

# the Voice

FALL 2025

A PUBLICATION OF COLUMBIA TOWNSHIP

SAVE THE DATE

COMING SOON!

10.31

Halloween Trick or Treat 6:00 to 8:00pm in Columbia Township

12.4

Thursday, December 4th Madison Place "Light Up" Tree Lighting & Holiday Party

## Major Columbia Works Projects

Contributors: Dustin Frazier, Columbia Public Works Superintendent and Mel Taylor, Columbia Administrator

### Madison Place Neighborhood

#### Good Shepherd/Madison Place North Stormwater Improvement

4460 Berwick Street

In one of the most unique public works projects in Columbia's history, the Board of Trustees partnered with **Good Shepherd Catholic Montessori** to construct a major stormwater management project. The project was constructed on the school's campus to reduce flood impacts from the school hillside downstream into the Madison Place North neighborhood.



Trustee Brian Lamar proudly shows the scale of the project

The \$407,399 project (construction + design) began in early summer and was completed late summer. Columbia Township Trustees hosted a dedication ceremony on October 1st.

To reach the project stage, Columbia invested nearly \$220,000 for planning and engineering to identify why the hillside water overwhelmed the school's open drainage channel – and to identify a feasible way to reduce flooding downstream into the neighborhood. Columbia won a \$293,000 stormwater infrastructure improvement grant from Hamilton County Board of Commissioners in 2024. Good Shepherd also shared in the project cost.

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## Columbia Township Celebrates Grand Opening of New Community Center

Story submitted by David Kubicki, Trustee

On August 16, Columbia Township welcomed the public to a lively street party celebrating the grand opening of its brand-new community center. Residents enjoyed a perfect summer evening filled with live music, children's activities, food trucks and a spectacular fireworks finale launched from the rooftop of the new facility.

The event drew a large crowd eager to be part of this historic milestone. Local and state leaders joined in the celebration, including Hamilton County Commissioners President Denise Driehaus, who praised the achievement: "What you continue to do in Columbia Township is incredible. A project like this doesn't get done without vision and leadership."



Township Team Celebrates Building Dedication



Families and Friends Enjoyed Music and Food



Dramatic Conclusion to the Party

*Continued on Page 4*



# New and Expanding Businesses

Contributors: Dustin Frazier, Columbia Public Works Superintendent  
Mel Taylor, Columbia Administrator

## Madison Place – Plainville Business District



### **Danny Boy** Coming Fall 2025!! 6896 Murray Ave

**Daniel Souder**, an experienced restaurant operator who owns Iris Read in Walnut Hills and previously owned the highly acclaimed Pleasantry in OTR, will be opening a deli/butcher/ larder/wine bar this fall at 6896 Murray Ave.

Danny Boy will provide many popular offerings: sandwiches, salads, cuts of meat, prepared foods, wine, lunch & dinner, and catering.



Restaurateur Daniel Souder



Danny Boy will be located on Murray Avenue next to Green Papaya and Mariemont Vet – and will be a few doors down from the newly opened Columbia Township Community Center.

Daniel also is a Columbia Township resident – so he’s doubly excited to serve his hometown and surrounding neighborhoods.

Columbia Township purchased the underutilized 1939 building to redevelop it and marketed it across the region to prospective tenants. In January 2025, Columbia sold it to Daniel Souder.

### **Mariemont Vet**

**\$1.5 million renovated clinic opened in June to increase capacity and space**  
**6892 Murray Avenue**



**Mariemont Vet owners Jory and Jeremy Zola** collaborated with top architects and design teams in veterinary medicine to create a state-of-the-art facility.

The new space elevates the quality of veterinary medicine delivered to animal owners and the surrounding community.



The expansion also enabled the clinic to retain its existing eight employees and provide room to grow with another doctor and four-to-five additional technicians.

During the renovations the clinic remained fully operational in two top-of-the-line mobile veterinary trailers to serve as the temporary clinic.

# New and Expanding Businesses



## I-71/Ridge & Highland Business District



### Tesla Showroom & Service Center

5245 Ridge Avenue



President of the Board of Trustees David Kubicki and Fiscal Officer Caroline Heekin welcome Tesla to Columbia Township during their Grand Opening celebration

The region's largest **Tesla** showroom and service center opened in Columbia Township in August after a nearly two-year redevelopment of two former big-box retail stores. The new center's owners were attracted to the I-71 location for its prime regional access and demographics.

The former Tesla regional service center off Ronald Reagan Highway in Blue Ash was relocated to the new Columbia Tesla campus, and the Tesla showroom is new in the region. Tesla is an Austin-based electric vehicle manufacturer and sells directly to consumers instead of dealerships.



### The Dog Stop

5164 Kennedy Ave

**The Dog Stop**, a national all-inclusive dog care franchise, opened this summer in the former MadTree taproom space at 5164 Kennedy Ave.

