

**November 2003**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Important Township Government announcement**

**REDEVELOPMENT PLAN expected to be voted at meeting November 19.** See Township Committee report, infra.

**THE LIBRARY**

**Evening Hours Are Back...**Beginning in November, the Library will once again have extended hours on Thursdays: from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m.

As a convenience to our patrons, the Library has ordered an all-weather book return bin. This will soon be in place by the parking lot entrance to the Municipal Building.

**Events for Children...***Thanksgiving Story Time* for ages up to five: Wednesday, November 12 and Thursday, November 20 at 10:30 a.m. Thanksgiving stories, songs, and a craft for the holiday table. A *Yu-Gi-Oh After-School Program* for grades K-3 on Monday, November 17, 4-5 p.m. Time Warp Comics from Cedar Grove will be on hand to explain the game. (Please don't bring trading cards to the program.) Parents are welcome. *Talk It Up! Book Club* for grades 3-5 will begin on Monday, December 1 at 4 p.m. when *Niagara Falls, or does it?* will be discussed. Copies are available at the Library to check out.

All programs will be held in the Court Room of the Municipal Building, and registration is required. Call the Library at **973-267-8000 Ext 32** to register or for more details.

**The Police Department** is participating in the Seventh Annual Coat Drive for Jersey Cares. The drive started on November 1, 2003 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.

**Thanksgiving Service** On Thanksgiving Eve, **Wednesday November 26 at 7 PM**, the entire community is invited to an interfaith service of Thanksgiving. The service will be held at First Presbyterian Church. Ministers and lay leaders of the Christ the King Church, The Green Village United Methodist Church and the First Presbyterian Church will lead the service; a community choir will provide special music. All are invited, all are welcome. "Come Ye Thankful People, Come!"

**CAN YOU HELP A LOCAL BOY SCOUT?**

Greg Fullenkamp, Sand Spring Rd, of Harding Troop 43, is working to become an Eagle Scout, and is seeking help in his intended Eagle project: "The project that I

intend to accomplish is to complete the mapping and marking of the horse trails in Harding Township for the Bridle Path Association. This will be done using GPS units to record the trails and by posting trail markers. The project will commence in late November, and will be carried out over a number of weekends. I am writing this letter to advise the public in Harding Township that I will need volunteers and GARMIN GPS units to successfully complete the project. If anyone thinks they could assist me in either volunteering or lending me a GPS unit over weekends, please call me at 973-889-5874, or email me at sunrise4@patriotmedia.net. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Greg”

### **All Harding Residents are Welcome at the Harding Township School**

The Harding Township School's PTO invites the Harding community to our annual **HOLIDAY BAZAAR**. Please join us on **Saturday, December 6 from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. in the Matthew C. Sellitto Gymnasium** for a great day of shopping as well as fun activities for your kids. There will be jewelry, scarves, shoes, Tupperware/Party Lite products, toys, crafts, American Girl Doll clothes, stationary, hand knitted children's hats, mittens and blankets, children's books, baskets, Pampered Chef products, wonderful gifts made by local artist Tyne Graham, chocolates, adult clothing and much, much more. Santa will be arriving a little early this year for pictures, music and a whole room full of children's activities. Don't miss out, last year's sale was a solid success and that's why we've extended the sale hours. We have a limited amount of vendor tables still available so if you're interested in participating or have questions call Lisa Palazzetti at 973-984-7579 or Beth Pallone at 973-425 9425.

### **SAVE THIS DATE TOO! Saturday, March 27, 2004 for the PTO's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual FASHION SHOW & AUCTION.**

This year's theme is "Spring Times: Yesterday and Today" that will be presented at The Springbrook Country Club. Please watch for more information regarding the show. Our fundraising arm of the event will be reaching out to the community as well. It is our hope that you will attend and also support our children by donating items, money or services to the important cause. Last year's fashion show raised \$50,000 and those funds directly benefited our children and our school which can only lead to making Harding a stronger and more vibrant community. More to come in December...

### **Report on the 9/11 Memorial Dedication**

About 300 citizens attended the special dedication ceremony on October 26<sup>th</sup> held at the Memorial Park on Village Rd. The ceremony was a culmination of many individuals' efforts. Local resident and sculptor Peter Allen created the commission of the two World Trade Center welded steel benches and also donated all of his time for creating the bronze sculpture of the four Harding victims of the 9/11 attack mounted above a plaque on a large stone. Lisa Holck, chair of the Township 9/11 Committee, worked with both Peter Allen and Justine Kovacs to complete this project and integrate it

into the Park.

