



Newsletter #9 ~ April 25, 2008

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April 2008 Newsletter

Dear Neighbors,

I am pleased to be sending you this latest update in a series of E-newsletters containing commentary on our Township Committee meetings and other helpful information about our municipality. This newsletter covers the Township Committee meeting of 4/16/08 and also provides updates on some community issues. If you did not see the prior newsletters, you can view them at www.JeffGrayzel.com Click on the "newsletter" link.

April 16 Committee Meeting...

You can view a copy of the April 16 Township Committee meeting agenda via a link to our Township website: http://morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_04-16-08.pdf

The April 16 meeting opened with 2 tributes. The first was to Mr. Paige L'Hommedieu for his years of service to the Township Historical Committee. Paige retired from his position as Chairman of this committee at the end of 2007.

The second tribute was a "RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL". This resolution proclaimed Morris Township's solidarity with Israel's and recognized Israel's accomplishments on the occasion of its 60th anniversary.

Police Department Promotions

The April 16 meeting continued with a recognition of three promotions in the Police Department and a ceremonial presentation of badges to these three officers. Mayor Nace and Jeff Grayzel, the Police Commissioner and Deputy Police Commissioner, had the honor of presenting new badges to Captain John McGuiness, Lieutenant John Hall, and Sergeant Mark McGuiness.

I wish these three fine men well in the new capacities.

Ordinances...

The meeting continued with final consideration of previously introduced ordinances and with the introduction of new ordinances.

There were four ordinances for Public Hearing and Final Approval at the April 16 meeting.

The first item for final consideration was an ordinance to purchase back-up generators for several of our fire stations. The updated generators are needed in case power is lost to the station in a storm to allow the station to stay operational (and specifically to allow the garage doors to be opened so that the trucks can leave on a call). A lengthy discussion ensued about the capital outlays for the generators. Committeeman Goldberg asked about the long-term plans for each of the firehouses and how these generators fit into those long-term plans. In the

end the Township Committee voted to approve expenditures on 2 of the 3 generators with an option to pursue the third one after the first two have been installed.

The second ordinance for final consideration was to allow for a handicap parking space to be placed in front of a house of a resident who had requested such. An ordinance is required for this because it is a change to our parking regulations.

The third ordinance for final consideration was for an update to an existing ordinance related to walls and fences. We had a situation in town where one neighbor disagreed with another over the right to build a tall masonry wall between their properties. The intent of the existing ordinance is to allow this (within reason of course), but the language was not clear. So the Planning Board, at the suggestion of the township engineer, proposed new language for the ordinance, which was then referred to the Township Committee for final approval.

The fourth ordinance for final consideration related to updating the Township Code for Municipal Solid Waste. This came about because the state has put out new regulations relating to recycling. The State of NJ wants to see more of our solid waste (i.e. regular garbage) being recycled, and their recent directive outlined some minimum standards every municipality should have in the municipal code. Morris Township actually does an excellent job of recycling (although more is always better since it saves us the cost of paying to dump the garbage), but some of the language in our code needed to be updated to conform to the new state directive.

Copies of these ordinances may be obtained from our Township Clerk.

There was one ordinance for introduction. This ordinance formally prohibits parking on private property. This is being introduced relative to the parking situation at the train station so that people who park illegally in private parking lots can be ticketed.

Several Resolutions were then passed. The title of each of these resolutions can be viewed on the agenda: http://morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_04-16-08.pdf

Copies of these resolutions may be obtained from our Township Clerk.

Administrative Hearings on Liquor Law violations

The Township Committee then heard the continuations of two separate administrative hearings for alleged liquor law violations. The hearings had commenced at prior Township Committee meetings. The Township Committee acts as a "judge" and administers a penalty to the holder of the license based on the facts presented to them. In these two cases, one establishment was penalized with a suspension of their liquor license for a period of 20 days and the second establishment was penalized with a suspension of license for 15 days.

Public Commentary...

Every Committee meeting has a "public commentary" portion during which any member of the public can make a statement concerning anything related to Township matters, or ask the Township Committee anything they wish.



Only one speaker appeared on April 16. He brought up several issues:

- He asked about the status of the "tear down" ordinance being studied by the Planning Board.
- He sought clarification related to Municipal Messenger sidewalk policy. He asked Mayor Nace for the source of the 60\40 figure the Mayor used in the Municipal Messenger to quantify those who favor\oppose sidewalks.
- He praised the Township's Municipal Messenger newsletter coverage of Police Chief Quinn's promotion, and expressed disappointment that same courtesy was not afforded to newly elected Twp. Committee members.
- Lastly, he inquired about a Rubinetti Garbage truck that is regularly parked on Tiger Lily Lane.

I urge more citizens to come to the Township meetings to ask questions and to air their comments. Doing so at a public forum gives you the opportunity to get an immediate response from the Township Committee, and often times helps the Committee improve regulations related to the issues at hand.

Jeff's Comments...

