

STATE OF THE VILLAGE

2011

January 13, 2011

My fellow Addystonians, to this great an Honorable Council of the Village of Addyston, other Village Officials and leaders, to all of our friends in the Three Rivers Areas, We thank God for each of you and this opportunity to address each of you.

Once again our community has been greatly blessed. We continue to prosper even in hard times. We are able to maintain a reasonable line of services for our citizens, while keeping our books in balance. We are blessed that we have a great company in Ineos ABS with great management that has prospered in a bad economy. They have become leaner, meaner and cleaner and a great neighbor.

While we have managed to progress we must be cognizant of the fact that we are just one swipe of the pen from being in one of the greatest financial crises that we have ever witnessed. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to hedge ourselves against such a catastrophe. Couple this with the reality of ever shrinking government funds, things could erode quickly and significantly.

We need to protect ourselves against these possibilities. We need to take control of our future in as much as we can.

To this end we are working on a master plan for the Village of Addyston. The planning Commission and the Council Planning Committee have prepared a Request for Proposal from qualified planners and consultants to start the process. I know that a Master Plan in and of itself is not going to get the job done. It is merely the map that will guide our future.

Over the passed several years we have been embroiled in one set back or another. We have been at war with outside forces that have tried, and sometimes did, dictate our future. We must never forget our past. We must never forget the struggles and injustices of the last several years that have stymied our growth and progress. If we forget we are doomed to repeat those types of struggles with the same results.

For nearly 8 years I have been consumed with defending our community as have many of you in one form or another and I will continue to defend this village with all my being. I will defend our state given right to annexation. I will defend our right to obtain the school property as our own. I will defend our right to develop our community as we wish without pressure from outside entities.

But while we must remember and defend, we must move on. We must plan our future.

We must focus on those things that we have control of. We must take full responsibility

for our community from this day forward. We cannot look to our neighbors across the street to do it. We cannot look to the county or state or federal government to do it.

Although these are ready and willing partners; we must take the lead, we must lay the foundation. Above all we must allow ourselves to dream. As Robert Kennedy once quoted George Bernard Shaw saying, and I paraphrase, “Some people see Addyston as it is and say, ‘Why’? I dream of Addyston as it never was and say, ‘Why not’?”

Every one of us in the Village of Addyston should have a dream or vision of what we would like our community to look like. Every village official, every business owner, everyone that lives or works in Addyston, every, man, woman, boy or girl must be able to say, “This is what I would like to see our village be”. Your dream may not be my dream. My priority may not, be your priority. The beauty is that we bring all dreams to the table and we combine them into a greater vision than any one of us could have ever imagined.

Some thirty five ago years, several men and women sat around a table similar to where we sit today. They did not have a lot of money, they had no payroll tax, but they had a dream, a vision that they needed to move out of the old Burr Oak School Down on Main Street, with its cramped quarters and build this beautiful building where we comfortably sit tonight. Did they have the money? No. But they knew how to leverage the money they had and stepped out on faith and got the job done.

I salute Mayor John Calvert, Clerk Kenneth Browning, Treasurer Phyllis Rinehart, and the six men of vision around that table: Councilmen Joe Benter, Stan Bowman, Harry Getz, Mel Knigga, Hubert Riley and Ben Thomas Senior.

I hope someday that someone will look back at this great Council and say, “ wow that group really had foresight, they made a difference. They changed the outcome”.

Now we have come to different era. Our challenges are greater. What used to be the big boxes are now the mainstays of every neighborhood. Mc Donald, Walgreen, the Dollar Store, United Dairy Farmers and the like are now neighborhood fixtures. They are the new replacements of the Mom and Pop era. Likewise our demographic has changed.

Although we are Addyston, with people being even more mobile, we must realize that we are competing on a regional scale. Addyston, Cleves or North Bend alone cannot sustain businesses. We have to have patrons from all of Miami Township, The Southwest part of Green Township, some from the Southeast part of Whitewater Township and we must be able to take advantage of the some 30,000 daily commuters along US 50. The region has many needs. We need to look to fulfill those needs. There are no sit down, full menu chain restaurants in the region. There are no full fledged name brand, stand alone pharmacies in the region. Pharmacies are one stop shops for a multitude of household needs. There are no alternatives to McDonald such as Arby’s or White Castle. These are all end destinations with regional appeal that would bring people into our community.