The event symbolized the way Harding comes together at special times. A Harding family initiated the project by donating the cost of the commissioned benches. The Harding P.B.A. raised funds for the bronze foundry work and the bronze plaques. The Civic Association led the way in reaching out to the community to raise funds that established the Harding Township September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial Fund. It paid for the wheel chair access path and the cost of the dedication event. The Friends of Trees funded trees and plantings around the Memorial. The Garden Club paid for the Landscape Architect and the blue stone patio.

Participants in the ceremony included Harding Township Police and New Vernon Fire and Rescue Squad, speeches by the Mayor, John Murray Matthew T. Sellitto, a representative of the families, and Lisa Holck. The Harding Township School Band and 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus contributed their musical talents to this special occasion. The dedication of the many people who worked towards this project and the valor of the families who withstood the years of pain from losing their loved ones stood out in the speeches, prayers and songs.

Harding's Memorial Park, that previously was used primarily during Memorial Day Ceremonies and for viewing the World War Two Veterans Memorial, will now have greater use with the addition of lawns, plantings and trails that lead to a new site for reflection at the 9/11 Memorial. Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup> 2003 will be remembered along with the smiling faces of the children, siblings, wives parents, and relatives of the deceased, mixing with all those of the spectators to make the site's inauguration extremely powerful.

### **HARDING COMMUNITY INVITED TO SCHOOL BUDGET PLANNING SESSIONS**

The Harding Township Board of Education will begin the 2004-2005 budget planning process at its work session on November 10. Over the next several months, various aspects of the budget will be discussed and analyzed during each work session. In preparation for the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing and the April 20<sup>th</sup> School Board Election, the Board is hopeful that the public will attend and participate in the budget development process. The current schedule of dates and topics for discussion are:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Monday, December 8 | Fixed costs – what are they and how can they be controlled?       |
| Monday, January 12 | Review of departmental requests – prioritizing needs              |
| Monday, February 9 | Discussion of the tentative budget – bringing the pieces together |
| Monday, March 8    | Informal presentation of the proposed budget                      |

These meetings will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Media Center on the second floor of the Middle School Building on Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon.

The Finance Committee of the Harding Township Board of Education is also forming a budget advisory committee to foster greater public understanding of the needs

of the school system and more public involvement in the budgeting process. This committee will first learn about the diverse needs of the school system, and will then provide its insights to the school administration and the Finance Committee as they establish priorities for the 2004-2005-school budget. Any Harding resident who is interested in participating and can attend two or three evening meetings over the next few months is invited to contact the Business Office at 973-267-6398 x 114. The Board will determine the final list of members and name the committee at its meeting on November 24.

### **Wildlife Management Committee Report**

2003 – 2004 Hunting Season The dates of the Hunting Season are as follows:

Fall Bow and Arrow:	Sept. 6 – Oct. 24
Permit Bow and Arrow:	Oct. 25 – Nov. 22 and Nov. 27 – Dec. 31
Permit Shotgun:	50 days between Nov. 24 – Feb. 14
Six-Day Firearm Season:	Dec. 8 – Dec. 13
Permit Muzzleloader Season:	62 days between Nov. 24 – Feb. 14
Winter Bow and Arrow:	Jan. 1 – Feb. 14

#### Extra four days of hunting during Great Swamp Hunt

The Fish and Wildlife Service once again gave Harding Township a special permit to hunt in Harding during the Great Swamp Hunt. The special permit allows *four days of permit shotgun hunting November 19 – 22, 2003*, in Harding Township, for antler less deer only. Participating hunters must possess a Zone 13 shotgun permit and a valid 2003 firearm license. Hunters are required to check in their deer at New Vernon Coach & Motor Works, 960 Mt. Kemble Avenue, in New Vernon, NJ. Upon checking in the deer, a supplemental transportation tag will be issued to the hunter, allowing the harvest of additional deer.

#### Do not feed the deer! It attracts them to your ornamental plantings.

In prior years it was felt that feeding the deer during the winter reduces their need to resort to ornamental plantings for their food. The Fish and Wildlife Service has now pointed out to us that this approach is counter-productive. ***Deer are naturally browsers, and they will feed on everything else they see on the way to the supplemental food source!***

### **TOWNSHIP NEWS**

#### **Township Committee**

At the Wednesday October 15 meeting of the Harding Township Committee, a standing room crowd filled the meeting room at town hall. Several upcoming meetings that might be of interest to those in attendance included **December 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Gathering to honor veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War at 7:00 PM at Town Hall.

