

October 2003

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Important Township Government announcements

A public meeting to discuss Harding's planning objectives **concerning historic preservation and zoning will be held Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 7:30 p.m.** in the Municipal Building. *The Text of the informational handout for this meeting is included in this issue of Thumbnail, see pages 4-6.*

GRASS PROJECT PUBLIC MEETING, November 5th meeting starting at 7 p.m.

As was reported in the last issue of the Thumbnail, "the township's experiment with allowing grass to grow long on parts of the municipal building site and at Bayne Park began as a citizen's initiative to set a good example for environmental stewardship on municipal land". From the outset, the governing body had planned to evaluate the pros and cons after the grass was mowed in the late summer. To this end, the Township Committee will be conducting a public discussion session at its **November 5th meeting starting at 7 p.m.** at the Municipal Building on Blue Mill Road. All interested persons are encouraged to attend.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN PUBLIC MEETING, OCTOBER 15 See Township Committee report, *infra*.

NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT Soup Contest

The frost is on the pumpkin and it's great weather for soup. It's time once again for the Auxiliary-sponsored "Home-made Soup Contest"

Date: **Sunday, October 19**
Time: 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Place: Fire House, Village Road
Cost: \$5.00 for soup, bread, coffee

Homemade desserts and soda will be available for sale. Vote for your favorite soup. Prizes will be awarded. If you would like to enter a soup in the contest, admission is free, please call Pat O'Reilly (973 301-2151) or Connie Cherrillo (973 539-9383).

CALLING ALL JUNIOR GARDENERS!

New Vernon Garden Club's Jr. Gardeners are BACK! Children from K-4 welcome. First meeting **Tuesday October 21, 3:15 PM-4 PM** at Harding School. Next and other meetings (all Tuesdays) Nov 18, Jan 20, March 16 and May 18, in Fellowship Hall at the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon, from 3:15 to 4:15 PM. Please come join us for an exciting year, questions, call M. J. Turnbull, 973 377 3866 or Martha Coy, 973 538 3265.

Annual Children's Halloween Parade

Date: **Thursday, October 30, at 7 PM. Place: Fire House, Village Road**

All town residents are invited; there will be refreshments and fun for everyone. Prizes will be awarded!

THE LIBRARY

Evening at the Library returns on **Wednesday, October 22 at 7:30 p.m.** in the Courtroom of the Municipal Building. Please join us as noted New Jersey photographic artist, Walter Choroszewski, guides us on a visual journey through ***New Jersey: A Photographic Treasure***, the theme of his latest book. Choroszewski has been traveling the roads of New Jersey with his camera for over 20 years, and we are indeed fortunate to have him share these delights with us, as well as offering tips on digital photography. Copies of his award-winning books and calendars will be available for purchase, with a portion of the proceeds donated to the Library. Children in grades 4 and up are welcome to join their parents. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served.

Children's Programs...Thursday, October 23 at 10:30 a.m. in the Courtroom: *Hallowe'en Storytime and Pumpkin Painting*. Children up to age 5 are invited to come in costume for a parade through the Municipal Building. **Monday, October 27 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.**, *Not So Scary Stories* After-School Program for children in grades K-2: stories, pumpkin painting, and a movie. To register your child, call the Library at 973-267-8000 Ext. 32.

General Mills box tops may be left at the Library for the benefit of the Harding Township School. Please trim the labels before depositing in the box provided. We are happy to assist the School in this worthwhile endeavor.

Are you homebound but eager for something riveting to read? Remember the Library's **Homebound Service**. We will arrange to have books or tapes delivered to your home if you are unable to come to the Library. Let us know your needs by calling 973-267-8000 Ext. 32.

Correction: The **HTL Morning Book Club** meets the **Third Monday of every month** (except July and August), not the 4th Monday at stated last month, at 10 a.m. in the Conference Room opposite the Library. We will provide guidelines to familiarize newcomers with the discussion format. Contact person: Helen Twomey at (973) 292-4728.

Water Symposium: Thursday, October 23rd at 7:30p.m.Presbyterian Church

Fellowship Hall All Harding Township residents are invited to attend a Town Meeting sponsored by the New Vernon Garden Club. What is the source of our water? Why do wells run dry? How do I know if I have enough water in my well? What can be done to make certain our town has enough water? What can we do as citizens? Our expert panelists will address these and other questions: Garry Annibal, Harding Township Health Administrator and Chris Allyn, Chairman of the Environmental Commission, have information and data to share with us about our local supply. Anthony Sblendorio, President of Back to Nature Landscape Associates, will give his views about landscaping for water conservation. Jim Gould, local well expert, will discuss well issues. After their presentations, there will be a panel discussion followed by questions from the audience. Coffee and cookies will be served.

