

## Business growth at Playland

It's not that often that a businessman approaches Sylvania Township's planning and zoning office seeking to tear down a building to enlarge his enterprise, but that's what Ross Radkov is seeking to do.

He recently met with Daryl Graus, manager of the township's planning and zoning office, to get approval for his plans to demolish a house south of Sylvania Playland, 3540 Centennial Rd., so he can put in an additional parking lot.

He acknowledged that the additional parking will probably only be needed part of the year, but having it beats sending customers away. It also will allow customers to park closer to the entrance during inclement weather.

Inclement weather, particularly in winter, is a boon to the business and when activity is at its greatest.



Mr. Radkov, and his wife Melissa, opened their business four years ago and it wasn't easy.

"It was a time you couldn't get any money from the banks," he said.

What is now a business, often bustling with children either attending birthday parties or just playing on playground equipment indoors, was an essentially vacant former manufacturing plant.

"I think it was vacant for about seven years. It had been used for some storage, but there was no activity," he said, noting that the exterior had become shabby.

The inside was worse. The plumbing and wiring all needed to be repaired or more often replaced and there was no heat or air conditioning in the building.

"It was really just a cold-storage warehouse," he said, when he and his wife first looked at it as a spot for a business.

Mr. Radkov said the idea for Sylvania Playland came from his wife.

At the time, their two children were quite young and there was no place like Playland to take them, he said.

She told him what kind of place she would like and they both thought that it would offer a reasonable option to some established places for parents in the Sylvania area.

They leased about half of the building for the first year, but have expanded to occupy all of it now. The exterior has been redone as well.

The business is growing enough to call for his plan to demolish the house next door and create a parking area in the space south of the building.

Recent expansion and improvement have been made possible, he said, in part to a good relationship with Key Bank.

He is now winding his way through the necessary process of getting approval from various government agencies.

Mr. Graus said Sylvania Township has been happy to meet with him and work with him and will almost certainly approve his plans when it's time.

He said he did suggest a marked pedestrian walkway within the new parking lot to possibly improve safety for the children who will be anxious to get inside and start having fun.

Posted: 9/24/2013