**Redevelopment Plan** Sensing that most in attendance were interested in discussing the

ordinances concerning the New Vernon Village Redevelopment Plan, Mayor Murray reordered the meeting agenda to discuss these issues first. The Mayor began with a brief overview of the Redevelopment Plan process that formally began with the Planning Board's consideration of the Redevelopment Plan in the context of the Master Plan in September 2002. Mayor Murray stressed that there has been much discussion of the Redevelopment Plan with citizens at numerous breakfast meetings and that the Township Committee and other groups involved have tried to make the process as open and inclusive as possible. The Mayor then referred to a handout prepared by Susan Kimball, Township Planner, and described the goals and vision of the Redevelopment Plan and the need to now further refine and define the plan.

He then asked Ms. Kimball, to describe the Ordinances that were being voted on. Ms Kimball began by reminding the audience that the Township had adopted Ordinance No. 6-03 in May 2003 which laid out the goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan and that Ordinances 18-03 and 19-03 were intended to revise the zoning in the B-1 district and offer specific guidance for the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan.

#### **Susan Kimball's Report**

Ms. Kimball summarized and highlighted the key elements of the Redevelopment Plan by observing that two sites were under consideration for a new Post Office, the so called "Coach Works" or "Ortman's Garage" site and the "Cooke property." She noted that the new Library (to be built with privately raised funds) was to be located on Township land behind the Coach Works adjacent to the Tunis-Ellicks House. She explained that the revisions to the B-1 zoning district proposed in Ordinance 19-03 would impact 13 properties in the Village including the Township property and been designed to promote were residential and business redevelopment of properties in keeping with the goals and vision of the Redevelopment Plan. The proposed Ordinance would broaden the allowable business uses in the Village, by allowing, for example, a coffee shop or sandwich shop where patrons could sit and eat, a barbershop and an art gallery. The Ordinance would not allow full service restaurants or "fast food restaurants," and would prohibit warehouses and the outdoor display of products. In order to encourage the retention of historic structures, the Ordinance would increase from 15% to 20% the allowable floor space limit (percentage of lot size) if an historic structure was retained. Ms Prendergast commented later, in response to a question, that 8 of the 13 lots had historic structures. The Ordinance would permit up to two rent paying "boarders" in a residence and would also allow for apartments in mixed-use buildings, e.g., an apartment above a business. Businesses would only be allowed on the first floor of structures, unless affordable housing was offered, in which case additional office space would be allowed on the second floor. The intent was to encourage affordable housing in the Village as a goal and to address Harding's need to meet State requirements for affordable housing.

The Ordinances also give guidance for the location of shared parking, the location of pathways, the consideration of traffic calming methods and fire safety. There is a special committee that is chaired by [Mr. Dietz] working on the details of these

issues. Ms Kimball stressed that while existing properties may not be meet current Township codes for wastewater and storm water, any new development would need to comply.

#### **Questions and Comments from the Public**

The meeting was then opened up to the public for questions of clarification on the proposed Ordinances as well as general views on the Ordinances and the Redevelopment Plan in general.

Many people from the Village as well as other areas of the town addressed the Committee. While several different views were expressed over the course the more than three hour meeting, several themes emerged.

#### **The Library**

Many citizens questioned the proposed location of the library in the Village behind the Coach Works. Many felt that it could lead to too much congestion in the village and expressed concern over safety and possible conflict with the activities of the Department of Public Works complex. Others questioned whether there would be room for future expansion of the library and whether such a building would be “lost from view” in that location rather than an architectural attraction. Many felt that a better location would on Township land near the Municipal Building.

Those is favor of the location stressed that it would draw people to the Village, would blend in and be less visible and that there would be benefits of having the library adjacent to the archives of the Historical Society.

#### **Other Concerns**

Several residents expressed a general desire for less rather more activity in the village and seemed to question the wisdom of any redevelopment that might attract more traffic. Others expressed concern that redevelopment could possibly increase the burden on the Township to install and maintain infrastructure such as pathways and sidewalks, which could lead to tax increases.

