

November 2001

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLING ALL JUNIOR GARDENERS!

Children from K-5 welcome. Meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 3:30 to 4:30 PM starting November (except the December meeting is 12/6) in Fellowship Hall at the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon. Each meeting will include a snack and fun seasonal projects. Space is limited, please call M. J. Turnbull, 377 3866 or Martha Coy, 538 3265 to sign up.

The Police Department is participating in the Sixth Annual Coat Drive for Jersey Cares. The drive started on November 1, 2001 and continues through December 31. Coats will be distributed to those in need in the area. The Police ask residents to drop off used or unwanted coats at the Police department located in the Municipal Building on Blue Mill Road. Your support for this worthwhile project is greatly appreciated.

THE LIBRARY

If you have preschoolers or toddlers at home, be sure to bring them to Harding Township Library's *Storytime*. Storyteller Jill Fitzpatrick and the Storytime Mice will treat your children to stories, songs, and theme crafts at the Green Village United Methodist Church on Spring Valley Road. Pre-schoolers gather on Tuesdays, at 1:30 p.m., Toddlers on Fridays at 9:30 a.m. It's an hour not to be missed! **Schedule as follows: 12/4 & 12/7, Winter Stories; 12/11 & 12/14, Hanukkah Stories; 12/18 & 12/21, Christmas Stories.** *Storytime* will resume the week of January 7, 2002.

Shop the Cart...When holiday shopping, remember to check the Library's books-for-sale cart. It is constantly replenished with treasures at bargain prices!

Thanks to generous commemorative gifts from a Harding resident, the children's collection boasts a number of new titles, Among them are *Yoko's Paper Cranes* by Rosemary Wells; *Flight* by Ian Graharn; *Sleepytime Rhyme* by Remy Charlip; and *Arnelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride* by Pam Munuz Ryan. Browse the shelves for other delights.

Book Club schedule for December- **Monday, December 3 at 10 a.m..** *The Music Lesson* by Katharine Weber **and Monday, December 17 at 3:30 p.m.:** *The Winter of Our Discontent* by John Steinbeck, All are welcome.

The Harding PTO is sponsoring a sale of the Red, White and Blue. They are selling white cotton T- shirts, both long (\$15)and short (\$10) sleeve, with the

words "America the Beautiful" across the front with 3 American flags. The order deadline is December 3, 2001. Sizes, Youth: S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), and adult sizes, S, M, L, XL. Please send your order to Connie Cherillo, at 95AA Lindsley Rd, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920, with check payable to Harding PTO, in memo area mark "Bocchi Boys Fund, as all proceeds go to this fund honoring John Bocchi. Please include your phone number to arrange for pick up when the shirts have arrived. Questions? Call Mrs. Cherillo at 973 539 9383 or Jane Williams, 973 644 2445.

Thanksgiving Service

On Thanksgiving Eve, Wednesday November 21 at 8 PM, the entire community is invited to an ecumenical service of Thanksgiving. The service will be held at First Presbyterian Church at the Crossroads. Ministers and lay leaders of the Harding Congregations will lead the service, and a community choir will sing, directed by Richard Cox. Margaret Gray, organist and Richard Gradone, trumpet, will provide special music. The offering of the people will support the Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown.

HTRA Basketball signups were held on November 10 at the Harding School Gym Foyer at 9- 10:30 AM, children in grades 2-8 are invited. Questions? Call Paul Bodnar at 973 267 5881 or Leo Motiuk at 973 644 4899.

A Thank You Announcement

The fundraiser "Special Shopping Days on The Country Mile" was a big success for Homeless Solutions, Inc. a private, non-profit organization serving the children, mothers, the working poor and homeless of Morris County and for the participating merchants on The Country Mile. A large part of the success was due to volunteers who conducted ticket sales on the premises of the business during October 5-7. Over 70% of the volunteers were from Harding, many Mt. Kemble Lake residents and/or members of The First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon. The Trustees of Homeless Solutions, Inc. want the residents of Harding who supported this project, particularly the volunteers, and the participating merchants to know how much they appreciate their support.

Attention Francophiles!

If you speak French, and would like to volunteer about one hour a month in Harding Township School French classes, please call Joanne MacLennan at 973-267-6398, extension 148, for details.

TOWNSHIP NEWS

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:

Post office update Residents whose mail is handled out of New Vernon have been aware for a year that the Post Office location shifted to a “temporary” trailer in back of Kirby Hall. The reason for the PO evacuation, last December, was at the time the PO was working with the landlord of the “old” PO building on Village Rd to make improvements so that the PO could handle the volume of mail. The structure need serious improvements to keep it in service as a PO.