BOARD OF HEALTH - FLU VACCINE CLINIC DATES

The influenza immunization clinics will be held **Thursday October 16** and **Thursday October 30**, 2003 from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the Harding Township Municipal Building. The flu shots are available free of charge to Harding Residents who are at least 65 years old. Also, residents at high risk for flu due to chronic disease or those who are sole caregivers to the elderly or high-risk individuals may get a flu shot. High-risk residents must provide a note from their doctor, authorizing the vaccine, before the Health Department can administer the shot. Residents, 65 years and older, who wish a pneumonia vaccine must call the Health Department at (973) 267-8000, extension 25.

Harding Township Historical Society Antiques Show, November 7, 8, 9.

It's hard to believe that 20 years have passed since the first antiques show and sale to benefit HTHS. Last year we changed our format to a larger tent in order to accommodate a bigger crowd and more antiques. We're doing it again and adding yet more dealers this time around. The preview party takes place on Friday evening, November 7 between 6 and 9 PM. Members of HTHS will receive invitations in the mail with which to make reservations at a charge of \$10 for Friends and \$25 for Patrons. Those without reservations will be asked to pay \$15 per person at the door. On Saturday, November 8 and Sunday, November 9 admission is \$3.50 or \$3 with newspaper coupon and/or show cards.

You'll see many of your favorite dealers as well as several new ones. The Country Store, a favorite source for handmade items and homemade soups, condiments and baked goods, promises to be better than ever. For the first time, an assortment of baskets by Ro and Charlie Gates of Green Village, who regrettably are unable to take a booth this year, will be available for sale. HTHS would appreciate donations of hand made/ home made items such as jams, jellies, knitted scarves, mittens and hats – or anything else that would be appropriate for the Country Store. Please call Joan Humphrey at (973) 425-4108 for assistance and information.

Election Day Book Sale...Tuesday, November 4 from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Pick your candidate, then pick up your books! Get a head start on holiday shopping and leisure reading at the Library's Election Day Book Sale. It's the best bargain in town!

FREE RABIES CLINIC, SATURDAY, November 8, 2003

The Harding Township Department of Health, in cooperation with the NJ Department of Health, will again offer a free Rabies Vaccine Inoculation for cats and dogs at the New Vernon Volunteer Firehouse, at the corner of Village Road and Millbrook Road. **CATS: 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. DOGS: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.** Dogs whose rabies vaccination expires before October 31, 2004 must be vaccinated before a license can be issued for 2004.

<The following text was provided to the Thumbnail. It is the Handout that will be available to the public for the meeting on October 29>

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ZONING IN HARDING TOWNSHIP

Historic Properties Committee

Open Public Meeting: Wednesday, October 29th at 7:30 PM

Harding Township Municipal Building

BACKGROUND

In 1999, the Planning Board established a special task force known as the *Historic Properties Committee* to look into ways in which the township might encourage historic preservation. The committee, chaired by Township Committee member Epsey Farrell, consists of members of the Planning Board, Historic Preservation Commission, and Environmental Commission.

Since 1999, the township has arranged for a comprehensive survey of historic homes and other structures and has enacted an ordinance intended to avert the imminent demolition of historic structures. Work on updating the township's Historic Preservation Plan is currently underway. As these efforts come together, the Historic Properties Committee is now considering ways in which the township's land use ordinances could be amended to encourage the preservation, renovation and rehabilitation of existing historic homes and other structures to avert their demolition and better meet the needs of Harding residents. The purpose of the October 29th meeting is to seek input from the public about ways in which the township's zoning ordinances might be crafted in order to encourage property owners to save historic structures.

HARDING'S PLANNING OBJECTIVES

- The township's Master Plan recognizes the importance of state and national historic preservation initiatives. The township's land use ordinances should encourage the preservation, renovation, and rehabilitation of existing historic homes and structures.
- Harding's R-2, R-3, and R-4 zones recognize some of the existing historic village development patterns in the township with small lot size requirements and "shallow" setback limitations. The R-1 Zone (3-acre min. lot size), however, covers most of the township and currently does not provide flexibility in zoning terms to ensure the protection and viability of historic structures.
- Historic structures built before the zoning ordinances were enacted are "grandfathered" and are considered "nonconforming" if they are not in compliance with current zoning standards. They are allowed to remain, but they may not be enlarged except in conformance with ordinance limitations. The Master Plan encourages flexibility in land use ordinances to mitigate the conflicts between the application of modern zoning standards and the preservation of existing historic structures.