Brian McKittrick of Millbrook road, asked the Committee whether relocation of the Department of Public Works had been considered. Mr. Lanzerotti explained that this has been discussed for many years, but that it appeared to be cost prohibitive due to high land costs and the cost to relocate activities. He also stressed that the central location was an advantage for quick response to snow removal and other needs.

#### **Post Office**

There was much discussion concerning the proposed location of the post office. Virtually all those who spoke were in favor of a permanent and improved post office structure for New Vernon. Some felt the best location would be in the Village near the Library (current proposal) while others felt it too should be located near the Municipal Building, to reduce traffic and noise in the Village. Mr. Lanzerotti expressed concern that that the Township not get involved with locating the post office on Township land, as it could set a precedent for allowing quasi private operations on public land and Township involvement with what is essentially a quasi private business. Concern was also expressed that if a

decision on the location of the post office was delayed, there was a risk that New Vernon might lose its post office given the financial pressures on the Postal Service.

After several hours of discussion on the above topics, Ms Farrell made a motion that the vote on the Ordinances be delayed for two weeks and that the location of the library be reconsidered. There was no second of the motion as Mr. Lanzerotti felt more time was need to consider alternative sites for the library. Mr. Lanzerotti then made a motion amending Ms. Farrell's motion to delay the vote until the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved by the other Committee members with Mr. Dinsmore abstaining.

#### **Ordinance No. 21-03**

The Committee passed unanimously, Ordinance 21-03. This ordinance prohibits the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by underage persons on private property and supplements Chapter 141 entitled "Peace and Good Order" of the Code of the Township of Harding. The Ordinance makes violators subject to fine and loss of driving privilege. The Ordinance does not prohibit consumption for religious observance or consumption in the presence of a parent or legal guardian or possession while performance of employment.

Other Business:

A resolution was passed supporting **State Public Question #1** on the November ballot that would allow an increase in public debt to fund open land purchases. Chris Allyn commented that this involved a refinancing of existing debt and that the interest cost saving to the State would support the increased borrowing without an increase in debt service and that Harding had greatly benefited from these funds over the years.

**Municipal Question #1** which would allow up to 10% of the tax money raised by the Township for open space purchases to be used to purchase historic structures, was discussed. The Committee approved by a vote of four to one, the continuance for two weeks of four tax waivers.

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

In other matters of interest, and as part of a land swap deal, the township is about to purchase a 64-acre wildlife sanctuary, located on Long Hill Road and surrounded on two sides by the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, for \$1.75 million from Wildlife Preserves Inc., (WPI) a non-profit New Jersey corporation dedicated to preserving wildlife and waterfowl areas. The township will then turn the property over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which owns the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, in lieu of payment for the town's share of the \$2 million cost to remediate the former Harding Landfill in the summer of 2000. The former Harding Landfill is located about 500 feet northwest of Long Hill Road on land adjacent to the Great Swamp National Wildlife Service. The .6-acre tract was a municipal trash dump for several decades until 1969 when it was acquired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

According to Mayor John Murray, WPI had previously tried without success to get the federal government to buy the property with certain restrictions, but the government would not agree to those terms. The township's 11th hour deal with Wildlife Preserves' came after the organization already had signed a purchase agreement with Woodmont Builders LLC, who wanted to build houses on the property. Mayor Murray reported "it occurred to us that we had a valuable opportunity to buy the land and transfer it to the federal government to satisfy our obligations for the landfill."

The next step was negotiating terms of the property transfer with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Murray said WPI wanted to stipulate that no plants or wildlife could be removed and that there would be no building, habitat disturbance or deer management within the preserve. But the federal government didn't like the conditions, and the negotiations continued for several months as the two sides inched closer to an agreement, Murray said.

The terms finally accepted by both sides include no hunting, trapping or poisoning of any species and no removal of specimens, not even for research, on the 64-acre tract, Murray said. The federal government will reserve the right to build up to four houses on the land, such as ranger housing, but there are no plans to do so, he said. "The government was very clear that they have no intention of putting anything on that property," Murray said.

The deal is subject to the approval of a federal judge, following a 30-day comment period that ends on November 3, and Murray anticipates closing by the end of the year.

### **Historic Properties Committee, Oct 29 meeting**

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

This meeting discussed ways to encourage preservation, renovation and rehabilitation of historic structures by amending land use ordinances. According to Wendy Montgomery of the Historic Preservation Commission, more than 200 historic properties are located within the township, including open land, houses, barns and other accessory structures. "We wanted to have a public meeting because this is a matter of community-wide importance with near and long term importance," said Committee Chair Epsy Farrell, a Township Committeewoman. "We know there are many different views among our residents on how to approach this."