Unfortunately, these plans fell through, the lease expired, and the building put up for sale. The Township leased the site for the trailer at a nominal sum on a temporary basis to keep the postal service in the vicinity. Township officials are aware of the need for a post office in the center of town, but the Township itself does not want to get into the business of ownership of real estate, which would be leased back long-term to the PO. (The Postal Service has tried to move to a commercial location on Rt. 202, but plans for this move appear to have been dropped.) At present the PO appears to be hoping to stay in the trailer indefinitely.

Fran Frigerio, a resident on Blue Mill Rd., is working with Township officials and Post Office officials to try to provide a new permanent home for the Post Office back in the center of New Vernon. Her motivation is to keep the Post Office in the heart of Town, but in a building which would be a functional one for the mail handled there and also in keeping with the historic appearance of the center of Town, a Federally Registered historic District. She has an option to buy a residential property in the commercial zone of the center of New Vernon, and is negotiating with Post Office officials to get this project accepted by them.

Please give Mrs. Frigerio a call, her telephone is 973 267 7532, fax 267 2474, if you can lend any political support to this ambitious project. She is also trying to get popular support for the Township library to relocate into the center of the Town, again a move which would require creative thinking, but if accomplished, would be beneficial to the Township.

Township Committee, Morris Animal Inn Expansion Decision

On November 2, 2001, the Township Committee affirmed the decision of the Board of Adjustment granting a variance to the Morris Animal Inn for a side setback of 88', rather than the required 100' for its proposed expansion. The vote was 4-1; Dinsmore, Lanzerotti, Farrell, and Murray voted to affirm; Prendergast voted against the earlier decision. The Township Committee led by Special Counsel Arnold Mytelka, hired especially to conduct this quasi-judicial proceeding, voted after a 2 ½ hour discussion. The decision was made following a 4-hour hearing on October 31, at which time legal arguments were heard from

Counsel for both the Appellants, a group of 22 Township residents headed by Peter and Susan Deeks of Sand Spring Rd, and the Appellees, Walt and Marianne Morris, also Township residents, proprietors of the Animal Inn. Despite the work day scheduling of 9AM, both meetings were attended by over 100 residents, an estimated 150 attendees at the Wednesday meeting alone.

The Township zoning issue began in 1999, when the Animal Inn filed for expansion of its facility. This decision brings Township zoning proceedings to an end, although the matter is apparently not completely settled, due to uncertainty regarding a Great Swamp Watershed Assn (GSWA) complaint pending at the state DEP.

The Inn is a commercial dog/cat boarding facility located in R-1 zone on Sand Spring Road within the shoulder of the I-287 overpass. Built in 1983 pursuant to a Township grant of a use variance, the business is a long-established local family-run enterprise located originally on James St.

In 1997, the Animal Inn acquired additional land to its rear from the NJDOT; the lot had been first held by the state for construction of I-287, but was deemed surplus and sold to the Morris family. With this additional land, the Morris family applied for an expansion of the building, primarily for the purpose of serving larger dogs. The hearings for the expansion have been heard over the past 3 years.

The proceedings were extended in part due to the fact that a separate hearing, which is still open in Trenton at the NJDEP, started in 2000 to determine the environmental effects and propriety of inadvertent fill activity and site grading that occurred when the facility was constructed in 1983. The activity had been discovered during the course of the present proceeding. Upon its discovery, the Morris application applied to the state for the necessary permits. Following various motions and responses in the State proceeding, the DEP granted the Animal Inn a modified stream encroachment permit, provided unauthorized fill was removed. Fill was in fact removed, and remediation completed. Despite the apparent termination of this matter, the Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) filed a request for reconsideration at the NJDEP on the question. To date no action has been taken on the reconsideration request at the DEP, but it is still pending. In fact, GSWA has continued to pursue this issue, recently bringing a citizen based request for criminal summons under State DEP violations, in Harding Twp Municipal Court, against Walter Morris. This matter was dismissed by the judge in the Harding Court.

Meanwhile, once the variance hearing resumed at the Board of Adjustment in November 2000 the issue became limited to a requested variance

for a minimum north side setback of 88' rather than the 100' setback required. The proposed building complied with the R-1 requirement of maximum building area ratio of 3%. The Board of Adjustment considered all testimony and evidence regarding the impact the proposed expansion on the residential values of the neighborhood, the environmental effects, the traffic on the road, and to the Master Plan of the Township. The Board of Adjustment rendered its decision favorable to the Animal Inn on May 24, 2001. From that decision, the appeal to the Township Committee was taken.

