

PENNSBURY TOWNSHIP NEWS

Winter 2012
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www.pennsbury.pa.us

Township Year in Review

Pennsbury Village Associates

A highlight of 2011 was the resolution of the dispute with Pennsbury Village Associates (PVA) over its proposed development. This dispute had gone on for more than ten years, with lawsuits brought by PVA against two of the Supervisors and against Township residents who were concerned with the proposal and with countersuits. One of the cases was heard by three levels of Pennsylvania Courts — Common Pleas, Commonwealth and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. These cases have been discussed both in the press and in past Township Newsletters. The proposed settlement of the issues was considered at two public meetings of the Board of Supervisors. A court order settling the issues was entered on April 11, 2011. The current Board of Supervisors was concerned over many aspects of the PVA proposed development plan, which had been approved at year end 2007 by the then Board of Supervisors (*The Approved Plan*). PVA and the current Board of Supervisors worked jointly to revise the Approved Plan to satisfy the concerns of the current Supervisors.

Highlights of the settlement are as follows:

- Township front lawn protected — an access road in front of the Township Building for the sole benefit of PVA was eliminated.
- The proposed demolition of the township's maintenance facilities required by the prior Approved Plan was eliminated.
- The rural character of the Township will be respected — the development will be residential only, thereby eliminating the impact of traffic, noise, lighting and sewage associated with commercial developments.

- Sewage will be disposed of through land application and not stream discharge as had been contemplated by the prior Approved Plan.
- The East parcel will be accessed with a right in, right out for the residents.
- Public sewer and water to the Township Building will be provided, and public sewer will be available for immediate commercial needs in the area.
- The storm water management basin proposed to be in front of the Township Building will be eliminated so that this land may be used for Township purposes in the future.
- The colonial building on the West parcel may be moved at PVA's expense to the Township property for use by the Township, if the Township so desires.

The next step is for PVA to formalize the settlement by a re-submission of its preliminary / final plan. This step is expected to be taken in 2012. At that time the prior Approved Plan of 2007 will be rescinded.

Sewage Plan

Act 537 Township Sewage Plan Update was completed and advertised for public comment.

The plan update includes:

- Executed easements from the property owners to the Township for a new sewage plan location at Chadds Ford West and subsurface infiltration beds on Mr. Jack Becker's property to serve the Route 1 highway commercial district. Becker's property consists of nine acres located across from the Gables Restaurant on Rt. 1.

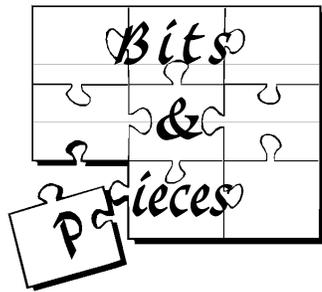
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Wendell Fenton
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❖ 2012 TOWNSHIP BUDGET

The budget was adopted at the Board of Supervisors meeting on December 13th. It is balanced in the amount of \$ 1,139,450 and is posted on the Township website.

There is no Township tax increase for 2012; however, as the state continues to trim their budget, more pressure is put on local governments to pick up the slack in the way of "unfunded mandates". Simply put, local governments must now do many things that the state was responsible for without any monetary help from the state. Taxes are being kept at a reasonable level, but it is not sure how long local governments can carry this increased burden without raising taxes.

❖ NEWS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

- Crosslands Wellness Center was approved by the Township in November. A major renovation to the skilled care unit and the creation of a fitness center is planned for 2012.

- The zoning ordinance draft has been reviewed by the Supervisors and changes made. This version has been sent to the Chester County Planning Commission for their comment. The Township hopes to start public hearings on this in the first half of 2012.

- A resolution was adopted by the Township amending the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 5 - Land Use Inventory and Plan.

- A resolution was also adopted by the Supervisors approving with conditions the preliminary / final plan for the Jack Becker property titled Penns Village.

❖ PROPERTY TAXES

Property tax will continue to be collected by Berkheimer Associates. The 2012 bills will be out on March 1.

Earned income tax and local service tax is now collected "county wide" by Keystone Collections.