Historic dwellings tend to be much smaller than the homes favored by today's families, so property owners often prefer to build new homes on their lots, rather than renovate existing structures. But under current R-1 zoning, which has a three-acre minimum lot size, only one home is allowed on a single lot up to six acres in size, which means that without a variance, the old structure has to be torn down before a new one can be built on the site. Farrell said the committee has been exploring ways the township could provide special consideration for historic structures to encourage property owners,



developers, and builders not to demolish them. One of the stumbling blocks to historic preservation is the requirement for a 100-foot setback for structures on R-1 zone lots. Historic homes are often situated closer than 100 feet to the road, but they are "grandfathered" as pre-existing structures. However, property owners need a variance before making any improvements or expansions to the grandfathered property. This restriction sometimes makes it easier to just demolish the existing structure and start from scratch.

The committee is considering whether the township should permit changes to nonconforming historic structures, providing certain criteria are met. Another concern the committee is hoping to address is the potential loss of historic accessory structures, such as old barns, sheds and root cellars, when a new home is built on a lot. Under current zoning, accessory structures must be located behind the main residence. So, the builder is restricted from situating a new house further back from the road than any existing old buildings. The committee is considering amending that requirement for historic accessory structures. The committee is also looking for public input on whether the township should allow historic structures to be used as accessory rental residences as an incentive to preserve old houses. The current R-1 Zone requires that accessory residences can only be used by family members, domestic employees or temporary guests. The committee also wants the public to weigh in on whether the township should permit large lots to be subdivided into a small and a large lot, so that an historic home can remain on the smaller lot while a new home is built on the larger lot. Farrell said the committee is also considering whether there should be special restrictions on lighting, signs, and the height of new structures and additions in Harding's six historic districts to ensure that the streetscape is preserved.

The Historic Properties Committee was formed as a special task force of the Planning Board in 1999. It includes members of the Planning Board, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Environmental Commission.

Other recent historic preservation efforts in the township include the completion of a comprehensive survey of historic structures and the enactment of a "demolition delay" ordinance to allow officials more time to preserve historic structures facing destruction.

Meanwhile, work on updating the township's Historic Preservation Plan is underway, Farrell said. The township's Master Plan already recognizes the importance of state and national historic preservation initiatives and encourages flexibility in land use ordinances to mitigate the conflicts between the application of modern zoning standards and the preservation of existing historic structures. While Harding's R-2, R-3, and R-4 zones already accommodate historic village development patterns with small lot size requirements and "shallow" setback limitations, most of the township is in the R-1 Zone, which currently does not provide enough flexibility to ensure the protection and viability of historic structures, Farrell said.

### **Planning Board, Oct 27, 2003**

There was discussion about the Township Affordable Housing Obligation. This has been lowered by the State to 58 units, due to the Township lower rate of growth than that projected earlier. There was also a review of the report on the Environmental Resources Inventory. The latter will provide a factual basis for policy recommendations in the Master Plan that relate to the natural environment. This report has recast maps of the Township within a computerized Geographical Information System. The report focused on water resources, but covered other important resources as well. Topography, Soils, Wetlands, Drainage Basins, Floodways, Flood Hazard Areas, Vegetation, Wildlife Habitats, Vital Stream and Forest Corridor Habitats, are all mapped in detail. It is presumed that the maps will serve as a basis for more detailed recommendations for any changes in land use ordinances, such as minimum zoning, in the future.