EXAMPLES OF ZONING BARRIERS INHIBITING THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

In 2002, R-1 zoning regulations were amended to exempt *accessory* structures built prior to 1945 from the *building area* limitation except for that portion used as an accessory residence and any new additions. *Building area* refers to the “footprint” of all roofed structures on a lot, whereas *lot coverage* refers to the total impervious coverage on a lot. It is unclear whether the accessory structure exemption has had any impact on historic preservation, because there are many other requirements that still limit the potential for improvements to historic structures and properties.

The following are examples of zoning requirements that, when applied to some historic structures built prior to the enactment of zoning, may render them “nonconforming.” They are “grandfathered” and permitted to remain on the property, but planned improvements can be complicated by the need for a variance. This may lead property owners, builders and developers to consider the demolition of historic structures as an easy alternative to preservation or renovation.

- The R-1 Zone’s 100 foot setback requirement renders historic buildings nonconforming if located close to roads or property lines. Additions require a variance, even if the addition itself can comply with setback requirements.
- Smaller historic homes on lots less than the 3 acre minimum lot size in the R-1 Zone are nonconforming. Additions require a variance.
- Accessory structures are required to be located behind principal structures. Therefore, a variance is required to build a new home behind an existing historic structure such as a barn. A property owner wishing to use a historic structure as an accessory residence will have to apply for a variance if the proposed location for the new house is behind the historic structure. Moreover, an accessory residence is permitted only if the lot is at least 6 acres in size.
- Since all structures on a lot count as part of the limitation on building area (building “footprint”) and lot coverage (impervious coverage), property owners often conclude it is better to demolish the historic structure in favor of new construction. Although pre-1945 accessory structures are exempt from this limitation, their use as an accessory residence and new additions are counted in the calculation of building area.
- Only one single-family dwelling is permitted on a lot with less than 6 acres. Some oversized lots (typically 4 to 6 acres) contain historic structures, many of which are quite small by today’s standards. These properties cannot be subdivided without variances to permit new construction on a conventional lot while preserving the historic house on a proportionately smaller lot.

DISCUSSION POINTS

By modern standards, many of Harding's historic homes are considered small and may lack some of the amenities that families seek in homes today. Some are in need of upgraded systems or other significant repairs and renovations. Many residents and potential purchasers may become discouraged about the prospect of obtaining a variance for home improvements to meet their needs. However, the township could provide special consideration for historic structures in order to encourage property owners, developers, and builders to retain them and avoid their demolition. Following are a series of questions being explored by the Historic Properties Committee.

Should the township permit, without a variance, **additions to historic structures that do not conform to front setback** requirements, if certain criteria are met? *For example, if the addition is to be located no closer to the road than the existing structure.*

Should the township **exempt historic accessory structures** from certain zoning requirements? *For example, historic accessory structures could be exempted from the requirement that all accessory structures must be located behind the principal residence.*

Should the township permit a historic structure to be converted to or used as an **accessory residence** on the same lot as a primary residence **regardless of the size of the lot**? *For example, accessory residences established in historic structures could be exempted from the R-1 Zone requirement that the lot size must be at least 6 acres.*

Should the township permit, without a variance, a historic structure to be used as a **rental accessory residence** as a means of encouraging historic preservation? *For example, accessory residences established in historic structures could be exempted from the current R-1 Zone requirement that the residence only be used by family members, domestic employees or temporary guests.*

Should the township permit, without a variance, the **subdivision** of a large lot that contains a historic home, such that the **historic home remains on a smaller than required lot** if approval is obtained for a compliant septic system and the lot created for a new home conforms to the zoning ordinance? *For example, a 5-acre lot with a small historic dwelling might be subdivided so that the historic dwelling is situated on a 1.5-acre lot and a 3.5-acre lot is created for a new home.*

Should the township enact **special restrictions** to ensure that the streetscape is preserved **in Historic Districts**? *For example, the township could consider restrictions on lighting, signs, and the height of new structures and additions to buildings in Historic Districts.*

<This is the end of the Text>

TOWNSHIP NEWS

Township Committee

<Thumbnail is indebted to the Observer Tribune, Julie Lange, reporter, for much of the following report>

At the September 3 meeting, Phase II of a redevelopment plan for the village of New Vernon was introduced.

