

OUR VIEW

► To the point

Bedford Township might be fertile ground for a farmer's market, but the seeds of the idea must be planted carefully.

Don't rush Bedford market

The Bedford Township Board has mulled the idea of hosting a farmer's market at Bedford Township's Government Center.

The farmer's market concept is not new to the community.

Members of the Temperance Action Committee have sponsored such an endeavor since 2008. The idea for the market was conceived by the citizens group several years prior to the market coming to fruition.

The township hall, 8100 Jackman Rd., would likely not be the best location for such a market, however.

Many questions that have been raised about the use of the property remain unresolved, including the liability stipulations, parking adequacy issues and restrooms for visitors.

Bedford Township has several other locations that might provide a better venue for a farmer's market.

The Temperance Action Committee hosted its first market at Carr's Grove Park, the same place where the committee has for years hosted its annual Downtown Temperance Day event, which brings hundreds of people into the area.

A farmer's market in Bedford Township could be successful if the proper steps are taken to ensure its success. Beyond finding the right location, those running the market would have to ensure a large number of local vendors will be on hand to pro-

vide their goods. Ideally, a farmer's market should be a place where local farmers and gardeners provide their locally grown goods for residents. It is an opportunity to draw people into the township from other places such as north Toledo and other parts of Monroe County to help generate extra revenue for the vendors.

The township should take careful consideration when starting the market. Though officials have said they would like to start the market in June, rushing into the creation of a market could be a recipe for certain failure.

Poor planning and a lack of vendor support could destroy a farmer's market before it begins or stunt its development.

Board members should consult with Temperance Action Committee members to learn what measures made their market succeed and what unforeseen problems they might have encountered.

Consulting with organizers of other area markets, including those in Dundee and Monroe, also might help Bedford avoid missteps.

A successful farmer's market in Bedford Township surely would benefit the community. But care must be taken not to rush the market to reality before all the questions are answered. It might not only doom the current plan, but muddy the waters for similar ventures in the future.