This is Dog Stop's first Cincinnati location, and was opened by local franchisee owner Mary Beth Schutter.



## Wooster Pike Business District



### The Hub at 50 West

7669 Wooster Pike



**The Hub at 50 West** is replacing Pedego Electric Bikes on the Fifty West campus on Wooster Pike. The Hub offers premium bike rentals and purchase. The fleet will include a range of high-quality bikes including eBikes, hybrids, road bikes, and more.

# Community Center Dedication (Continued from Cover)



Lauren Allison, Ellen Harback, Melissa Taylor & Krista Blum



Our building is officially re-dedicated



Long-time crew member Jim Groen receives a big surprise



Danny Boy serves tasty treats from our new Chef's Kitchen

The new community center will serve as the home for Columbia Township's public meetings, a point of pride for township officials. "We are proud to finally have our township meeting space located right here in our community," said Trustee Vice President Brian Lamar. The previous meeting facility was located on Kenwood Road in Madeira. The building will also function as a voting location for area residents.

Designed with flexibility in mind, the center features a full commercial kitchen, bar area, rooftop terrace, and state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment. When not in use for township business, it is available for public rental, with exclusive discounted rates for Columbia Township residents.

For more information or to reserve the space, **contact Lauren Allison at [lauren@columbiatwp.org](mailto:lauren@columbiatwp.org)**



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**Emergency**  
911

**Non-Emergency Columbia Township Police**  
(513) 825-2280

**Deer Park Silverton Joint Fire District**  
(513) 791-2500

**Little Miami Joint Fire & Rescue Department**  
(513) 271-3636

**Water**  
Greater Cincinnati Water Works  
(513) 591-7700

**Gas Electric**  
Duke Energy  
(513) 421-9500

**Waste**  
Rumpke  
(513) 851-0122

## Columbia Township, Virginia, and George Washington

Story submitted by Steve Brokamp, Trustee

Did you know **Columbia Township** was the cradle for much of Cincinnati and Hamilton County? In fact, the settlement of Columbia was formed in 1788 after Benjamin Stites floated down the Ohio River on his flatboat and landed at the mouth of the Little Miami River. Columbia preceded the formation of Losantville, now known as Cincinnati, by one month and was officially formed as a township in 1791. Once larger than many present-day Ohio counties, Columbia encompassed the future communities of Indian Hill, Mariemont, Fairfax, Madisonville, Columbia Tusculum, Oakley, Pleasant Ridge, Kennedy Heights, Mount Lookout, and parts Anderson Township, among others.



So where does **George Washington and Virginia** come into play? Many years earlier, the Northwest Territory, including present-day Columbia Township, was considered part of Virginia's western frontier. Washington was a land surveyor, speculator, and shareholder in the Ohio Company, created in 1749 to encourage settlement and development of the region. In 1753, As a young major in the militia, Washington was sent by Virginia's Lieutenant Governor, Robert Dinwiddie, to confront the French in what was then know as "The Ohio Country." The French were building forts and expanding their influence in the region. While here, Washington saw the value and opportunity of the Ohio River Valley and was later awarded thousands of acres of land as a bounty for his military service in the Revolutionary War. Though Washington laid claim to much of the land in present day Hamilton County, including Columbia Township, his claim was ultimately lost due to an error in filing with the US federal government.



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Sign up to receive **Columbia Township Board of Trustees** monthly meeting agendas

Email [Lauren@ColumbiaTWP.org](mailto:Lauren@ColumbiaTWP.org)





## **Fire Chief Mike Siefke** **Little Miami Joint Fire and Rescue District**

Story submitted by Steve Brokamp, Trustee

In this edition, we are proud to shine our community spotlight on **Fire Chief Mike Siefke** of the Little Miami Joint Fire and Rescue District.

Throughout Chief Siefke's distinguished career, he has spent over 20 years in corporate leadership, developing skills in business administration, budgeting, management, and leadership—skills that have prepared him well for the role of fire chief.

At his foundation are his wife of 37 years, his four adult children, and two grandchildren.

Mike has made his mark not only as a dedicated first responder for our community, but as a family man who values spending time in the great outdoors, especially around a safe, warm, and well-controlled campfire with family and friends.

Chief Siefke began his fire service career in 1990 as a volunteer firefighter/EMT. In 1992, he continued his career with Whitewater Township FD. During his tenure, he was promoted to Lieutenant in 1994, Captain in 1997, and Assistant Chief in 2007. In 2021, Chief Siefke moved from the west side of town to accept the fire chief position with the Little Miami Joint Fire & Rescue District.

Chief Siefke is currently a State of Ohio-certified Paramedic, Firefighter II, Fire Safety Inspector, CE Instructor, and a former State of Ohio-certified Fire and EMS instructor. He leads the Hamilton County Fire Chief Association's mobile incident command unit.