The plan identified proposed sites for a post office and library and addressed issues such as wastewater management, traffic and parking as well as incentives to encourage combined residential and commercial use of buildings in the redevelopment district, which includes 13 lots on the east and west sides of Village Road.

The plan identified a proposed library site on township land behind the former Coach Works site and just west of the Tunis-Ellicks House on Village Road. The Coach Works site is identified in the plan as the best location for a new post office because of its size and location in the village area. According to the plan, a private developer has prepared a concept plan showing how the site could accommodate a post office.

The plan also recommended the construction of a shared village parking lot to avert the need for large on-site lots, and it suggested pedestrian walkways and other traffic-calming techniques to help preserve the quiet, village character of the district. Among the nonresidential uses to be permitted in the village district are professional offices for financial planners and landscape architects, a senior citizens facility, retail shops for services such as hairdressers and barbers, tailors, florists, interior decorators art dealers and galleries, antique stores, delicatessens and coffee shops with seating limited to 30 seats.

Among the pivotal barriers to development in the village has been the limited space on existing lots to accommodate upgrades to septic systems in order to bring them up to code. The redevelopment plan calls for township support of private initiatives that lead to innovative wastewater solutions, such as shared systems that serve more than one use or property. To encourage continued residential land use, the plan suggests that the township consider amending existing B-1 zoning provisions to allow apartments and boarding in commercial buildings.

There have been objections to the Redevelopment Plan.

Mrs. Harriet Hayes of Village Road and other residents have requested that the Post Office location be kept at Township Hall, as they believe the early AM mail truck deliveries are obnoxious. Mayor Murray has said Township officials are sympathetic, but that the Post Office would serve as town focal point and preserve a sense of community. In any event the PO had been located at the Village Rd site for many years prior to its emergency relocation due to the building deterioration.

A group of New Vernon residents have formed a group called the Village Preservation Committee and they have a long list of concerns about the redevelopment plan now under consideration by the Township Committee. In his Sept. 21 letter to the Township Committee on behalf of the Village Preservation Committee, Chairman Bruce Wild of Village Road wrote that the current plan, as written, would destroy the character

of the village. Among the original stated objectives of the redevelopment plan was to preserve the historic and rural character of the village in a way that promotes its viability while ensuring consistency with the Township's Master Plan. Among the issues raised by the residents is the resulting increase in population density within the district and the burden that growth might place on the water supply. Wild also raised concerns about wastewater management and storm water runoff in his letter. "Of the 10.25 acres, over six acres will be non-pervious," Wild wrote. "Parking for families/businesses alone could create a need for 50 parking spaces, not including parking for customers, patrons of the library or people using the post office."

The letter also raised concerns that the proposed library and post office designs are out of scale with the character of the village and that building the library on the proposed site would not allow room for either the library or the adjacent Harding Township Historical Society to expand. Other issues cited by the committee include increased traffic, both by pedestrians and vehicles, as well as more noise, light and litter pollution and a resulting impact on property values. Jane MacDougall of Millbrook Road, one of the committee members, said the Township Committee needs to be made aware that not everyone favors the redevelopment plan as it is currently written.

Mayor Murray has responded that the redevelopment process had been initiated because "the village was becoming a mini-banking and real estate sales center, with a derelict building at its center, one of its major historic structures under severe pressure and the post office was in limbo." Murray wrote that many residents, including those in the village, had been asking what officials were going to do about the village and in spite of the township's best efforts, "it had proven to be impossible to use a piecemeal, let-the-market-work approach." Murray said in his letter that contracts have been signed with three property owners in the village to allow private development initiatives to move forward, but only after Phase I of the redevelopment plan had already been enacted following extensive public comment. "We are working very hard to strike an effective balance with the competing opportunities and challenges that the redevelopment process offers," Murray wrote.

Murray also responded that he did not expect the noise level in the Village to change appreciably and that a new post office in the village should have no more potential for noise than when it was located there for more than 50 years, up until a few years ago when it was moved into trailers behind the municipal building. Although redevelopment is likely to draw more people into the village, he believes that most people welcome that vibrancy. Harding has lighting standards in place and new standards, which are more considerate of surrounding neighbors, are now under consideration by the Planning Board. He acknowledged that successful redevelopment will increase traffic in the village by Harding residents, but said a pedestrian and vehicular access subcommittee was working on access and safety issues and had come up with some innovative plans for improving access, decreasing vehicle speeds and increasing pedestrian safety. The proposed redevelopment ordinances limit business hours to not

later than a 9 p.m. closing time.

