



Newsletter #17 ~ December, 2008

**IMPORTANT -- PLEASE NOTE:**

Your privacy is important. If you do not wish to receive emails from Jeff Grayzel, please click the unsubscribe link on the bottom of this page and your email address will be removed within 48 hours. Thank you.

## December 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. If you did not see the prior newsletters, you can view them at [www.JeffGrayzel.com](http://www.JeffGrayzel.com) . Click on the "newsletter" link.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to any (and all) of your friends & neighbors. There are many people who still do not get the newsletter and who surely would be interested in what goes on in our Township. They can subscribe to the newsletter by sending an e-mail to [Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com](mailto:Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com) . You can let them know that I only send one e-mail per month and do not use their address for any other purposes.

This edition covers the month of December including the Township Committee meeting of 12/17/08, and also provides updates on some community issues. Make sure you catch all of the upcoming events in our community. See the listing under "Other items of interest" near the end of this newsletter.

### **December 17 Township Committee Meeting...**

You can view a copy of the agenda via a link to our Township website:

[http://www.morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm\\_12-17-08.pdf](http://www.morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_12-17-08.pdf)

### **Ordinances for Final Consideration...**

The meeting started with "Ordinances – Public Hearing, Final Consideration, and Adoption". This pertains to ordinances introduced at a prior Township Committee meeting. There were five such ordinances from the November 12 meeting.

**The first ordinance, #38-08**, created no parking zones along portions of Westminster Place, Indian Head Road, and Wheatshaf Farm Road (in the new townhouse development off Kahdena Road).

**The second ordinance, #39-08**, authorized the Township to contribute \$1 million dollars from our Open Space Trust Fund to help acquire a portion of the 187 acres at St. Mary's Abbey (Delbarton) for open space preservation. Please see my July newsletter for more details regarding this matter. Also see the accompanying resolution below.

**The third ordinance, #40-08**, rescinded a previously approved ordinance to allow JCP&L an easement to install a power line at the Collinsville Firehouse. This easement was no longer necessary, so the ordinance was rescinded.

**The fourth ordinance, #41-08**, established development fees charged to developers of new

residential or commercial space. The money will be used to build or rehabilitate affordable housing units in the Township. (See my September newsletter for more information on this matter, and also see the special meeting below.)

**The fifth ordinance, #42-08**, updated the rules and regulations relating to our swimming pools. This included the establishment of a fee schedule for the 2009 pool season.

A copy of any of these ordinances may be obtained from our Township Clerk by calling 973-326-7430.

### **Ordinances for Introduction...**

There were no ordinances for introduction at this meeting. The reason for this is that Final Consideration of any new ordinance would have to be voted on in the new year when a new Township Committee would be seated. Therefore new legislation is never introduced at the final meeting of the year for the Township Committee

### **Report of Bid Receipt Committee...**

The next item on the agenda was a report from Fred Rossi, our Township Administrator, regarding bids received for one project up for bid. Please see the agenda for a listing of this item.

Details of each individual project may be obtained from our Township Administrator

### **Resolutions...**

Several Resolutions were then passed. The title of each of these resolutions can be viewed on the agenda:

[http://www.morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm\\_12-17-08.pdf](http://www.morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_12-17-08.pdf)

These were routine and without controversy. However, I would like to provide the following additional information:

**Resolution 210-08** approved an additional contribution of \$100,000 towards the purchase of a portion of the Delbarton land (the Township will gain ownership of approximately 10 acres of 178-acre parcel) to make up a shortfall from one of our partners so that the deal with Trust for Public Land to preserve all 178 acres can go ahead. The deal is expected to close within the first quarter of 2009.

**Resolution 211-08** endorsed a resolution from the Township Planning Board to petition the NJ State Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) to approve our "Housing Element and Fair Share Plan" for our affordable housing obligations. (See Planning Board section below)

Copies of all resolutions passed may be obtained from our Township Clerk.

### **Public Commentary...**

Every Township 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.