Among his many accomplishments, Chief Siefke has received recognition from The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association (OFCA) and the Ohio Fire & Emergency Services Foundation (OF&ESF) as an "Ohio Fire Chief" (OFC) through the "Ohio Fire Chief Credentialing Program."

Finally, and perhaps most notably, Chief Siefke has been awarded the distinction of "Fellow" issued by the Ohio Fire and Emergency Services Foundation, which recognizes those who have achieved the highest standards in fire service. These recipients are deemed to be among the most honest, trustworthy, dedicated, inspirational, loyal, brave, respected, knowledgeable, friendly, courteous, thrifty, reverent, ethical, moral, distinguished, skillful, still-learning, and are held in the highest esteem by their colleagues.

Columbia Township agrees! Thank you, Chief Siefke, for your continued service and dedication.

### Madison Place Neighborhood

#### **New Parking (Redevelopment Project) 6805 Cambridge Ave**

Columbia Township secured multiple grants from the State of Ohio and Hamilton County Community Development to redevelop the vacant, obsolete property at 6805 Cambridge into a business district flex-parking space. The new parking will support the newly opened Columbia Community Center at 6904 Murray Ave., as well as Danny Boy, a new deli/bistro opening this fall at 6896 Murray Ave., and other small business uses in the downtown district.

The parking project is being constructed concurrently with the Cambridge Avenue Major Improvement Project to save money. Both the road project and parking project will be substantially completed this year.

#### **Cambridge East Major Improvement Project 2025**

Road improvement projects are prioritized by an engineering consultant, using state criteria, based on the severity of conditions (physical and safety) and built as funding becomes available.

At \$2,911,566, the most expensive road project in Columbia's history is underway with the full reconstruction of Cambridge Avenue in Madison Place. The project began in May, will be substantially completed before the end of this year, and will be fully completed by Spring 2026.

The Project is made possible by an Ohio Public Works Commission 50% grant/50% loan. The loan will be paid primarily from Columbia's business income tax – the Columbia-Fairfax "JEDZ" Joint Economic Development District.

The roadwork will include new curbs, upgraded drainage system, and sidewalks; a new water line will be paid by Greater Cincinnati Water Works. The work includes the full width of Cambridge Avenue from Plainville Rd. to Berwick Ave. and the section from Berwick Ave. east to the Township boundary line with the Village of Mariemont – and also new road drainage system on Kenmore from Grace Ave. to Cambridge Ave.

#### **Grace Avenue Major Improvement Project 2026**

In 2026 we will fully reconstruct Grace Avenue. Estimated total project cost is \$2,365,810. Columbia applied for a 50% grant/loan financing from the Ohio Public Works Commission, and our application was ranked 5th highest of all Hamilton County community road applications.

### Walton Creek Area Neighborhood

#### **Pear-Elm Sanitary Improvement Projects (2 Phases) Completed 2025**

Ford Development has completed the Elm Street Sanitary Sewer Project, and the remaining property owners are now connecting to public sewer. This is the first time the neighborhood has public sanitary sewer service since it was established in the 1800s. Phase 1 - Pear Lane Extension Sewer and Phase 2 - Elm Street Sanitary Sewer Project were both funded by federal grants and made possible through the new housing development by WP Land.

Trustee Steve Brokamp led neighborhood coordination and communications during the project. Grant funds were awarded to property owners to cover the cost of private connections to the new public sewer which will be owned and operated by MSD of Greater Cincinnati.

### Ridge & Highland Business District

#### **Ridge & Highland Business District Gateways Beautification**

Columbia is already hearing rave reviews about our all-new gateway beautification project in our Ridge & Highland Business District. Our contract arborist Jerry Frankenhoff redesigned the landscaping and hardscaping for our major business district gateways at Ridge / Highland and also Highland / Kennedy. The old landscaping was 15 years old and had deteriorated.

## Shop right here in Columbia Township!



### Jay's Chicken: The Best Fried Chicken You Didn't See Coming



Story submitted by **Brian Lamar, Trustee**

Jay's Chicken, located inside the Marathon gas station at 5361 Kennedy Avenue in Cincinnati, is a locally owned fried chicken shop associated with the Krispy Krunchy Chicken franchise. The restaurant has gained a reputation for its Cajun-style fried chicken, which is marinated and hand-breaded before frying, consistent with the Krispy Krunchy method used by many gas station eateries across the country.

Though the setting may appear ordinary, Jay's Chicken stands out for its food quality, drawing regular positive reviews from the neighborhood. Prices are affordable, and the shop is praised for portion size and quick service.



This informal, takeout-focused operation serves lunch and dinner throughout the week and the restaurant's popularity has grown largely through word of mouth rather than advertising, with some local media coverage highlighting its place among Cincinnati's standout fried chicken offerings. Jay's Chicken is a clear example of a national franchise adapting to a Columbia Township neighborhood, offering comfort food in a no-frills environment with a focus on reliability and taste rather than decor or atmosphere.



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### Columbia Township's Board of Trustees

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