Regarding citizens' concerns about overburdening water supplies and excess wastewater and runoff, Murray wrote that almost all of the plans for changed or increased use of sites involve businesses, which typically use less water than residences. He also said the design criteria within the village would be guided by constraints concerning wastewater handling, potable water supplies, storm water management and the ability of the site to accommodate specific improvements.

Murray also said Harding's subsurface sewage disposal standards are more stringent than state standards, in some areas by a considerable amount. With regard to concerns that proposed library and post office buildings would be out of scale with the character of the village, Murray said officials are committed to seeking substantial advice from the historical society during the design process.

Murray said he encouraged all citizens not only to offer suggestions and recommendations but also to attend the Oct. 15 meeting on the proposed redevelopment ordinance

At the **Sept 17** meeting, the group "Concerned Citizens of Pleasant Plains and Lees Hill Road", represented by Brian Mathews, addressed the Township Committee on the concerns of the recently formed Home Owners Association, about the possible redevelopment of a portion of 51 acres of land owned by Lynn (Jayson) Kurdzialak, bounded by Lee's Hill Road and Pleasant Plains Road. According to Mathews, the United States Fish and Game [Department] who manages the Great Swamp Wildlife refuge is negotiating to purchase the land which includes three subdivided lots, one of which is 15 acres with a four bedroom home and several out buildings. According to Mathews, Fish and Game is considering plans to build a new visitor center and administrative offices on the lot, if they are successful in purchasing the property. Because the purchaser is a Federal agency, they are not subject to local zoning and ordinances. Mr. Mathews said the Home Owners Association was concerned about the possible negative impact on the area of such a development and asked the Township Committee to become involved.

Mayor Murray responded that the Township Committee would continue to monitor the situation and work at maintaining a good dialogue with the Great Swamp. He added, however, that the buyer and seller were free to transfer the property and until the transaction closed and plans for any redevelopment were made public, there was little direct action that could be taken.

Planning Board, Sept 22, 2003

The Redevelopment Plan was discussed and the Historic Properties Committee reported on its activity. Both items are covered separately elsewhere.

HARDING TWP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, September 4, 2003

- **Allocco, Block 19, Lot 11**—HPC recommended the use of clapboard siding and stain treatment. HPC had no other comments on the building materials and the project as proposed. HPC is concerned that the historic building be maintained and not neglected once it is vacant. Owners confirmed their intent to find a use for the structure.
- **Jepson, Block 47, Lot 1**—Owner intends to add a second floor and a three-car garage. The applicant stated that the original structure was built to accommodate a second floor. HPC recommended the use of clapboard siding and cedar shake roof, in keeping with neighboring historic properties. HPC is concerned with the streetscape and the visibility of the building from both Lee's Hill and Bailey's Mill Roads. It was recommended that additional landscape be planted to buffer the view of the garage seen from Bailey's Mill Road when approaching Lee's Hill Road. The applicant indicated this suggestion would be considered.
- **Smith, Block 47, Lot 3**—The original home on this lot was built in 1870 but a previous owner compromised the exterior's historic integrity during a renovation and expansion. The property is now classified as non-contributing but is surrounded by contributing properties. HPC has significant concerns about the elevation of the proposed addition, its proximity to the neighboring historic properties, and its impact on the Logansville Historic District streetscape. The proposed addition compounds the problem of the poorly placed prior expansion. Further, there appears to be inadequate landscaping shielding the structure from the adjacent lots. HPC anticipated that the plans would be revised after the site inspection and requested a review of the final plans.
- **Eichler, Block 21, Lot 3**—A fence was built closer to the road than the applicable zoning ordinances permit. HPC found that the placement of the fence is consistent with the placement of fences in early rural communities that were close to the road to keep farm animal from escaping.
- **Nelson, Block 4, Lot 30**—Owner proposes to add a rear deck to home. HPC had no comment on this application because the subject property does not involve a historic structure and is not in the Silver Lake Historic District.
- **Horstmann, Block 48.01, Lot 1.01**—Owner proposes to take property off of one lot and add it to another. A six-acre lot containing a historic structure would result. HPC thought that the requested subdivision might allow for a future subdivision that could place the historic home in danger of demolition. That event would negatively impact the historic district. HPC requested review of further changes to the proposed subdivision as well as subsequent applications