### **HARDING TWP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, October 2, 2003**

1. **Smith, Block 47, Lot 3**—Owners appeared at the October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to discuss the plans dated September 19, 2003. HPC found that the proposed addition does not add significant bulk to the residence and does not dramatically exceed the current footprint. Although the dwelling is a non-contributing structure in the Logansville Historic District, HPC was concerned with the visual impact on the district. The owners provided pictures of existing landscaping and views to and from neighboring properties and HPC revised its previous recommendation. HPC now believes that this addition will neither be seen from the street nor from the adjacent historic homes. The existing privacy fence and some large evergreens will shield the addition from the streetscape. Further, while the existing home is situated very close to the lot line, the placement of the historic home on Block 47, Lot 4 (old Kirkinis property) on the far side of that lot puts more than adequate distance between the two homes. HPC recommended granting the application, provided that the plans do not change.
2. **Blanchard, Block 49, Lots 12 and 12.01**—Owner is asking the Planning Board to allow it move 2.72 acres from one lot to another lot. The result will be a six-acre lot. HPC noted that the structure on Block 49, Lot 12.01 is a house over 200 years old located in the New Vernon Historic District. A six-acre lot would allow for the future subdivision of the property and that event might put the historic house in jeopardy.
3. **Matthews, Block 51, Lot 1**—Owners are in the process of applying for a building permit. They plan to alter windows on a second floor bathroom and to upgrade a first floor enclosed porch. HPC found that the plans dated September 19, 2003, would not alter the historic character of the home. HPC recommended the use of the window style of divided 2 over 2 casements to match the existing windows. The applicant stated that the changes would not be noticeable from the road. HPC recommended the granting of the building permit for construction

without additional comment, provided that the plans do not change.

4. **Kurdzialek, Block 52, Lots 3, 3.01 and 3.02**—Brian Matthews claimed that the U.S. Department of Fish and Game, administrators of the Great Swamp, might purchase 26 acres of this property. Appearing on behalf of the Pleasant Plains Road, Save the Neighborhood Group, Matthews discussed the possibility of a visitor's center being built on the property and its impact on area. No formal plans were presented and the HPC believed it might not even have jurisdiction over such building plans.

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The records of the school board meeting are found at Board Notes, on the school's official website: [www.hardingtwp.k12.nj.us](http://www.hardingtwp.k12.nj.us). This site will also lead to the Madison school district site. Harding Township currently spends about \$1,000,000 to send its high school students to Madison HS, and many items on that site are of interest to all taxpayers, whether you have any children currently in HS or not.

**Report on The Board of Education, 10/27/2003.**

**Audit Report** Tim Vrabel of Dickinson, Vrabel, and Cassells, presented and reviewed the findings of the district's 2002-2003 audit with no findings or non compliance items. Recommendations for the future included conducting a fixed asset inventory and placing benefits funds (currently in an unallocated fund) into allocated functions which will provide a better idea of specific operation costs in the future.

**Quality Assurance Annual Report** Dr. Pallozzi reviewed the QAAR that was prepared for submission to the state of NJ. In addition to many facts about the make up of the student body, the staff and the school finances, the report also contains a summary of the spring 2003 Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT) for grades 2,5,6 and 7. A copy of the report is available in the Harding Library or by calling 973-267-6398, extension 101

**Public Hearing on EVVRS Report** (Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System): The following components of this program were discussed :DARE, Project Alert, conflict resolution, emergency response procedures and an anti-bullying program.

### **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, October 16**

At this meeting, Paul Humphrey was introduced as a new Board member.

Pending Application #10-03 - Neil and Leslie O'Donnell - Lee's Hill Road, Block 17, Lot 55.04 - "C" Variance. - Postponed to November meeting.

Pending Application #16-03 - Terri and Kurt Eichler, Sand Spring Road, Block 21, Lot 3, Zone R-1- "C" Variance. Variance is for a fence that was placed too close to

the centerline of the road. Current fence is in the same location as it was in the past, based on historical pictures of the site (house dates from pre-turn of the century). Historical commission verified that placement is consistent with what would have been done in the past. House also is not conforming to 100-foot setbacks, which also affects placement of the fence (setback is about 81 feet from road). The fence would have to zigzag across the front of the property in order to follow the center of the road. Debbie Williams, resident on Sand Spring Road, felt that the fence should stay where it is. The fence ordinance is generic (no distinction is made to type of fence). Variance approved with wording specifying that fence must remain Split Rail and may not be changed to another type of fencing without being resubmitted for approval to Board.

Pending Application #19-03 - Bradley and Beth Smith, 81 Lee's Hill Road, Block 47, Lot 3, Zone R-1 - "C" Variance. The Smiths made changes to the original drawing. The size of the patio was scaled back. Side yard setback is 14.5 feet at its closest point to the neighbor. The addition would not be visible from the street. The house lost its historical significance after alterations done by prior owner. Application was approved with the condition that additional landscaping would be provided to shield their property from the neighbors. Applicant will consult with the Shade Tree Commission for appropriate vegetation.

