

December 2006

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Civic Association News, Appeal for Annual Dues, Annual Meeting**

Thank you for your generous response to our appeal for annual dues, as well as your appreciative notes about our efforts to continue with high quality reporting of civic events. ***You help us achieve our goals by joining as a dues-paying member.***

The following people will be nominated for the Board of trustees: Kara MacKenzie, Art Williams, and Janet Pearce at the **Civic Association Annual Meeting on Monday February 5, at 7:30 PM**, in the Township Hall.

**THE LIBRARY**

*Remember to visit the Library's donated book cart when shopping for holiday gifts. It's still the best bargain in town!*

**Wednesday, December 27 at 2:00-3:30 p.m.: Holiday Event for Children.**

Join the Library staff for a fun-filled afternoon of festive stories, games, and crafts. Appropriate for pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, but all are welcome!

**Wednesday, January 3 at 7:30-9:00 p.m.: Evening Book Group** will discuss *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards. The novel tells the gripping story of a family irrevocably changed by a father's deception. Copies of the book may be obtained at the Library. The group meets once a month.

**Tuesday, January 9 from 4:30-5:30 p.m.: 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Book Club.** Meets once a month for an engaging hour of "literary circles." The December/January title is *The Nine Lives of Romeo Crumb* by L. Rifkin, a modern fantasy with a feisty street cat as its hero.

**Closings: The Library will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26 and on New Year's Day.**

**Your link to the Library: [hardinglibrary.org](http://hardinglibrary.org). Tel: 973-267-8000 ext 132.**

Join the **New Vernon Presbyterian Church** for the Annual Christmas Pageant at **10 a.m. Sunday December 17** followed immediately by Christmas luncheon. Soup, sandwiches, dessert, coffee, tea and juice will be served. We will then sing Christmas carols to help usher in those warm holiday feelings. All are welcome. The more the merrier! Call 973.538.8394 to RSVP for lunch.

Please note: The **Annual Harding Township Blood Drive** will be held on March

24, 2007 rather than the usual January date. It will be held at Christ the King Church. Please mark your calendars!

**Correction: Affordable Harding Corporation – The Farm at Harding**

Correction: last month Thumbnail reported the Van Kirks, Co-Directors of the Affordable Harding Corporation were volunteers. In fact, they were hired by the Township as paid consultants to facilitate the project. Their bill for their work was \$57,000.

**TOWNSHIP NEWS**

Harding Township Committee Public Session Notes, December 6, 2006

Attendance: Township Committee: Present: Mrs. Prendergast, Mr. Dinsmore, Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Murray, Dr. Lanzerotti

Town: Linda Peralta, Township Clerk, Gail McKane, Township Administrator Maryann Nergaard, Township Attorney

**Upcoming Meetings**

- The Township reorganization meeting will be held on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Township will be introducing a salary ordinance, and an ordinance to extend the budget beyond the budget cap on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Eggert Property**

Isobel Olcott and Penny Hinkle of the Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee announced that the Morris County Trust has approved Harding's application for a \$325,000 grant to be applied to the stated \$650,000 price of the proposed Eggert Property purchase. The remaining cost will be funded by a New Jersey Green Acres grant (\$125,000), Harding Township (\$125,000 from HOST), the Harding Land Trust (\$50,000), and from the Trust for Public Land (\$25,000). HOST recommended that the Township Committee accept the grant. According to Mrs. Olcott, the Eggert property is a good open space purchase for the Township, as the purchase will help Harding maintain its rural character, complement Jockey Hollow Park, and protect Primrose Brook. The Eggert property is a 7.25-acre lot located on a steep hillside on Jockey Hollow's southern boundaries. The property contains an "intermittent stream" (a natural ditch) that flows downhill under Routes 202 and 287, where it feeds a tributary stream that eventually flows into Primrose Brook (about 1. to 1.5 miles in total). The property currently contains a house, in ground storage fuel storage tanks, and a 1950's – 70s 'bomb shelter' all of which will be removed by the seller and the Trust for the Public Land. The property is zoned as RR (allowing only one house to be built on the property) and is subject to zero increase net runoff regulations. The Jockey Hollow Park Superintendent and the Great Swamp

Watershed Association have written letters supporting the purchase.

All of the Township Committee members were in favor of accepting the grant except Dr. Lanzerotti who recommended the Township take the time to further research some of the outstanding issues before accepting the grant. In a written statement, Dr. Lanzerotti noted that there are three issues to be considered when purchasing land for open spaces purposes: 1) the impact of removing a taxable entity from the tax base, 2) how the property will be used by the public along with the identification of associated costs, and 3) any COAH (affordable housing) impact. According to Dr. Lanzerotti, HOST has considered #1, #3 does not apply, but #2 has not been addressed adequately. Dr. Lanzerotti also had questions regarding the 'historical' structures said to be located on the property.

Dr. Lanzerotti also said that it was unlikely that a house on the property would have any practical impact on Primrose Brook as the water runoff from the property has to pass Route 202 and Route 287 and then flow next to and down grade from Route 287 for a significant distance before reaching Primrose Brook.

Members of the public, including Steve Balog, Judie Ward, Leon Desbrow, and Vern Condon, stated objections to the purchase of the property for open spaces purposes. Their objections included that the purchase would have no positive impact on Harding's streetscape or on Primrose Brook; the property would not be used by the public or really enhance the Park; and that HOST funds could be better spent elsewhere. Mr. Desbrow noted that although Harding would pay only \$125,000, most of the \$650,000 would come from taxpayers. Ned Ward (who was recently elected to the Township Committee effective this coming January) noted that the property was on the market for 18 months without any offers prior to being considered for an open space purchase.