Two Comm. Regular Meeting, October 17, 2001, there was a public hearing and adoption of Ordinance No. 18-01, a bond ordinance authorizing acquisition of Block 51, Lot 34. The property is located on Long Hill Road and is owned by Wildlife Preserves, Inc. There will be \$1,725,000 appropriated for this purchase, of which \$1,642,500 in bonds or notes will be issued, if necessary, to complete the purchase. Other funding sources such as Green Acres and the Township's Open Space Trust may also be utilized.

The resolution supporting the Crossroads Of The American Revolution National Historic Area was adopted. Michael Henderson of the Morristown National Historical Park Service explained that a National Heritage Area is a part of our country's landscape that has been recognized by the United States Congress for its unique contribution to the American experience. It is a 'living landscape' where residents, businesses and organization have formed partnerships with local, state and federal governments to celebrate their heritage and conserve and restore irreplaceable natural and cultural resources. Citizens of NJ and interested local governments and organizations are asked for their participation in these studies. Often, heritage areas result in preservation of natural and historic resources, heritage tourism and compatible economic benefits, and enhanced educational opportunities. Interested citizens are encouraged to participate in the discussions that shape our region by providing information and comments on their vision for the future of the Crossroads of the American Revolution. Beginning in mid-April, the National Park Service will be holding public meetings; a second series of public meetings will take place in Summer 2001 to present findings and seek comments on draft recommendations. If individuals have information that they believe is important to the understanding of the Crossroads of the American Revolution, please contact either Linda Mead, Project Leader, 609-924-4646 linda_mead@nps.gov; or Michael Henderson, Superintendent, Morristown National Historical Park 973-539-2016 ext 201; michael_henderson@nps.gov

Harding Township Shade Tree Advisory Committee

A Summary of Harding Township's Tree Conservation Ordinance pertaining to homeowners follows. This is the text of a letter which is being mailed to all residents.

"The Harding Township Shade Tree Advisory Committee would like to thank the community for its support of the recently adopted Tree Conservation Ordinance. The following summary is supplied in an effort to familiarize Harding residents with the key provisions of the ordinance:

"On developed residential property 3 acres or more in size, a permit is required before a homeowner may cut down any tree 8 inches or greater in diameter which is located in the conservation area. The conservation area is comprised of a 50 foot wide perimeter along the portion of a property which abuts a roadway and a 25 foot perimeter along all other property lines. The 25 foot perimeter includes the "flagstaff" of a flag lot, except for trees designated to be removed to provide driveway access in accordance with an approved permit. Please note that there is no fee for obtaining a tree removal permit for developed residential properties. If any of the following exemptions apply, you will not need to obtain a permit for tree removal:

"Property not located in the R-1 Zone

In the R-1 Zone, all property located outside of the conservation area as defined above

Diseased or hazardous trees

Trees smaller than 8 inches in diameter as measured at a height of 4 ½ feet above the ground

Commercial orchards or nurseries

Trees in public utility rights of way, waste disposal and well system locations

Commercial farm that meets the requirements of the New Jersey Right to Farm Act

"A copy of the entire ordinance (#11-01, 15-01 & 17-01) may be obtained at the Township Administrator's Office at the Harding Township Municipal Building on Blue Mill Road or by sending a request to the Harding Township Shade Tree Advisory Committee at P.O. Box 666, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

"Please feel free to call upon the Shade Tree Advisory Committee with any tree related questions or concerns. The members of the Shade Tree

Advisory Committee are: Caron Menger, Chairman; Susan Deeks; Justine Kovacs; Barbara Keefauver; Ruthe Lovretin; Tracy Toribio, Public Works Foreman; Richard Walter; and Richard Wiedmann, Township Administrator.”

HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

October 11, 200, Old business:

Builder Richard Brown presented his plans for the Limmer application, Block 49, Lots 6 & 7, renovation and remodeling of an old garage. Amish craftsmen will be erecting the timber frame, and vertical siding will be used on the outside of the structure, much in keeping with the style of the late 1700's. Use of this type of siding is historically appropriate, and HTHPC supports these plans.