New Application - #20-03 - Douglas H. Nelson, Spring Valley Road, Block 4, Lot 30, Zone R-1, "C" Variance. Issue is lot coverage -- currently at 14%. This is a flag lot with about 70% of coverage due to driveways. Two other houses share the driveway from Spring Valley Road. Improvements to land are: existing ranch house with 2 car attached garage and a freestanding garage with a driveway connecting it to the main house. The freestanding building was formerly used for a tractor and a truck. This building would be used by the Nelsons for their truck. The Nelsons would like to put a 22 x 18 foot addition on the back of the house for a master bedroom. A deck is also planned for the back of the house. No changes would be made to the front of the house. Roof coverage would go from 2.65% to 3%. This is 1% under total allowance. House currently has 3 bedrooms. Coverage will have to be removed. Site inspection planned.

The Board as well as the Planning Board passed Resolutions in honor of and in memory of Gerry O'Loughlin, who served on the Boards for 7 years before his death August 26, 2003. Mr. O'Loughlin will be remembered for his integrity, dedication and courage, and his contribution to the Township is deeply appreciated.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION, Oct 6, 2003**

#### **Reports:**

Well Survey report has been written by Chris Allyn and will close out study.

Model EIS – report is being written by Ted Cotton and will close out the study.

Natural Resource Inventory NRI – Update - New section to be included as part of the Master Plan will be presented for public adoption at the next Planning Board meeting on October 27 at 8PM. We have started a new study of the carrying capacity that includes a

new study of the carrying -capacity which includes ground water recharge and considers such factors as # of people in a dwelling+water usage+geology+soil etc to get a measure of housing density that can be supported by on-site wells and waste water disposal. .

Fencing issues: Mr. McCormick asked the members to report on any new fences being built, noting changes on the fencing map that was created by an earlier survey.

The Environmental Commission supports Public Question #1, regarding a Constitutional amendment to increase the amount of bonds that the Garden State Preservation Trust may issue from \$1 billion to \$1.15 billion. Approval of Question # 1 would require no new or increased taxes; instead it takes advantage of falling interest rates to increase the amount of borrowing. The additional \$150 million will help achieve more preservation of open space and farmland, and improvements in existing community parks. The commission plans to ask the township Committee to pass the resolution of support for this question at the October 15 meeting.

Comments on matters before the planning board:

Approved lot line adjustment on block 55 lot 10 and Block 12.01 Lot 1 on Myersville Road. There is concern about the expected subdivision on the grounds of space limitations (100x100 requirement) and wetland concerns. Environmental Commission is aware of neighbors' observations and concerns will monitor closely as the plans proceed.

Blanchard, Block 49 Lot 12 and 12.01 applied for a minor subdivision involving a lot-line adjustment between parcels. Concern was expressed about the wetland at the back of the larger parcel and any possible future subdivision on either parcel.

Comments on matters before the board of adjustment:

Eichler, Block 21 Lot 3, on Sand Spring applied for a variance for a new split-rail fence that is already in place. The issue is not yet resolved.

Smith, Block 47 Lot 3, are asking for the building load to increase from 4.9% to 5.9%. Since they are already over the 3% limit, the Environmental Commission has reservations in granting a variance despite the non-conforming nature of the lot.

Nelson, Block 4 Lot 30 want a variance to increase impervious cover from 14% to 15% as a result of an additional house. This appears to be a case of a flag-lot multi-parcel shared-access drive being assigned (for purposes of Impervious Cover determination) primarily to one of the lots served. An agreement to allocate the cover to the served properties would seem to be an appropriate action in this case. Keeping track of such an agreement in future is an important consideration.

**HARDING TREE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**, No report this issue

**EDITOR'S NOTE: THE DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE THUMBNAIL ARE** 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays 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 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)	6 PM	
Environmental Commission (1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday)	7:30 PM	12/2
Seniors (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday at Pres Church)	11 AM.....	
Planning Board (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	8 PM.....	11/24, 12/15
Hist Preservation Comm (1stThursday)	8 PM	12/4, 1/8
Board of Health (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	8 PM	11/13, 12/11
Board of Education (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM....	
Board of Adjustment (3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday)	7:30 PM....	11/20,12/18
Township Committee	8 PM.....	11/5,11/19
Shade Tree (2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday)	3 PM	11/10
Municipal Alliance (3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed at Harding Schl)	8:45 AM	11/19
Harding Twp Civic Association	7:30 PM	12/1