- The first resident who spoke at the December 17 meeting complained about the continuing problem of dog waste left on the ground in his neighborhood. He asked for better enforcement of our laws relating to pet owners picking up dog waste from their pets.
- The second resident who spoke asked two questions:

**1)** Asked for clarification of the resolution relating to the preservation of the Delbarton property. She was told that the additional money was needed to cover a shortfall by another partner. She was also told of Delbarton's official withdrawal and abandonment of any future plans for a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) on the property. She was also informed of the Township's intent to remove the CCRC zoning from that same land and render it an OSGU zone exclusively

2) Asked about the COAH plans and where the units would possibly be placed. She was told of plans to pursue a County land option on W. Hanover Ave for development of affordable housing to satisfy the 3rd round of COAH obligations

- The third resident thanked Mr. Watson and Mr. Nace for the service to the Township and commended them on the perseverance in acquiring the Harding property for use as soccer fields. She wished them both a happy retirement from the Township Committee.

**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 Commentary...

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 first acknowledged 3 employees who reached the 30-year mark in years of service to Morris Township this past year. These are Tim Quinn, Chief of our Police Department; Craig Goss, Chief of our Fire Department; and Mike Ryer, our fire inspector. Thank you gentlemen for your years of service to our community. You have all served us well.
- The Morris Township Police Department was one of eight municipalities in Morris County that was awarded a grant for drunken driving enforcement this holiday season, called the "Over the Limit Under Arrest 2008 Year End Crackdown". The grant is funded through New Jersey Highway Traffic Safety. It is for \$5000 (100 hours of overtime) for extra patrols for drunken driving enforcement from December 8th to January 2nd. The police department started last Thursday and had a number of DWI arrests over the past weekend.
- I noted the wonderful streetscape project on Speedwell Avenue. It looks great, and it is about to get even better. We just received new planters to replace the wooden barrels that are currently in place along Speedwell Avenue. The Beautification Committee, another of our volunteer committees, will be planting and decorating these new planters for the holidays. Thanks to the members of the Beautification Committee for volunteering their time to beautify the community. Thanks also to Jim Stoia and our DPW department for working with the Beautification committee to deliver and set up the planters on the street. These planters will stay out year-round and will be replanted in the spring with flowers. The Beautification Committee is looking for new members. If you are interested please contact me and I can give you more information about what they do.
- I wished Bob and Rick all the best upon their retirement from the township committee. I have been on this committee for less than 2 years but can now vouch for how much work goes in to running our town and the many hours each of the Committee members puts in on an almost daily basis as part of his commitment to the community. Bob and Rick have been doing this for a long time, and the sum of all the hours they have put in for the benefit of the community makes a very large number. I thanked both of them for the time given to our citizens. I also thanked them for the help and insights they gave me during my first 2 years on the Committee. Their experience will be missed, but I know they will make themselves available for advice in the future.
- Lastly, Happy holidays too all our residents, my colleagues on the Township Committee, and to all our municipal employees. I wish everyone a safe and peaceful holiday season.

### Other Commentary from Township Committee members...

**Ron Goldberg** made the following comments:

- Thanked Bob Nace and Rick Watson for their dedication and service to the community.

Scott Rosenbush made the following comment:

- Thanked Bob and Rick for their service to the community. He then presented each of them with a gift recognizing their contributions to the community.

Rick Watson made the following comments:

- Read a Proclamation honoring Bob Nace.
- Thanked his wife for her support during his tenure.

Mayor Nace made the following comments:

- Noted that we are "on the goal line" with are efforts on the Harding Sports Complex.
- We will close the deal on the preservation of the Delbarton property in early 2009.
- The Morris Township Recreation Foundation has received its 501-c3 certification as a tax-exempt organization. He would like to see the Foundation pursue a Senior Center for the community.
- Read a proclamation honoring Rick Watson.

### 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 personnel, land acquisition, real property, and legal matters.

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

### Building Applications Around Town...

This section provides the community with some information about building projects around town. There are always new projects and continuing projects that come 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 encourage or are opposed to certain types of developments, they need to voice their opinions in-person at the hearings.

The **Board of Adjustment** held a regular meeting on December 8. The agenda for this meeting can be found online at the township website:

[http://morristwp.com/agendas/boa\\_11-10-08.pdf](http://morristwp.com/agendas/boa_11-10-08.pdf)

There was only one minor item on the agenda. Of note, it was announced that the hearing for the Madison Avenue Gas Mart project will be rescheduled for a date TBD.