❖ ELECTION RESULTS

Wendell Fenton was re-elected Supervisor for his second 6 year term. Marjorie Crandell was elected Township Auditor and Mary Wood, Township Tax Collector. School Board members representing the Township will be Frank Murphy, Kathleen Do, and Greg Linder.

❖ RECYCLING REMINDER

Please remember to crunch or fold, in other words, break down all boxes put in the recycling bins. Unbroken down boxes can quickly fill up space.

❖ E-MAIL ADDRESS

Periodically the Township sends out public service announcements to residents through email distribution. If you change

email providers, your address will change. If you wish to be included in future notices, please send your updated email address to: knowley@pennsbury.pa.us

❖ SOCIAL SECURITY

Many services of this agency which used to require a trip to their office, are now available online at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>

It's Time for Those Winter Road Reminders!

❖ ❖ **Do not park on the street.** If our drivers do not think they can salt, cinder or plow a street or cul de sac safely, they will SKIP it or plow it last. If vehicles are still on the street, the Township will have them towed at the owner's expense.

❖ ❖ **Do not put leaves in the street or gutter.** It is dangerous for cars and impedes water run-off.

❖ ❖ **Trim trees and shrubs along roads.** Make sure they do not impede visibility or make passage difficult.

❖ ❖ **Secure your mailbox.** The Township is NOT responsible for damage to mailboxes. The mailbox and base should be strong enough to withstand flying snow and slush from traffic and snowplows. To prevent damage the front should be at least 12 inches from the edge of the road and the supporting post at least 3 feet from the edge of the road.

❖ ❖ **Keep the right-of-way clear.** Any installation of plants, mailboxes, etc. is done at the owner's risk.

❖ ❖ **Do not push snow into the street.** It is in violation of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code to push snow into the street. It is also a danger to passing motorists.

❖ ❖ **Main subdivisions will be plowed first.** Less populated areas next.

A Pennsbury Historic Structure: THE JESSE SHARPLESS STORE

This property is located in Fairville Village, the Township's only historic village listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Village is an architecturally intact crossroads village of late 18th, early to mid 19th and early 20th century houses, commercial buildings and outbuildings. It is on the Kennett Pike running from Fairville Road to Hickory Hill Road. There are 37 contributing buildings in the village. This is the first in an occasional series on buildings in the core of this key landmark in the Township.



The Jesse Sharpless residence and store is located at the southern end of Fairville Village on the Southeast corner of Kennett Pike and Fairville Road. The Sharpless family was the driving force behind the development of Fairville Village as a crossroads village center. The land containing the village (approximately 78 acres) was initially part of Letitia Penn's Manor and was bought in 1744 by Owen Evans and used mainly as a farm. In 1803 Caleb Sharpless bought most of the 78 acres and the Sharpless family controlled much of the land and developments into the early 20th Century.

The Jesse Sharpless Store was built as a residence in 1818 and a newspaper article in 1828 mentions a "new store house" indicating the age of the building's large additions and the store. In addition to being a residence and general store, the building was the local post office until 1902 with William Sharpless as the first Postmaster. The store sold general merchandise and was an outlet for local farmers. As such, it was probably the most important enterprise in the Village (in addition to the forges located in other buildings) contributing greatly to the commercial importance of the Village.

The building is a Georgian style house with the original and one addition facing Kennett Pike. It is a brick, six bay, 2 1/2 story building with chimneys at either end. The side facing Kennett Pike has a shed roof porch which covers the entire front. The side along Fairville Road is seven bays long and suggests a third major period of additions. The property includes two other buildings, a late 1800's barn/garage converted to a residence circa 1915 and a stable/garage, circa 1890, moved to the property in the 1920's.

The Village began to decline in the mid 1800's when the Baltimore and Philadelphia Railroad constructed a line that crossed Kennett Pike about a mile North of the Village and established a station there. The village of Mendenhall grew up around the station and much of the commerce in Fairville moved to be closer to the rail line. The Village had about 100 inhabitants in 1870 which dropped to 60 by 1884. The Village became mostly residential and in the 20th Century several retail shops occupied Village properties. The Sharpless Store has recently been a multi-family dwelling.

