

## Work to begin Monday on \$1.6 million Northville streetscape project

By Pam Fleming • Staff Writer • July 30, 2010

Construction was supposed to start this week but will now begin next Monday on Northville's \$1.6-million Streetscape Enhancement Program downtown.

Work will move east to west on Mary Alexander Court, then begin on Center Street from Main to Cady streets.

Lori Ward, executive director of the Northville Downtown Development Authority, and the rest of the project team addressed a small group of merchants at the first coffee Thursday morning at Genitti's.

She said the last major renovation to the streets was in 1978.

"So, it's time for an update," Ward said.

She mentioned that the city applied for and recently received a \$685,880 federal grant from the Department of [Transportation](#) to help pay for the work.

The project team consists of Ward; Jim Gallogly, director, Department of Public Works; construction managers Scott Lockwood (project manager) and Mike Smith (field superintendent) of Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick, Inc.; contractors Jerry Stranally, Mike Locke and Anthony Rau of Rauhorn Electric; and architects Bob Doyle (project architect) and Alicia Zimmerman (project engineer) from JJR, Inc.

Merchants were given phone numbers for all those involved in the project.

Smith will be on site daily overseeing the project.

### Why is project needed?

Ward said downtown Northville may look good to the casual observer. But, she took photos of

deteriorating sidewalks for the federal grant application, and Gallogly has been patching cracks over the years. Plus, the city has paid settlements on slip-and-fall accidents because of the state of the sidewalks.

"Northville really hasn't had a facelift in 32 years," Ward said.

The city also wants to bring the sidewalks up to Americans With Disabilities Act standards.

Ward said in this tough economy, it's also important to stay competitive with Northville's neighbors.

"Plymouth has just gone through a streetscape enhancement," she said. Other communities whose staffs have initiated recent improvements include Farmington and Milford.

"These are the people we're competing against for shopping and dining dollars," Ward said, "as well as businesses that we attract."

### Lighting improvements

The project will include improvements to the lighting system downtown, which will move from high-pressure sodium to induction lighting that features bulbs with more than a 28-year lifespan.

"That will save us not only in parts and replacement costs but also in the labor to replace them; plus the

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lights are more energy efficient," Ward said.

The light provides a "truer" light instead of casting an orange or yellow glow on buildings. New lighting fixtures will also be added, but the same light poles will be used.

Although there will be some parking spaces that will not be available on the south side of Mary Alexander Court during the sidewalk work, Ward said streets and accesses to businesses will be open at all times during the construction.

"It will be business as usual in Northville," Ward said. Doyle said there will be no loss of on-street parking as well.

The 15-month project should be completed by the fall of 2011.

## Goals and objectives

Doyle, of JJR, said one of the goals is to "declutter" the sidewalks, especially with the increase in outdoor dining. The second goal was to expand the design concept of Town Square.

More trash receptacles and planters will be included, too, and there will be a continuous sidewalk on the south side of Mary Alexander Court.

"I think that will really be a plus for that area," Ward said.

The next merchants' coffee will take place at 9 a.m. on Aug. 10 at Genitti's, with one slated each Tuesday morning until the project is completed.

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Bob Doyle, project architect from JJR, Inc., of Ann Arbor, discusses details of Northville's Streetscape Enhancement Project Thursday morning at Genitti's Restaurant with local merchants. (Pam Fleming|Northville Record)

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