

# Condos damaged by 2019 tornadoes razed

Five units had been declared dangerous properties by Harrison Twp. trustees in aftermath of storm.



*People watch as demolition begins Friday on a condominium along the river in Harrison Twp. damaged by a tornado on Memorial Day 2019.*

*MARSHALL GORBY / STAFF*

BY AIMEE HANCOCK - STAFF WRITER

## HARRISON TWP.

More than three years after sustaining significant damage from the 2019 Memorial Day tornadoes, on Friday the condos along the Stillwater River in Harrison Twp. were demolished.

All five of the abandoned condominium units — located at 4000, 4002, 4004, 4006 and 4008 Lofty Oaks Lane in Harrison Twp. — were declared dangerous properties with unsecured structural damage by township trustees in the aftermath of the tornadoes.

“The township has been working over the last three years to secure funding, perform our due diligence and coordinate all of our resource partners to make this possible,” Harrison Twp.

Administrator Kris McClintick said of the demolition project.

Originally built in the 1970s, the condos were owner-occupied prior to 2019. Susan Crabill, program manager for the Montgomery County Land Bank, said none of the condos were insured. After the tornadoes hit, a couple condo owners continued to live in their homes, but left shortly after, according to Harrison Twp. trustee Georgeann Godsey.

Harrison Twp. Fire Chief Mike Crist said the condos soon became a hazard to public safety.

“One of the biggest hazards we ran into was ... that the tornado caused a significant amount of structural damage and they became uninhabitable at that point, and with being exposed and open to the elements over these last three years, it just made them significantly unsafe structurally,” he said.

Crist said once the owners left, some homeless individuals sought shelter in the condos.

“We would have these units full of people living here and the unfortunate aspect is that they just weren’t safe doing so,” he said. “With the structure being weakened and being on the side of a hill, there was so much potential for catastrophe, so that’s why we really moved toward getting the people safely out and getting the buildings torn down.”

The price of Friday’s demolition totaled around \$41,500, according to township officials. The Montgomery County Land Bank covered 25% of these costs, Crabill said. The remainder was covered by state funding, as well as a portion of a \$109,000 Community Development Block Grant, approved by Montgomery County Commissioners last summer as part of an effort to raze Harrison Twp. properties damaged by the tornadoes.

The demolition was completed by FCS Construction Services Inc. from Dayton.

Contact this reporter at [aimee.hancock@coxinc.com](mailto:aimee.hancock@coxinc.com).