These are a great part of my vision, but the reality is that unless we have a strategy to clean up our town both physically and its image this won't happen no matter how many plans we draw up. Dick Weber our code enforcer has dedicated himself to that end. This is not just a job for him, this is a passion. If you have ever talked to him you will see his Marine background come out. Semper Fi is his motto to our village.

How do we clean it up physically? First we have to instill a sense of pride in every citizen in our village. Homeowners must repair, restore and beautify their homes and yards. Believe me this is happening in spots all over town. What about the ones that will not clean up or fix up? First we must make sure that they are exposed to every possible help program that is available. Then we must redouble our efforts to enforce the codes and ordinances that we have. Believe me this is happening also. Slumlords beware.

Next, we the village officials must take the lead and show everyone that we are serious about improving our housing stock and the business community. We need to put enough money up to buy and restore (Through our non profit) some of the homes that are vacant. We need to hire some of our local contractors to do the rehab. Then we will put them on the market at below market value to insure swift occupancy. Now we have taken a vacant, maybe blighted property, and made it into a home. In the process we have put some of our village residents to work. Thereby obtaining more tax dollars. And we have a new homeowner who is paying taxes as well. This is a win, win, win situation. We will have to enlist the services of Habitat for Humanity and private developers to help us achieve our housing goals.

Once we demonstrate that we are committed to improving our housing, we can start to market our village to builders to help with the infill of vacant lots. It all hinges on whether we as a Council and community are willing to stand up and demand a change in our housing and our standard of living as a whole.

Now, let's talk about our image, or images.

We have to be about cleaning up the perception that we live in an unsafe environment, both physically and in the quality of our air. The police department under the direction of Chief Tom Von Leuhrte has gone a long way in cleaning up our streets. We don't see gangs of people blocking the sidewalks even the streets making them impassible. We don't see open drug dealing on the corners anymore. I will not be satisfied until the saying, "You can get anything you want in Addyston" turns into them saying, "It's hard to find drugs in Addyston".

We need to partner with Ineos, the Hamilton County Health Department and its Environmental Services Department, the US and Ohio EPA to put together a program that promotes where we have come from as a plant and community. We need a program that shows what we did as an environmental task force to help solve our problems. We need a program that highlights the ongoing communication and improvements that exist via the company's open door policy to citizen's complaints and the Public Advisory

Group (PAG). We need to be able to convey through our marketing that this is a vibrant, safe and healthy community.

This is where “my” real vision begins. As I approach Addyston on US 50 from Cincinnati, I see a gateway saying, “Welcome to the Village of Addyston, New Beginnings, Lasting Traditions”. As I look to the right I see a flourishing boat dock leading into the Muddy Creek to the Ohio River. Just beyond that I see kids and grownups playing hoops on our 2 full length basketball courts fully marked and colored vibrantly. I see a little league game with the Addyston Panthers Playing the Cleves Tigers on one field. On the other field I see The Addyston Old Timers playing a bunch of village kids in a softball game. The soccer/ football field is empty right now, but will be filled with practices and games on the weekend. The skate/bike park is thriving with skateboarders sailing up and down the many ramps. Near the center is a kiddy paradise with kids darting through the water park. All this is surrounded by a walking path filled with seniors getting much needed exercise. At the far west, just before you get to the newly renovated Cannon’s auto repair, there is Joe’s Ice Cream, Burgers and Fries.

As you cross Dining and Main the walking path continues on the south side of main to the Municipal Building. In the middle of the green space there is a fountain surrounded by benches and a gazebo. Where the Hitches School, play area and athletic fields were is a shopping area anchored by a 24 hour Walgreen Drugstore and an Arby’s Roast Beef. In between there are several other shops and office space, including Addy Town Pizza and Deli, and Fred’s Sports Bar. Over the shops and businesses there are 2 bedroom

apartments. This will insure that there is always income on that property. Behind those properties there will be a new Hotel with conference rooms and the new Club West.