Protecting Our Watershed

What is a watershed?

A watershed is the surrounding land area that drains into a lake, stream or river. It includes natural and artificial drainage systems, such as ditches and storm sewers. Even if your home is not next to a lake, stream or river, you still live in a watershed. Each of us lives in a watershed and shares its water quality.

How do watersheds affect water quality?

If we pollute the watersheds surrounding a lake, stream or river, we're directly affecting the water quality in that lake, stream or river. Everything we do in a watershed, from caring for our lawns and gardens to picking up our leaves, affects the local water body. Caring for your watershed is caring for your local lake or stream. Many events that occur in a watershed affect water quality, including the following:

- Storm water run off – In a natural watershed, rain falls on grassy or vegetated areas which allows the soil to soak up most of the rain that falls. In an urban watershed, rain falls on hard surfaces such as streets, driveways and rooftops. The rainwater runs quickly over these hard surfaces and is not soaked up – storm water runoff. As this water flows to storm sewers it picks up pollutants. Pollutants in storm water runoff include oil and antifreeze from streets and driveways, leaves and grass clippings from gutters and streets, animal wastes from lawns and gutters and fertilizers and pesticides from lawns and gardens. The loss of vegetated areas due to urbanization and development dramatically increases the volume of storm water runoff and also increases the amount of pollutants available to be picked up by storm water.

- Storm sewers – Storm water runoff is carried directly to lakes and streams through storm sewers. Storm sewers are designed to prevent flooding, but also provide direct routes for pollutants to lakes and streams. By controlling the pollutants in storm water runoff, we can control the amount of pollution entering our lakes and streams.

- Phosphorus is one of the most troublesome pollutants in storm water runoff. Phosphorus comes from many sources, and it is the primary cause of water quality problems in our lakes and streams. Everything that is or was living contains phosphorus. It is in leaves, lawn clippings and animal wastes

and is an ingredient in most lawn fertilizers. When these materials are picked up by storm water runoff and are carried directly to our local lakes and streams, they cause excess phosphorus. This excess phosphorus causes increased algae growth, which is observed as green algae blooms or "scums" on lakes. Too much algae is harmful to a lake system. It blocks sunlight and prevents other plants from growing. When it dies and decays, it also takes much needed oxygen away from fish. Limiting phosphorus reduces algae blooms.

What can I do to help my watershed?

You can help your watershed by understanding that you are part of the solution to water quality problems. Your actions affect the water and environment around us. Keeping your lawn healthy is beneficial to water quality. Plant and maintain grass and natural vegetation to help water quality by soaking up rainfall, reducing runoff, and retaining sediment. Use phosphorus-free fertilizers. Keep your leaves and lawn clippings out of the streets and gutters. Pick up your pet's wastes. It all adds up to better water quality. And that means water that is fun and safe to swim in, live by, and enjoy.



Halloween festivities at the Bark Park



The Year in Review (continued from page 1)

- Executed construction and operations agreement between PVA and Mr. Becker and the Township for the new sewage system, which will be paid for entirely by PVA. The plan will be submitted to the PA DEP after public comments are addressed.

New Ordinances

- An ordinance was passed which addresses permitted parking in the public right of way and on streets
- The property maintenance code was updated

Bark Park

A group of residents working with the Township recommended a Bark Park in the Pennsbury Park which the Township implemented. It has attracted many dog lovers from both Pennsbury and other areas.

Eagle Scout Projects

Several projects were undertaken by Township Eagle Scouts from Troop 31 during the year. The Township is very grateful for the wonderful work these young gentlemen have produced for all residents to enjoy.

- Drew Smallacombe constructed benches, installed fences, and planted trees in the Bark Park
- Marshall Lane cleared a pathway, removed invasive plants, and put in place foot bridges over a small stream in the Township's Johnson Wood Preserve.

- Conner McShane designed, painted and constructed a township emblem which is in the Harris Room of the Township Building.