- for building permits or variances.
- **Kurdzialek, Block 52, Lots 3 and 3.02**—Applicant proposes to change the lot line in order to accommodate a well. HPC had no comment on the specific request but noted that the original 50+-acre property that was subdivided contains several 18th and 19th century buildings and contributes greatly to the rural streetscape at the end of Pleasant Plains Road. Block 52, Lot 3 has a cluster of interrelated historic buildings dating back to 1800.
 - **Lancor, Block 55, Lot 12**—Owner proposes to change property line between two lots. HPC noted the proposed change might allow the building of up to three new homes and this new development could have a significant impact on the adjacent old homes in the Green Village Historic District. HPC requested that it, the Shade Tree Commission and the Environmental Commission continue to review all future site and building plans for this and adjacent properties.
 - **Zenker, Block 5, Lot 7**—HPC had no comment on this application for a minor subdivision because the property does not contain a historic structure and is not in a historic district.
 - **Addition to July report: Cusano, Block 49, Lot 11.02**—Owner applied for the demolition of the main house (built in 1845) and an outbuilding (built over 100 years ago) on a 3.3 acre property. The house has been determined to be a significant component of the historic and rural streetscape and was documented as a contributing property in the recent Historic Properties Survey (2003). HPC was presented with no compelling documentation that the existing house is structurally unsound or cannot comply with applicable building codes or that continued preservation and renovation is economically unfeasible. HPC noted that the existing house could be expanded or another residence could be built behind it if a variance were granted to allow the use of the original house as a carriage house or guesthouse. HPC indicated it would support the application for such variances if the plans retained the current home and maintained the historic character of the property. HPC denied the certificate of appropriateness and recommended that the issuance of a demolition permit be postponed for nine months. HPC will work with the owners and may consult with civic groups and public agencies to see if there is some way to preserve these historic buildings. In addition, HPC noted that a notice of proposed demolition must be posted on the premises of the building in a location that is clearly readable from the street both until a demolition permit is issued and during the entire demolition process.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

IMPORTANT BOE MEETING DATES: October 13, Technology Curriculum Progress Report/Review of Metropolitan Achievement Test Analysis; October 27, Quality Assurance Annual Report/Bullying Program.

Specific reports from the Superintendent and the Business Administrator on

district, facility and resolution updates, please refer to the school's official website:
www.hardingtwp.k12.nj.us.

SEPTEMBER 8 The BOE had a planning session for their Kickoff Meeting to be held on September 22, 2003. The goal is to invite the community to participate in the educational process by contributing and sharing ideas. At this meeting the BOE will discuss their goals for 2003-2004. The Board is also reviewing its Long Range Facilities Plan and developing a list of capital projects to be addressed over the next several years. The Board is inviting community members to be involved with the formation of a new Facilities Advisory Committee. For more information, call Dr. Pallozzi or Mrs. Canose at 973-267-6398.

Public participation involved several Harding Twp. School parents who expressed concern regarding buses arriving late at school. Mrs. Canose explained that the transportation contract was put out for bid in the spring and Laidlaw was the only company to submit a bid. However, the bus company is contractually obligated to arrive at the school at least 5 minutes before the start of school. Mrs. Canose is addressing this concern with Laidlaw and will keep parents informed of her progress in resolving the problem. Parents also expressed concern with the candy/unhealthy snack items offered in the cafeteria. A survey has been circulated to the parents and when the results are in, Mrs. Canose will have a meeting with Dowling Food Management to make any recommended changes.

SEPTEMBER 22 The meeting focused on the Vision Statement which outlined the Board's goals for 2003-2004. The objectives are as follows (not in order of importance): 1. Pass monitoring objectives. (The State will inspect the school for issues of curriculum, safety and buildings and grounds). The Board will take steps to insure that the school passes inspection. 2. Develop a professional learning community. (Assist teachers in being more effective through supportive conditions, action plans and feedback.) 3. Develop and implement a plan to meet facility needs. (Develop and implement an Energy Conservation Plan and identify buildings and grounds needs and then find a way to fund these items under the current budget caps.) 4. Implementation of differentiated instruction strategies. (In compliance with the State's "No Child Left Behind" mandate. Teachers will be assisted in developing strategies to meet the need of diverse students; making the work equally interesting, important and engaging to each student.) NCLB Act grant will be used to fund workshops and conferences. 5. Restore Free Balance to a minimum of 3%. (This is the amount over the budget kept in reserve for emergencies. Minimum is 3%, maximum is 6%.) Ways to reach this goal were discussed.

Reports: Mary Jane Canose developed a comprehensive school energy plan which will be submitted to the Department of Education.

The EPA has issued new regulations regarding wells. The school is now required to hire a certified operator. Agra Environmental and Laboratory Services were hired.

The Board created a position of teacher-in-charge (for when both the superintendent and principal are not at the school).