The next regular **Board of Adjustment** meeting will take place on January 26. The meeting agenda will be available on the township website several days before the meeting.

The **Planning Board** also held a regular meeting on December 1, and this agenda can be found online:

[http://morristwp.com/agendas/plbd\\_12-01-08.pdf](http://morristwp.com/agendas/plbd_12-01-08.pdf)

The major item on the agenda was the hearing for the subdivision of the Delbarton property in order that they may sell off a large parcel for open space preservation (see my July newsletter for more info on this).

Of note, the hearing of the application by Joel Meer to subdivide a property on Shadyside Road was

postponed until February 3, 2009. No new testimony was heard at this meeting. Applicant proposes to subdivide the property into three lots, two of which are proposed for new construction. Applicant also seeks several other variances for insufficient lot depth and setbacks and waiver relief for steep slope disturbance are also being requested.

The **Planning Board** also held a **special meeting** on December 15. This special meeting is related solely to the new Council of Affordable Housing (COAH) legislation. All municipalities are required to submit a Plan by December 31 of this year on how they will work towards achieving their affordable housing requirements as determined by COAH. At this special meeting our Township Planner will present to the public details of the plan that our Planning Board will submit to the State of New Jersey. At the December 15 meeting the Planning Board approved a "Housing Element and Fair Share Plan" for our affordable housing obligations to be submitted to COAH for their approval.

For more information on COAH you can visit their website at:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/dca/affiliates/coah/index.html>

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...

- Sign-up for several Spring sports leagues is commencing soon. Please note the following dates for that each sport will begin taking registrations:  
  
GIRLS' SOFTBALL SIGN-UP FOR GRADES 2 – 5:  
JANUARY 31 FROM 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
  
T-BALL (BOYS/GIRLS) SIGN UP:  
FEBRUARY 7 FROM 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
  
NATIONAL LITTLE LEAGUE SIGN -UP:  
FEBRUARY 7 FROM 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
  
AMERICAN LITTLE LEAGUE SIGN -UP:  
FEBRUARY 7 FROM 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
- The Census Bureau will be hiring individuals to assist with Address Canvassing during the Spring of 2009. Interested individuals can make an appointment to apply for these openings, and for other temporary employment opportunities that the Bureau will need to fill from now up through Census Day, April 1, 2010. Pay rates range from \$13-\$20 per hour. If interested please contact the Bureau's toll free employment information number, 1-866-861-2010 or the Census Bureau's website. Visit the Census Bureau on-line at [www.census.gov/2010census](http://www.census.gov/2010census)
- Home heating aid available to Morris residents: The State's Home Energy Assistance Program is now taking applications from eligible Morris County residents who may be having trouble paying their heating bills. The HEA Program helps individuals and families who pay their own heating bills or who have their heating included in their unsubsidized rent. Applications are evaluated by household size, monthly gross income, heating bills and several other criteria. The HEA Program is administered by the New Jersey departments of Community Affairs and Energy through the Morris County Organization for Hispanic Affairs, which for the past eight years has been designated by the state as the county agency to receive the applications for assistance. Applications for the HEA Program are being accepted now to April 30. For more information or to request an application, contact the Morris County Organization for Hispanic Affairs at its 120-

122 Speedwell Ave. office in Morristown at (973) 644-5627.

- Morris Twp Dog and Cat license applications are due by January 31. (Yes, all pets are required to be registered)
- As many of you know, the traditional television signal will be turning to "all digital" in early 2009. The switch from analog to digital broadcast television is referred to as the digital TV (DTV) transition. In 1996, the U.S. Congress authorized the distribution of an additional broadcast channel to each broadcast TV station so that they could start a digital broadcast channel while simultaneously continuing their analog broadcast channel. Later, Congress mandated that February 17, 2009 would be the last day for full-power television stations to broadcast in analog. Broadcast stations in all U.S. markets are currently broadcasting in both analog and digital. After February 17, 2009, full-power television stations will broadcast in digital only. For more information on the DTV transition see this link:  
<http://www.dtv.gov/consumercorner.html>

Importantly, older television sets are incapable of receiving the new digital service without a special converter box that will convert the digital signal into the older analog signal that the older televisions accept. This will necessitate the Cablevision subscribers to either have a digital-ready television (newer model TV) or have a digital converter box (for older model TV's). For example, Cablevision plans to move the public educational and government access channels (PEG channels) to the digital spectrum of their systems, so older televisions will not be able to view these shows without a converter box.