Continuing west on Main Street I see that the Bricks Building has been renovated. The Bait Shop and the Unique Archery Shop on the second floor are completely remodeled and their advertising on radio and TV is bringing in tons of business. The third floor is now apartments and also houses a law firm. Next door, Volker Electric has torn down one building and has expanded their business and built a new office/warehouse. The front of the business has trees and nice scrubs along their driveway. They too are doing heavy advertising.

On Sekitan Ave. there is infill housing. On the north side of the street all houses are built into the hill with either two car garages at the street level or car ports. These will be below a front deck and in front of a basement. The living quarters will be on the second level. Some may have a third floor. A few will have three lots and a driveway and sit back off the street All will have at least a winter view of the river. On the south side, each house will have off street parking or a two car garage on the side. You will walk into the first floor with a basement below and maybe a third floor. These also will have at least winter river views.

Above Sekitan, on the Golsch property will be the condo development and maybe some single family development over looking the river.

On First and Second Streets we would like to do infill housing to match the beautifully renovated homes along those Streets. We would back fill empty lots on the south side of the street to provide off street parking for all the residents.

I see a double tree line run in front of the Ineos plant along US 50. Many of their towers and tanks are painted to blend in with nature. They have just been given a national award for Innovations in Green Chemical Technology. They are also nominated for the Chemicals in Communities Award.

My vision goes on and on. I know that we can do it. I know we can change the outcome. Why am I so confident? Just look around this table.

Jason Fry From a family of community service. He has the rare gift of history and future. He can visualize our new beginnings and lasting traditions.

Ronnie Pugh, who has grown tremendously in this service, insist that we stop procrastinating and keep things moving. This will be invaluable as we move forward.

Lisa Mear, relatively new to Council, has demonstrated her worth in technology. We are now moving right into her age. We will need her to help guide us in the use of the social network as a marketing tool for our Village.

Ann Pillow has demonstrated a passion for change and with her 40 years of nursing knows that things must progress in a very orderly manner to effect positive change. We will need her focus to keep all the balls in the air. Unfortunately she has the added task of trying to keep me straight as well.

Bill Wickman is one of the greatest resources we could wish for. He knows every nook and cranny in our Village. He has longed for change for many years. I know he is eager to get started.

Sonny Youngblood brings 43 years of knowledge from the building trades and supervision. Who better to keep the contractors and builders in line. From his Honored Military service, Sonny knows the value of a strategic plan. As he often says, “plan your work and work your plan”.

We are going to look to Clerk Margaret Ann Dozier, whose dedication to her job is unquestionable, (she spends way too many hours at the office), we are going to need her to help us find new and innovative ways to leverage our money and finance our projects. We will use the skills of our Treasurer Kathleen Adams, who has done a tremendous job in streamlining the accounting process from hand to computer, to track and keep the flow of our finances in line and transparent. She along with Margaret and the finance committee will have to be vigilant in finding money for our future.

Our solicitor and prosecutor Robert Kelly, with his vast knowledge and some 18 years tenure at this table, will have new challenges in walking us through the maize of legal questions as we trudge to our future.

We have a great and talented Council. But it does not stop there.

Chip Brinkman Our Street Commissioner and his Number One Man Bobby Cross continue to amaze me with getting more done with less. His leadership skills are superb and his easy manner has contributed greatly to our community.

Erin Lowry has done a great job in our court system. She works hard to see that it runs smoothly. Now we are about to tax her administrative skills as she will often be the face of our community in dealing daily with contractors and the like.

We have a very capable team. Together we can move this Village forward. All we need now is a commitment. Not just a commitment from this body, but we need a commitment from every woman, man girl, or boy that lives here. We need a commitment from every person that owns property, does business or works here. I Believe that this will be our last best chance to change the outcome. Let it be said that these people had a vision, because without a vision the people, the town, the hope will perish.

Trust each other, but above all we need to have our trust in God for unless the Lord build a building, or a city we will all labor in vain.

God bless each of you, and God bless this great village, and may God bless America.

Daniel L. Pillow, Mayor

Village of Addyston, Ohio