

Referendum rescinds Lewis-Sterns zoning

BY DANIELLE PORTEUS
danielle@bedfordnow.com

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — The controversial rezoning of property along Lewis Ave. and Sterns Rd. in Temperance was turned over to Bedford Township voters and they overturned a previous rezoning.

The referendum was defeated by fewer than 300 votes with 2,920 people voting yes and 3,209 no votes.

Jon Whitman, owner of Whitman Ford Co., requested the rezoning of six parcels of land. On Dec. 2, the township board voted to rezone five of the six pieces of land.

The “no” vote changes the zoning classification of the five parcels of land to their original classifications prior to the Dec. 2 rezoning. That means about 13 acres of land revert to single-family residential and about seven acres on Lewis Ave. would

revert back to C-2 commercial property, a less intensive commercial development.

The citizens group Bedford Watch collected enough signatures to allow residents to determine the fate of the property.

“We are very pleased,” Judy Frankowski said. “It’s a win.”

Mrs. Frankowski, a Temperance resident, is a member of Bedford Watch. She said the group worked hard to get out the word about the referendum.

“The key to getting out the message was diligence. We cited facts, even though some thought they were scare tactics, but facts are scary.”

Temperance resident Kevin Tracy, another member of the Bedford Watch, said the vote is a message to the township board.

“The biggest thing is the township board should pay attention to what the people

want,” Mr. Tracy said. “I hope this sets a precedent and I want to thank everyone for voting.”

On April 9, Mr. Whitman said the original zoning did not meet the township’s master plan.

“Family residential is not part of the master plan,” he said. “We requested zoning recommended to us by the township and it was still turned down.”

Seven previous attempts to rezone portions of the Whitman property from single family residential to commercial were denied.

In February, 2007, Mr. Whitman lost in Monroe County Circuit Court against Bedford Township.

The way the property was originally zoned, an approximately 200,000-square-foot store could be built, said Dennis Jenkins, township planning coordinator, in December.

School district’s sinking fund okayed

BY DANIELLE PORTEUS
dportteus@monroenews.com

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Bedford Township voters approved the Bedford Public Schools request for a sinking fund by more than 1,300 votes.

The .5 mill, five-year improvement fund passed with 61 percent of the vote, 3,751-2,427.

The fund will generate \$527,000 a year for five years. The cost to a homeowner of a \$150,000 home with a \$75,000 taxable value is \$37.50 a year.

Josh Little, co-chairman of Education First! Safe Schools With Sinking Fund, said the victory was a huge testament to the work put in to pass the millage.

“We want to send a huge thank you to the voters,” Mr. Little said. “This is huge since the last one failed by 57 votes and this one passed by about 1,300.”

The group hosted a six-hour phone bank Sunday to rally last minute support for the passage of the fund. Mr. Little said that phone bank, plus face time with voters was important to passing the improvement fund.

Supt. Jon White said many people worked to get it passed.

“There was a very dedicated group of people who worked hard to get the message out and show support for our schools,” Mr. White said.

He thanked the community for its continuing support of the school district.

“We do have great schools because of parent support and the community support,” he said. “This shows the schools are important to the community.”

The money from the sinking fund will be used to replace portions of schools’ roofs and boilers.