

# 2022 Chauncey Newsletter

**In an effort to continue building communication throughout the Village, this newsletter recaps 2022 and looks forward to 2023:**

## **Village Government**

In 2022, we welcomed two new council members, Karla Dellinger and Dylan Skees. One council seat remains vacant. If you are interested in the vacancy or would like more information about what it entails, please reach out to Amy at [chaunceymayor@gmail.com](mailto:chaunceymayor@gmail.com) or attend the next council meeting. Additionally, Jonathan Robe was contracted to perform Solicitor duties for the Village and his work in 2022 has been instrumental to progress made this year. Regular council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm at Village Hall, except for the January meeting which is held on the first Wednesday to approve the 2023 budget.

## **Friendship Bench**

The Friendship Bench has come to Chauncey! The Friendship Bench is a place to solve problems. The trusted listeners of the Friendship Bench are trained in problem-solving techniques that can help you work through life's challenges. Friendship Bench staff also can provide information about additional support services. Everyone is welcome at the Friendship Bench. All visits are free and confidential. Visits are available by appointment (and some limited walk-in opportunities) at the Chauncey Public Library and over the phone or virtually. Call 740.300.0488 Let's talk!

## **Athens County Together**

2022 Project: Holiday Decorations

ACT is a program made possible through the support of the Athens County Commissioners. This year, we had additional funding from the family of Becky Wemer, a long-time resident of Chauncey who loved Christmas and passed away earlier this year. Her family held a benefit specifically to raise money to help purchase decorations for Chauncey.

On Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, we held an ornament making session at the Chauncey Senior Center where 40 village children gathered to make ornaments for the village tree and then went to the Village Hall to have a tree lighting ceremony with cookies, hot chocolate, and caroling. I want to thank all of the children, their parents, and other community members who attended. We had a great time!!

With the help of Tony Burrirt, ACT team members, Chris Russell, and Christopher Russell Jr, we made 10 stars to hang along Converse St. Tracie Blair prepared Village Hall for the gathering. The Chauncey Friendly Circle donated their space for ornament making. Thank you everyone for your help and generosity!

ACT team members: Darlene Russell, Amanda Moore, Diana & Bo Burrirt, Liz Hill, Cheryl & Mike Kraus, Evelyn Nagy, Connaught Cullen, Karla Dellinger, and Tammy Hawk. If you are interested in joining the committee to plan next year's project, please contact Tammy Hawk at [tammyj\\_bg@yahoo.com](mailto:tammyj_bg@yahoo.com)

## **Chauncey Community Park**

Construction is nearing completion at the park. The last remaining items is construction of the amphitheater which is awaiting permit approval from the State, the ground surface for the playground, and fencing. In Spring 2023, we will add landscaping and other miscellaneous items from additional funding that we received. We anticipate holding a ribbon cutting and trail opening celebration in April 2023 so be on the lookout for that announcement. The shelter house is available to rent for free for Chauncey residents but needs to be scheduled in advance via a rental form available. Non-residents will have a \$25 rental fee. The entire park can also be rented but significant notice will need to be given and a fee assessed regardless of residency. Inquire with [chaunceymayor@gmail.com](mailto:chaunceymayor@gmail.com) for more information.

We are annexing property owned by the Village of Chauncey where the park is located to grow our village boundaries by 120+ acres and to provide critical sewer access to the park and upcoming visitor's center.

The Chauncey Boys Civil War veteran's marker will be placed at the Park soon by Village staff which was brought to us by the Sons of Union Veterans.

Chauncey was awarded funding to add a Story Book Trail to the Chauncey Depot Trail on the Baileys Trail System which will be installed soon by Village staff in collaboration with the Athens County Public Libraries.

Newly announced funding from the Athens County Foundation in the amount of \$11,050 will fund Invisible Appalachia to create an augmented reality experience and kiosk which allows visitors to the park to use their smartphones to see images of the former mining complex on the site over how it appears today.

Chauncey received funding in early 2022 from the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council to hire structural engineering firm Barber & Hoffman and museum curator Hilferty & Associates to provide respective studies of the old mining complex site to determine how to salvage and interpret the remaining buildings. Hilferty held a public forum to get input on what the desired interpretation would be and feedback resulted in plans to make the site a commemoration of local industry and transportation from the late 1800's to mid-1900's. Chauncey teamed up with Rural Action to submit a planning proposal for the mining buildings in an Appalachian Community Grant Program application, news of the outcome of the application should arrive in early 2023.