The final portion of each meeting allows for each member of the Township Committee to make any general comments they please. I made the following comments:

- I again congratulated our newly promoted officers Captain McGuiness, Lt. Hall, and Sergeant McGuiness. I stated that during the weeks leading up to the promotion ceremony, I had the opportunity to speak individually with each of these three men, and was very impressed with them. I feel confident that they will do well in their new assignments. Morris Township will continue to be well served by these 3 men and I wish them well in their new positions.
- I congratulated our Police Department on an award they are receiving from the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) for their participation in "Operation Re-Direct". This investigation into gangs and narcotics was conducted jointly with the County and other municipal Police Departments. The operation culminated last October with over 100 arrests around the county, several of them in the Morristown-Morris Township area. I further stated that the Morris Township Police Department participates in several similar operations throughout the year such as drunk-driving, domestic violence, and school-based programs. Much of what our police department does to protect us is "behind the scenes", so it is nice when our police officers are publicly recognized by an outside organization for their fine efforts.
- I told the public of a "lockdown drill" performed by the Police Department's Special Operations unit at Frelinghuysen middle school during the school break (when no children were around). The drill included a survey of the entire school by the officers to familiarize them with both the layout and the entrances/exits to the building. They then simulated a major event scenario that would require the school to be evacuated and secured in order to contain and deal with the threat within the school. We hope that this type of action will never be required, but it is good to know that our Police Department is prepared.
- I mentioned that our Trails committee presented their initial plan to the public at a meeting on April 9 at our municipal building. I encouraged citizens to go to our township website to view the plan in its entirety. More on this can be found below, including links to the website.
- I mentioned that I received an e-mail from a resident on Kitchell road who complained about speeding on her street and suggested that a speed bump be put in. I stated that at past meetings I had suggested that the township consider the installation of speed bumps in certain locations. I once again requested that the engineering committee develop a municipal policy related to speed bumps/humps so that we can move forward with a trial at certain locations.

Other Comments...

Ron Goldberg made the following comments:

- Urban Renewal Corp (website: www.urbanrenewal.org) held a free drop for electronic waste at our DPW yard on Jane Way on April 12. They were very pleased with the amount dropped which helps create jobs and fund community services. This was a win-win for Morris Twp residents: it reduced our solid waste stream and tipping fees, kept hazardous waste out of our land fill, and avoided the



normal \$3 fee to drop hazardous waste. We hope to establish a free 24/7 drop for such waste in the future.

Scott Rosenbush made the following comment:

- Commented on the house fire that consumed a house on Brigade Hill Road. He thanked the many surrounding communities who sent "mutual aid" in the form of trucks, equipment, and manpower to assist us in battling the fire.

Mayor Nace made the following comment:

- Urged residents to participate in the Relay for Life taking place on May 16th at our high school.

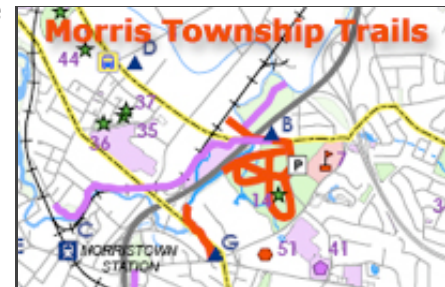
Closed Session

The Township Committee then recessed into "closed session" which occurs when there are legal or personnel matters that cannot be discussed in public. Minutes of the closed session are released to the public when the matters discussed are resolved. The Township Attorney John Mills announced at the Township Committee meeting (prior to recessing into closed session) that the closed session would deal with land acquisition and union negotiations.

THE FOLLOWING SECTION CONTAINS GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT HAPPENINGS AROUND MORRIS TOWNSHIP.

Morris Township Trails Committee presents plan to the public

The recently-formed Morris Township Trails Committee made a public presentation of their draft plan on Wednesday, April 9. The Trails Committee has been charged with assembling a plan to increase walking and bicycling from neighborhoods to schools, parks, playgrounds, historic sites, transit stations (train), and other destinations via a network of trails and pathways. While this is a long-term vision, this journey must start with the first step (so to speak), which is the Morris Township "Trails and Pathways Plan".



A copy of the Trails Plan can be viewed on the Township website at: <http://morristwp.com/trails.html>

Seasonal Deer Culling program concluded

Morris Township completed its third successful deer-culling season March 23 with a total of 176 deer killed by township hunters. The program is part of the township's wildlife management program endorsed by the township's Environmental Commission. Township Police Officer Steven Summerer, an experienced hunter himself, runs the program for the township. In the 2007-2008 season 176 deer were harvested throughout Morris Township of which 156 were female and 20 were male. Fifteen of the 156 females were fawns, leaving 141 mature females capable of having twin fawns this spring. Officer Summerer estimated that by calculating the number of deer killed by the number of does giving birth, a potential of 458 deer have been removed from the township. Thirty volunteer hunters gave approximately 704 man-hours of their own time to harvest deer at no cost to Morris Township.

State wildlife experts place a manageable number of deer in a setting such as Morris Township at 15-20 per square mile. In the Spring of 2005, an aerial survey revealed a concentration of about 49 deer per square mile. Based on the successful results this season, Morris Township expects to maintain this program to bring the deer population into a better balance with what the environment can support.