A job description for "Department Chairperson" was approved. The Purchasing Manual for 2003-04 was approved.

The tuition contract with Madison Public School District was approved for 2003-04 at a total cost of \$1,260,515.

The Board approved the emergency removal of mold in elementary classrooms.

AUGUST 18: Dr. Palozzi reported the respective staff committees completed the summer curriculum work in mathematics and language arts. These committees reviewed and analyzed the results of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests that were administered to students in grades 2, 5, 6 and 7 this past spring. The reports will be used during the year to reinforce strengths and remedial areas of concern.

Reports: Two proposals were received to upgrade the ball fields.

The outline for the planned roof replacement project was reviewed.

Out-of-District placement for 2003-04 school year was approved at the Montgomery Academy at a cost of \$36,106. Personnel changes were announced.

The Board approved the school policy for harassment. Amerada Hess Corporation was awarded the contract for firm transportation gas. Johnson Controls, Inc. will renovate eight unit ventilators in the Middle School. The funds for this project will come out of the capital reserve account. Dowling Food Service Management, Inc. will manage the cafeteria lunch program for 2003-04 school year.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Application #5-03 - Jepsen - Building area is currently over the limit. This is a re-submitted application and lot coverage has been reduced. House is in an historic district and is surrounded by other historic houses. New plan was accepted as proposed. Application approved. Property located at corner of Baileys Mill and Lees Hill Rd, BI 47, lot 1.

#10-03 - Neil and Leslie O'Donnell - Postponed.

#17-03 - Sara and Ralph Ribiero - Plans were reduced by 1/2 from prior submission. The footprint is now 4,362 sq. ft., which includes the shed and pool house. Application approved. Anthony Wayne Rd, BI 26.01, lot 25

#18-03 - Greg and Susan Voetsch - This is a flag lot - 3.2 acres. Issue is lot coverage, which is currently 14.2%. Plan reduces circular driveway so that coverage will be 13.253%. In addition, there will be dry wells. Application approved. Pleasantville Rd, BI 14, lot 8.04

#16-03 - Terri and Kurt Eichler - This variance is for a fence bordering Sand Spring Road. The house was renovated in 1998. There was an existing split rail fence and row of hemlocks. Hemlock trees were removed (diseased and too big). The new fence is now in the trunk line of old hemlocks. Height of fence is 4 1/2 feet at rails. Issue is

distance of fence from centerline of the road. The fence should be 25 feet from centerline of the road - it is 17.9 feet. There is also a question as to the definition of the "center of the road" that is used to determine the measurement. Site inspection scheduled.

#19-03 - Bradley and Beth Smith - Applicant wants to put an addition on to the back of the house. Currently there is a deck in this space. Applicant needs more space and would use addition for a dining area with a bathroom on the 2nd level. Site inspection scheduled.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION, Sept 9, 2003

REPORTS:

- Well Survey-Chris Allyn reported that additional files were found. The final report has been completed and will be submitted to the State with a request for the grant funds. Chairman Allyn reviewed Township well statistics with Comm. members. The members found the information very interesting and helpful.
- Recycling-Nothing new to report
- Model EIS-Ted Cotton reported that his final report is being prepared for submission to the State. Connolly Assoc. is requesting payment for their services. Ted will contact Rich Weidman regarding the status of this bill.
- NRI Update-A draft will be submitted to the Planning Board on 9/22/2003, for review. When approved, it will be included in the Township's Master Plan. It was found that water is the most important issue in future planning for Harding Twp., both ground water resources and surface water. Comm. members congratulated Chairman Allyn on a job well done. A motion was made and seconded to present this NRI draft to the Planning Board with some minor changes.
- Subcommittee on Fencing Issues-Mike McCormick reported that there have been some more new fences erected along the Twp.'s roadways. It was suggested that these locations be shared with the Wildlife Management Committee.
- Planning Board-Block 55, Lot 10, Lancor, Meyersville Road Green Village. The Planning Board heard the application for a lot line adjustment. It is expected that a second application will be submitted for a two-lot sub-division. These new lots have extensive wetlands. Block 48-01, lots 1 & 1.07, Lot line change has been requested so each lot meets the current codes.
Block 52, lot 3, Kurdzialek-Concerns have been raised by a neighbor regarding proposed plans to add the property to the Great Swamp National Park and convert the home and barns into a Visitor's Center and educational buildings. The neighbor doesn't feel that the surrounding roadways are sufficient for the additional traffic these kinds of changes would bring.
New Vernon Village Re-development-The Planning Board is drafting a plan for

designs etc. There will be a public meeting, open for discussion, of several parts of these plans.