## **Baileys Trail System**

It's been a busy year for the Baileys Trail System and the Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) which Chauncey is a founding member of! Over 26 additional miles of trail were built in 2022 bringing the total to approximately 52 miles. ORCA opened its bike rental store this year on Main Street which rents mountain bikes and complementary equipment. ODNR recently announced that ORCA was awarded \$3 million in Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization funding to build a 5,000 sq ft visitors center on Chauncey's property off of West Bailey Road. The center will be a hub for local entrepreneurs specializing in retail and hospitality to showcase their goods and services. ORCA and area partners applied for the Appalachian Community Grant Program which proposes building the rest of the trails, building a primitive and RV campground, and paving the Chauncey Depot Trail among many other improvements. ORCA hired additional staff this year who are based in Chauncey which includes a

Director of Communications & Philanthropy, Director of Sustainable Recreation, and other part-time support positions.

### **Sewer Line Replacement Project**

Chauncey, DLZ Engineering, and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) have been hard at work to get the sewer line replacement project designed and funded. The project, which will replace all the sewer lines in the village, is estimated to cost \$9.7 million. To date, Chauncey has secured \$5 million from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Another \$1 million is currently under review with decisions being made in early 2023. The funding secured thus far will allow for construction of Phase 1 of 2 to begin. The remaining funding needed for Phase 2 will be sought after next summer when the next round of applications open. Phase 1 is anticipated to start in the summer of 2023 and will include line replacement to customers on the following streets: Converse, Elm, Sycamore, 4<sup>th</sup>, Mound, 5<sup>th</sup>, part of Main, Jacobs, Birge, part of Monroe, and May. The project replaces original lines built in the 1950's which have been a source for financial strain for the Village since the 1990's. It will greatly reduce the maintenance costs that we are incurring so, while construction will cause an inconvenience, we'd appreciate your patience and understanding for this critical project.

### **Economic Development**

Chauncey received funding from the Governor's Office of Appalachia, the Appalachian Regional Commission, Athens County ARPA, and CDBG County Allocation to build water and sewer line extensions to a 37-acre property deemed the "St. Rte. 13 Development Property" in the northernmost portion of Chauncey which is zoned B-2 large commercial and industrial. The site which is located outside of the floodplain is an ideal opportunity for economic growth for the Village. It will also be accessible for fiber optic cable internet which we hope will be attractive to employers. Additionally, we are currently exploring setting up Converse Street as a downtown district and will be forming an advisory committee in 2023. If you would be interested in serving on this committee, please reach out to Amy at [chaunceymayor@gmail.com](mailto:chaunceymayor@gmail.com). Chauncey teamed up with the Mayors' Partnership for Progress to submit a planning application for the Appalachian Community Grant Program to explore downtown revitalization opportunities for the Village. Huge thank you to the Athens County Economic Development Council for their partnership in many projects in Chauncey!

### **Former Chauncey-Dover School Buildings Project**

From owners Brooke and Austin McDonough:

We are excited that our project at the old school buildings is moving forward as planned. We were able to obtain some grants in 2022 for some demolition, asbestos testing and abatement, and architectural drawings. Thank you to all who took furnishings, wood, and clothing to help us clean up the property both inside and out. In 2023, we plan to start demo of one building that isn't salvageable, continue to clean up the grounds, and begin construction on the brewery and restaurant that will be in the gymnasium. It continues to be a work in progress but it's definitely moving forward!

## **Zoning code**

In June 2022, Chauncey adopted its first zoning code and district map which can be found on our website under the “Village Documents” tab. Zoning will help us provide oversight into the development opportunities that come to Chauncey and protect the residential areas. We are currently in the process of developing a part-time Code Enforcement Officer position to help us review permits and nuisance complaints in the Village.

## **Floodplain Management**

The Athens County Commissioners have graciously offered to allow County Planner Laura Olbers to assist with reinstatement efforts into the National Flood Insurance Program. If you believe your property is not in compliance with our floodplain ordinance by not filing a floodplain permit for renovation or new construction, it’s never too late to reach out and we will help you get into compliance. Reach out to [chaunceymayor@gmail.com](mailto:chaunceymayor@gmail.com) for assistance.

## **Athens County Land Bank**

The Land Bank and Ohio EPA completed the remediation of the soil contamination at 16 Main Street after the building was demolished so, as the owner, the Village is now free to do as they wish with the property.

## **Additional news:**

- The Chauncey Public Library has acquired a parcel across from Village Hall on Converse Street to build a brand-new facility that will triple their current size. Excellent news!
- Through a partnership with Creating Healthy Communities at the Athens City-County Health Department and HAPCAP, we have a new bus shelter being installed near the post office.
- Habitat for Humanity bought 1 Lexington Ave (the lot with the abandoned trailer on the corner of Converse and Lexington) and will be removing the trailer and building a new home once the paperwork is complete.

*Have a safe and happy new year!*

Council President Connaught Cullen

Mayor Amy Renner

Council Member Tammy Hawk

Fiscal Officer Kevin Simons

Council Member Dylan Skees

Solicitor Jonathan Robe

Council Member Evelyn Nagy

Village Administrator Chris Russell

Council Member Karla Dellinger