Architect Pat Burke and Building Committee Chair John Barba presented new plans for the Church of Christ the King application. Some major changes have been made to the plans since the last site inspection. Some of the main changes made are:

- a) the proposed new Parish Life Center (PLC) would now occupy the area where the garage is currently, removing it from the area in front of the rectory;
- b) the set-back from Blue Mill Road has been increased;
- c) the façade of the new building would be reduced;
- d) the new building would sit back from the front of the church;
- e) the new building footprint has been reduced in size to ~4215 feet;
- f) the new plan would allow for a new traffic flow pattern;
- g) handicap accessibility from 2 sides of the new building;
- h) plans call for upgrades to the current walkway between the Church and the Rectory and PLC, as well as a brick or paving stone courtyard between the Rectory and the PLC;
- i) the plan proposes minimal use of outdoor lighting.

Some discussion was held by the HTHPC on the addition of a steeple/cupola on top of the PLC building. Concurrently, improvements would also be made to upgrade Millbrook House and it's 2-car garage as well as the current Parish Hall in the Church basement. Members of the HTHPC noted that the updated plans must include an identification of all new materials to be used, as well as the elevation of Mill Brook House. Other recommendations mentioned included restricted parking on the proposed lane running past the Rectory and the PLC, appropriate signage for this new lane, and supplementing the existing grove of deciduous trees in front of the Rectory, rather than the linear proposal of two lines of trees.

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Superintendent Pallozzi provided a Building Project Update at the meeting on October 8.

- The new flooring for the middle school has arrived and installation will occur according to a schedule that includes classrooms on the weekends and unoccupied spaces during the week, beginning with the elevator tower.
- The new fire alarm panel has been installed.
- Site work continues on the ADA ramps, water tank, parking lot, septic system, and driveways

At its regular meeting on October 29, the Board, among other things, approved non-academic assignments for seventh grade advisors. They also acknowledged, with gratitude, the receipt of a donation in the amount of \$25,000 for capital improvements to the Harding Township school's athletic facilities, given by the Harding Township Recreation Association.

They terminated professional services with URS Architects/Engineers ("URS") dated September 23, 1999, as the work to be done was modified.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Extension of Permit Shotgun Season to include November 28 - December 1, 2001 The Fish and Game Council approved Harding Township's request for a four-day extension of the Permit Shotgun season, permitting hunting in Harding Township simultaneously with the hunt in the Great Swamp, November 28 - December 1, 2001. Only female deer may be hunted during this extension. A formal notice will be published in due course.

Hunter Drives permitted on Township property

The Township Committee, in its session of September 5, 2001, authorized the driving of deer on all Township owned property. The discharge of firearms is not permitted for safety reasons.

Increasing the number of private properties for driving or hunting

Efforts are continuing to increase the number of private properties available for hunting and /or driving. Property owners contacted will be assured that the hunters will present themselves personally, identify the vehicles they will be using and show proof of their liability insurance. Hunters are urged to register with the Township Police Department and to present their registration to property owners they contact.

Food for Community Food Bank

Efforts are continuing to qualify a local meat packer to process venison for the Community Food Bank. This will facilitate for hunters the disposal of deer they do not wish to keep for their personal consumption.

The Environmental Commission on Nov 6, 2001 discussed a report on the wells in Harding Township. The Well Survey documented such things as water levels, well yield and well depths. They currently have documentation on approximately ½ of the wells in town. Further documentation will be forthcoming. Another discussion centered on 'GrassRoots' – a newsletter that the E.C. had published periodically in the past. There is talk of reviving it so that township residents can be made more aware of environmental issues of Harding. The E.C discussed the amended plans for the Christ The King application. There is concern among the members in regard to treatment of water runoff from paved areas.

The Commission is planning to apply for a grant to conduct a Natural Resource Inventory for Harding Township. It's been approximately 10 years since the last NRI was completed.

Finally – congratulations to the Environmental Commission. At the recent ANJEC Congress (Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions) the Harding Township Environmental Commission received an Environmental Achievement Award for a stormwater treatment project at the rest stop on Rt. 287. Members of the Commission developed a system that filtered pollutants out of the water runoff on the paved areas of the rest stop.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, Oct 16:

Application: # 24-01, Schliefer, Millbrook Rd, approved from maximum lot coverage of 10% to the desired 15.7%, Block 17, lot 9.07

#25-01, Greenbaum, Harding Realty, For variance for changes to structure, Board asked that design be simplified and that floor area ratio be reduced to come closer to the permitted 8.5% in the business zone.

#23-01, Travers, 5 Douglas Rd, for a new garage, request for front and side setback variances, site visit date set.