Cablevision is offering their subscribers a free digital converter box if they request it before the extended deadline of December 31, 2008. So for those residents without digital TV s, or digital service, I urge you to get the free digital converter available from Cablevision before the December 31 deadline if you are a customer of theirs. Residents that have questions about this equipment offer should contact the phone number on their monthly Cablevision invoice. Verizon has a similar offer for their customers, and you may also purchase converter boxes at many electronics stores such as Radio Shack (at the Morris County Mall on Ridgedale Avenue). If you do so, you may also be eligible for a government-sponsored rebate check for the purchase of a converter. Call 888-DTV-2009 for more information.

This change will tend to impact our senior population who often have older television sets. If you have a senior-citizen neighbor, please alert them to this change in television service.

- Morris County is getting \$4 million from the state's 2009 County Aid Transportation Program. The funds are earmarked for repaving portions of 11 county roads in nine municipalities. The state aid program provides funds to counties each year. The paving projects being funded include three projects in Morris Township. The projects are: 0.6 miles of Main Street to Changebridge Road in Montville; Main Road from Barney Lane to Boonton Turnpike in Lincoln Park and Montville; East Main Street from Hilltop Road/Mountain Avenue to Cold Hill Road in Mendham Borough; Mendham Road from Indianhead Road to Kahdena Road in Morris Township; Columbia Turnpike from Morris Avenue to Park Avenue in Morris Township; East Mill Road from Schooley's Mountain Road to Old Farmers Road in Washington Township; Powerville Road from Boulevard to North Main Street in Boonton Township; South Morris Avenue from Route 10 to Millbrook Avenue in Dover and Randolph; Village Road from Lee's Hill Road to 1.3 miles east in Harding; Glen Alpine Road from Route 202 to Lee's Hill Road in Harding; and West Hanover Avenue from the Frelinghuysen School through Second Street in Morristown and Parsippany. The paving work will be done in 2009.
- Due to the success of two earlier single day collections, the Department of Public Works has started a continuous electronic recycling program at the DPW yard located on Jane Way. As in the past, all acceptable electronic equipment must be brought to our yard. This program is available daily Monday thru Friday from 6:30 AM to 3:00 PM. You may bring electrical and

electronic items to our yard during these times for drop off. The commitment to reduce electronic waste has been proven by the residents of Morris Township. Your participation has allowed us to recycle approximately 14 tons of electronic waste. Your continued support of all of Morris Township's recycling programs is necessary for us to provide a "Greener" future for generations to come. For a list of acceptable materials see this link:  
[http://morristwp.com/pdfs/electronics\\_5-16-08.pdf](http://morristwp.com/pdfs/electronics_5-16-08.pdf)

### **Upcoming Committee Meeting...**

The Township will hold its annual "Reorganization" meeting on Wednesday January 7th when our new committee members will be installed and sworn in. The agenda can be found online at:

[http://morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm\\_01-07-09.pdf](http://morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_01-07-09.pdf)

The other business performed that night is to formally set the membership of each of our standing committees, and statutory committees. For a list of our Standing Committees and their current assignments please see this link:

<http://www.morristwp.com/boards.asp>

The next regular meeting of the Township Committee is scheduled for Wednesday January 21st. Regular Township business will be conducted at this first regular meeting of 2009.

As usual, I urge citizens to attend our meetings. 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](mailto:Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com).

As always, if you have any questions about any of the above or if you have a comment you would like to share with me, then please send me an e-mail to [Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com](mailto:Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com).

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

**JEFF**

Committeeman, Morris Township

[Jeff's Web Site](#) | [Contact Jeff](#)

©2008 Jeff Grayzel

**The Next  
Meeting:  
January 7th**