Irene

Hurricane Irene, which brought the Brandywine River to 15 feet above flood stage, did not cause serious damage within Township. Hurricane Floyd a number of years ago brought the Brandywine up 17 feet, a record which was not broken by Irene.

Township Owned Lot

The Township continued to work to maximize the value for the Wedgewood lot. Bids received earlier in the year starting at \$36,000 were rejected. By the end of the year, the bids were up to \$68,000.

Brinton's Bridge Road

The major culvert repair on Brintons Bridge Road was completed, which included rerouting the stream to reduce turbulence which had resulted in the undermining of the bridge. Also extra reinforcement of the bridge structure was provided to minimize future problems.

Speed Limit

The speed limit on Rt. 1 in the vicinity of Constitution Drive at the Knoll was reduced from 55 mph to 45mph due to prodding of PennDot by both Knoll residents and the Township.

Board of Supervisors

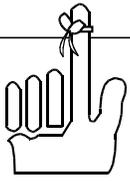
New Historic District Proposed

A proposed new historic district would include parts of southern Pennsbury and Chadds Ford Townships. The catalyst for this project is the necessary replacement of the bridge on South Creek Road over the Brandywine, called Pyle's Twin Bridge.

As part of the process for funding by PennDOT, through federal transportation dollars, The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that any project must be evaluated in light of its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

PennDOT engaged consultants to research potential eligibility, resulting in the submission to the PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) of a "PA Historic Resource Survey Form" (HSRF) for what it calls the "Bissell/Hill Girt/Beverly Rural Historic District. At the end of summer the PHMC ruled that the district is indeed eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Brandywine Conservancy is leading the effort to seek formal designation. It will work with the PHMC to provide additional needed information.



Pennsbury Township Calendar

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

TOWNSHIP MEETINGS

Supervisors meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the Harris Room of the Township Building. Exceptions will be February 29 and March 28.

Planning Commission meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 pm at the Township Building.

SCHOOL BOARD

Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board usually meets the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:30 pm. Tentative schedule can be found at: www.uchsd.org

DECEMBER

26 Monday — **Christmas Tree Recycling Begins**
Drop off undecorated trees at the Township Building.

JANUARY

3 Tuesday, 7 pm — **Board of Supervisors Organization Meeting** at the Township Building.

4 Wednesday, 7:30 pm — **Board of Auditors Organization Meeting** at the Township Building.

10 Tuesday, 7 pm — **Planning Commission Organization Meeting** at the Township Building.

16 Monday, 10 am to 2 pm — **Martin Luther King Day Celebration** at the Chadds Ford Historical Society. Tours of the John Chads House (fee), free activities at the visitor center.

For info, 610-388-7376 or www.chaddsfordhistory.org

27 Friday — **Christmas Tree Recycling Ends**

FEBRUARY

20 Monday, 10am to 2 pm — **President's Day Event** at the Chadds Ford Historical Society. Tours of the Chads House (fee), free activities for children.

28 Tuesday, 7:30 pm — **Winter Lecture Series** at the Chadds Ford Historical Society Barn Visitors Center. Various topics. Free for members. For speakers and topics, 610-388-7376.

MARCH

13 Tuesday, 7:30 pm — **Winter Lecture Series Sponsored** by the Chadds Ford Historical Society at the Barn Visitors Center. Various topics. Fee for non-members.

21 Wednesday, 7:30 pm — **Pennsbury Land Trust Annual Meeting** at the Township Building. Speaker on "Value of Protected Open Space".

24 Saturday, 7 to 11:30 am — **Shredding Event** sponsored by the Chester County Solid Waste Authority. 7224 Division Highway, Narvon, PA in the main office parking lot by the flag pole. Info at: www.chestercountyswa.org

27 Tuesday, 7:30 pm — **Winter Lecture Series Sponsored** by the Chadds Ford Historical Society at the Barn Visitors Center. Various topics. Fee for non-members.

28 Wednesday, 7:30 pm — **Townwatch Annual Meeting** at the Chaddsford Winery. Everyone welcome.

sara corbishley, editor

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