#22-01 Jacobson, Millbrook Rd, for demolition of existing house to build 5,621 ft² home, variances required for % impervious lot coverage and setbacks, lot in both R1 and R4 zone, Board requested that trees be marked as take down, leave, impacted by construction, for site visit. Septic is approved for 4-bedroom house, need to confirm with Bd of Health.

#4-01Wentz, Miller Rd, Block 13, lot 5, to enlarge existing master bedroom and add bath over garage, variance need to modify a non-conforming structure. Amendments to plans accepted.
#11-01, O'Connor, Blue Mill Rd, Block 9, lot 10, request for variance to build to 8.3% total lot coverage, reduced from original application request.

THE PLANNING BOARD, Oct 22

#5-01, DeCarlo, Tempe Wicke and Rt 202, BI 34, lots 1 and 1.01, adjourned to November

#7-01, Limmer, Lees Hill Rd, BI 49, lots 6 & 7, approved from revised drawings.

#8-01, BRB Custom Homes, Glen Alpin Rd, BI 21, lots 10, 10.01&10.02; subdivision with multiple variances. Builder and applicant John Barba wants to save historic house and structures at front of property, which is next to Bayne Park. Debate whether road standards necessary for private driveway to two lots in back of property in order to vote on approval resolution.

#2-97, Healey, BI 5, lot 4, Van Buren Rd (Crestley), request for extension of time for preliminary approval, not granted. Result would mean that any building on the lots subdivided out in the 1998 decision would have to meet any ordinances passed since 1998, including bulk and set back limitations.

The Board also discussed the lot line adjustment to the Ferber property on Meyersville Rd, the former Thorobian Farm, in which some of the structures on the property would be demolished, keeping only one house on 2.4 acres, the rest of the property being proposed for transfer to the Federal Great Swamp.

Building Area limitations in the R-3 and R-4 zones were discussed briefly, but will be covered in more detail at the November 26 meeting.

Civic Association News

Appeal for Annual Dues

You will be receiving a mailing asking for your contribution to the Civic Association in the mail in the near future. The goals of the Association are to foster public interest in government, and to assist in achieving and maintaining good mutual understanding between citizens and public officials, to promote knowledge and appreciation of public problems through non-partisan publicity and to inform, arouse and lead public opinion toward the solution of public problems. ***Please help us achieve these goals by joining as a dues-paying member.***

Time to update the Harding Township Directory

It's time to update the Civic Association Directory of Services. If you have responsibility for a listed service or organization, please take a moment to review and update your listing. Send it along to the Civic Association, either at the postal address -[**PO Box 72, New Vernon, 07976**]. Or **faxed to Thumbnail editor at 973-605-1127. If you want an electronic copy of your organization's current listing in the directory in order to update, please send an EM requesting it to the editor, hesnaj@aol.com.** Please get updates to us by December 31st. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that your organization's listing is correct.

The deadlines for the next 2 issues of the Thumbnail are November 29 and December 28. Call the editor if you have any transmission questions or ideas for articles, 973 540 8911. You should EM or fax articles (typewritten preferred, please) to the Editor, Hesna Pfeiffer, **973 605 1127, email hesnaj@aol.com.** *The Thumbnail is copyrighted and published by the Harding Township Civic Association, and is mailed to every home in Harding Township.*

RECYCLING: Commingled recycling of plastics, aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles and jars, mixed paper at Municipal Garage every Wednesday, 7AM-Noon; and 1st and 3rd Saturdays 11/17, 12/1, 12/15 from 9-12 AM. Residents are requested NOT to leave recyclable materials if the center is closed.

DATES TO REMEMBER, meetings at 8PM, unless as noted; special events in italic

Municipal Court (1 st and 3 rd Tuesday)	6 PM	
Environmental Commission (1 st Tuesday)	7:30 PM	12/4, 1/8
Seniors (2 nd and 4 th Thursday)	11 AM	12/6, 12/20
Planning Board (4 th Monday)	8 PM	11/26, 12/17
Hist Preservation Comm (2 nd Thursday)	8 PM	11/8, 12/13
Board of Health (2 nd Thursday)	8 PM	11/8, 12/13
Board of Education (2 nd and 4 th Monday)	7:30 PM ..	11/26, 12/10, 12/17
Board of Adjustment (3 rd Thursday)	7:30 PM ..	11/15, 12/13, 1/17
Township Committee (1 st and 3 rd Wed)	8 PM	11/28, 12/5, 12/26
Shade Tree (2 nd Monday)	3 PM	11/12, 12/10
Civic Association	7:30 PM	12/3