ANJEC Smart Growth grant-This grant has been approved for \$22,000. The Township must match this amount.

Board of Adjustment-The O'Donnell's will return before the Bd. with new plans for their addition. No comments were deemed necessary for the other plans reviewed. (Ribeiro, Voetsch, Eichler, Smith)

OLD BUSINESS:

- Township Easement Monitoring-David Dietz reported on the Conservation Easement on James Street. He stated that they found the brook water to be very clean. Roger Greenway reported on visiting the easement bordering on Silver Brook. The monitors found that new neighbors to this property needed to be brought up to date regarding the use of the lands, and how they were to be maintained. David Dietz will follow-up on the Silver Lake easement on the former Matthews' property on Blue Mill Road.

Harding Tree Conservation Commission, No report this issue

The New Vernon Volunteer Fire Dept. held its annual Country Auction on Sept 27. The Fire Dept. would like to thank all those who volunteered countless hours to make this event a success. Thanks as well to all those who donated and purchased items to support your Fire Department and First Aid Squad. Please keep in mind that we are a totally volunteer organization, and we always welcome new members. An opportunity for you to volunteer on a continuing basis is available by joining the New Vernon Volunteer First Aid Squad. If you would like to learn more about the NVVFAS, please call 973 538 7168 to leave a message. One of the members will call you and answer your questions.

Correction: **The Presbyterian Church's correct telephone is 973 538 8394**, which was incorrect in the September Thumbnail. Copies of a recently published book, [A History of the Presbyterian Church of New Vernon](#) by George E. Chorba, the church's 17th pastor, are available through the church office at no charge. **Call 973 538 8394** if you would like a copy. The book covers the early settlement and history of the community from the 1700's to the present. Photographs provided by the Harding Twp Historical Society are reproduced as well as Edwin Murgatroyd's "Annals of the Village", a pamphlet published in 1893.

Civic Association Call for New Members!

Please consider participation in the Civic Association- we welcome new members to the executive committee, which covers and reports on civic affairs. We meet monthly, and also make a commitment to cover a Township meeting, sometimes as

infrequently as bimonthly, sometimes semi-monthly, take notes on the proceedings, then send in a write up to the Thumbnail. By covering and disseminating information on the workings of the Township government, you serve others who cannot attend meetings, but who are vitally interested. You can call Lon Murov, 973 326 9394 or Hesna Pfeiffer, 973 538 0020, or write The Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976. You can also come to one of our meetings, usually the first Monday of the month, at 7:30 PM in Town Hall.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT THREE ISSUES OF THE THUMBNAIL ARE October 30 November 29 and December 29, respectively. If you have any information to be included, please send to the editor, Hesna Pfeiffer. Most preferred format is by E-mail, **email hesnaj@aol.com**, as we don't have to re-type, but fax is also acceptable, **(Please note change of numbers):** to the editor's **fax, 973 540 8911**. You can send items early! Call the editor if you have any transmission questions, **973 538 0020**. *The Thumbnail is copyrighted and published by the Harding Township Civic Association, and is mailed to every home in Harding Township.* Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are posted on our Website- check it out: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>.

RECYCLING: Commingled recycling of plastics, aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles and jars, mixed paper, corrugated cardboard and household batteries at Municipal Garage every Wednesday, 7AM-Noon, (7AM to 9AM self service); and 1st and 3rd Saturdays 10/18, 11/8, 11/22, 12/6, 12/27 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.

Municipal Court (1 st and 3 rd Tuesday)	6 PM	
Environmental Commission (1 st Tuesday)	7:30 PM	10/7, 11/4, 12/2
Seniors (2 nd and 4 th Thursday at Pres Church)	11 AM.....	
Planning Board (4 th Monday)	8 PM.....	10/27, 11/24, 12/15
Hist Preservation Comm (1st Thursday)	8 PM	11/6, 12/4, 1/8
Board of Health (2 nd Thursday)	8 PM	10/9, 11/13, 12/11
Board of Education (2 nd and 4 th Monday)	7:30 PM....	
Board of Adjustment (3 rd Thursday)	7:30 PM....	10/16, 11/20, 12/18
Township Committee	8 PM.....	10/15, 11/5, 11/19
Shade Tree (2 nd Monday)	3 PM	10/13, 11/10
Municipal Alliance (3 rd Wed at Harding Schl)	8:45 AM	10/1
Harding Twp Civic Association	7:30 PM	10/13, 11/4, 12/1