpose trail segment of the plan.

**Revisions to Property Maintenance Code & Abatement of Public Nuisances:** A new section on public nuisance abatement (Chapter 156) was adopted by City Council during the year. It will replace the public nuisance abatement provisions that were previously contained in the Building Code.

The Department also has presented a draft revision of the Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 152) to Council's Committee for Planning & Economic Development for review. The revisions include language that would allow the City to address complaints relating to the exteriors of un-maintained and/or abandoned commercial buildings and their lot areas. The city's current property maintenance regulations only apply to one, two and three-family residential structures. These revisions are currently under discussion by the committee.