For more information on any issues regarding the deer management program, or to report an area of Morris Township with a high concentration of deer, please call Officer Steve Summerer at Police Headquarters at (973) 539-0777.



Building Applications around town

Last month I introduced a new section with some information about building around town.

In order to keep the community informed about development proposals in Morris Township, I would like to start communicating to the community the various projects that are before the Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment. I will only highlight the larger projects and not get into details on the minor ones, such as a homeowner adding a front porch to their home. If residents are opposed to certain types of developments, they need to voice their opinions in-person at the hearings.

The Board of Adjustment will hold its regular meeting on April 28 and will continue a hearing for 219 Madison Avenue, a proposal to turn the 3 service bays of the gas station into a quick mart and Dunkin Donuts shop. The agenda for this meeting can be found here:

http://morristwp.com/agendas/boa_04-28-08.pdf

The Planning Board will hold a regular meeting on Monday May 5 to hear plans being presented for at least one subdivision project. The developer is requesting to subdivide one lot into three on Valley View Street and Shadyside Street. If you live near this property then you may want to come to the meeting to hear their proposals. The full agenda is still not available, but will be posted on the Township website about a week before the meeting:

<http://morristwp.com/>

All of the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment meetings start at 7:30pm at our municipal building and are open to the public. As with all public meetings, I urge our residents to attend so that they can have a say in how our township is managed and how it is developed.

Other items of interest:

There are many items of interest this month. Please read through this long, but interesting, list!

- FREE Car Seat Inspection provided by the Morris County Park Police on Saturday, April 26. Time: 9 a.m. – 12 Noon
Location: Mennen Sports Arena Back Parking Lot
Contact Information: 973-326-7632
- On Sunday May 4 from 8am – noon the Hillside Hose Company (our firehouse on Western Avenue) is holding its annual pancake breakfast. Please support our community firehouses by coming out to this event.
- Registration for 2008 Swim Pool Memberships is now open. Membership is good for entrance to both pools. Returning pool members may renew their memberships On-Line on the Township Website or by mail. New members must register through the Department of Parks & Recreation Office. For more information on pool memberships or other services provided at the pools, please call the Department of Parks & Recreation at 973-326-7371. For those of you who are unaware, many renovations to our pool facilities are being completed prior to the season. You can find a summary of these improvements at this link: <http://morristwp.com/pdfs/poolimprov.pdf>
- The Department of Parks & Recreation has published their spring/summer recreation guide. This guide contains a wealth of information about the park facilities in the Township as well as the many programs for both youths. The guide is mailed to every home in Morris Township, but can also be viewed online at: <http://morristwp.com/pdfs/summer08.pdf>

For more information about any of our recreation programs, please call the Department of Parks & Recreation at 973-326-7371.

- On Friday May 13 the Recreation Department is offering the second of two free "Trek the Trails" bicycle rides. These Bicycle Outings are for youths in grades 4 through 8. Moms, Dads & Grandparents are encouraged to ride, too. Representatives from Marty's Reliable Cycle shop will check bicycles for maintenance and safety, and discuss proper riding techniques; and then will lead the group for an off-roadway ride through the countryside on paved and graveled surfaced segments of the trailways. Participants must bring their own bicycles, bicycle helmets, and water. The rides are free. Pre-registration is required by calling the Parks & Recreation Office at 973-326-7371. Date/Time/Place:
 1. Thursday April 2nd from 4:15 PM – 5:30 PM for a Patriots Path Ride, meet at Streeter Pool Parking Lot
 2. Friday May 13th from 4:15 PM – 5:30 PM for a Loantaka Brook Path Ride, meet at Ginty Pool Parking Lot.
- CURBSIDE CONTAINER COLLECTION OF LEAVES, GRASS, BRUSH has resumed for the spring season. More info can be found online at http://morristwp.com/dept_dpwcollectionsservices.asp#leaves
- The Morris Township Firemen's Mutual Benevolent Association Local #70 is sponsoring two \$1,500.00 Scholarships for a Township resident graduating from high school in 2008. More information can be found online at: <http://www.fmba70.org/scholarship.html>
- For those of you the travel on Mt. Kemble Avenue (Route 202) please take note that there is construction taking place along a stretch near Springbrook Road for a period of several months. You can expect road closure and/ or detours during that period. More details can be found online at: http://morristwp.com/pdfs/RT202_Detour%202-25-08.pdf

Upcoming Committee Meeting...

The next Township Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 21st (there is only one meeting in May). I urge you to attend!! Your presence improves the quality of the proceedings, and your questions require the Township Committee to be responsive to our citizens.

Other Township meetings and events can be found online on our municipal calendar: <http://plus.calendars.net/morristwp>

Please feel free to forward this e-mail on to others. If you know someone who would like to subscribe, please have them contact me at Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com .

As always, if you have any comments you would like to share with me then please send an e-mail to Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com .

Thank you for taking the time to read through this lengthy newsletter. I hope it has helped you be more informed about what is going on around our town.

JEFF

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