Penny Hinkle explained that the property may have no particular public use other than as a natural open space and wildlife habitat. She also noted that many of Harding's most beautiful open space properties are not visible from the road. Isobel Olcott reiterated that the HOST committee (as well as the other associated committees) unanimously endorsed the open spaces purchase of the Eggert property, that it had been thoroughly inspected by Morris County, and was a good value for the Township.

Township Committee members approved resolution 06-230 to accept the Morris County grant, except Dr. Lanzerotti who voted against the resolution. After the vote, Mayor Murray commented that the property purchase will help protect Harding's ground water and will eliminate the negative tax impact of having a family with children living on the property (i.e. the public costs of school

education, etc.).

**Use of HOST 2007 Taxes for Historic Preservation**

Mrs. Olcott stated that HOST committee recommended that all of HOST 2007 tax revenues eligible for historic preservation (approximately \$90,000) be allocated to help pay debt service costs related to the debt for the Glen Alpin restoration. HOST tax revenues for 2006 are approximately \$900,000, 10% of which will be used for Glen Alpin. No more than 10% of HOST tax revenues may be used for historic preservation purposes. Mrs. Olcott noted that there were no other requests for funds for historic preservation.

**Glen Alpin Roof Cost Increase**

By a vote of 4 to 1, the Township Committee approved Resolution 06-229, which accepted a \$39,000 net cost increase for the Glen Alpin roof renovation project. The original roof repair cost increase was \$133,755, but the Township eliminated certain unessential roof repairs from the project yielding a savings of \$93,991.

Dr. Lanzerotti spoke out strongly against the resolution and voted against it. Dr. Lanzerotti said that there appears to be no end to the change orders, and no priorities have been assigned to the change requests. He asked the Township Committee to have the principals of Watson & Henry (the architecture firm for the Glen Alpin renovation who provided the costs estimates) to “appear before a hearing of this Township Committee and before the Harding public to explain (a) how they could have so badly underestimated the costs of this project and (b) how to terminate the project now.”

Mary Prendergast responded that it was not fair to blame the architects for the cost increases. Mayor Murray commented that although no one wanted like the cost increase, the Township was committed to capping the net cost to the Township for Glen Alpin at \$968,000<sup>1</sup> and there should not be any more surprises left. The \$39,000 cost increase will still allow an available balance of \$234,000 to be used for the upcoming HVAC installation. Several members of the public, including Ned Ward, commented that this was just the beginning and the Township should not be involved with this project.

Gail McKane distributed a debt and expense summary as shown below:

**Glen Alpin Encumbrance and Expense  
Summary**

As of: December 6, 2006

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<sup>1</sup> In a prior resolution, the Township committed to spend no more than \$968,000 of Township funds (not including HOST funds) on the Glen Alpin house renovation.

Encumbered Contracts and Expenses to date	\$1,183,894.14
Change Order 5	\$39,764.41
Total to Date	\$1,223,658.55

Grants and Donations

Garden Club and Glen Alpin Conservancy	\$16,500.00
NJ Historic Trust	\$50,000.00
Morris County - 2005	\$223,000.00
Morris County - 2006	\$200,000.00
Sub-total	\$489,500.00

Net Encumbrances Contracts and Expenses to date	\$734,158.55
Not to Exceed Commitment	\$968,000.00
Balance Available for HVAC & Fire Suppression design & installation	\$233,841.45

**Miller Road Flooding Problem Resolution**

The Mayor and the Township committee acknowledged the 'excellent and inspired work' of Garry Annibal, the Township's Health Department Administrator, and Gail McKane, who were instrumental in resolving the persistent and serious flooding problems experienced by residents of Miller Road, particularly by the Conroy property. The NJ State DEP, who has jurisdiction over the area, was unwilling or unable to resolve the flooding problem. Mr. Annibal and Mrs. McKane, using an existing mosquito control permit and by walking through the area, were able to investigate the cause of the flooding, which turned out to be caused by excessive silt and dead wood blocking some of the surrounding streams. Once corrected, the flooding problem was remediated.

**School Cistern**

The new Harding Township School cistern should be ready for testing in the next few days. According to Mrs. McKane, there may be enough available funds in the capital fund to cancel the debt previously authorized to pay for the cistern.

The Township unanimously approved the following resolutions:

TC 06-228	Authorize contract for dispatch services with Chatham
TC 06-227	Authorize participation in McArp and authorize payment for participation. McArp is a county program that provides recreational services for persons with disabilities. Harding's

participation cost is \$824.
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### **Hearing Persons Present**

- Steve Balog recommended that the Township Committee form a sub-committee that would focus on finding a solution for Glen Alpin that would “get the property off of Harding’s books”. The Mayor commented that this was a good idea and invited any members of the public interested in participating to contact the Township Committee.

### **OPEN SPACE DEBT**

Those citizens interested in the amount of Harding Township public debt for open space are informed that current information can be found the following website.

<http://www.hardingnj.org/departments/financeinfo/Debt%20Summary%20--%20Township%20%20HOST%2010-09-Fnl.pdf>

### **HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

#### **October 2007**

Member of the Commission listened to a presentation from Ms. Carol Bielicki representing Architectural Concrete Designs. The presentation focused on the use of bluestone stamped concrete for the walkways in the historic Village District. This company has done stamped concrete work in Somerville. The cost for the patterned concrete is approximately \$9.75 per sq. foot.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Block 11, Lot 2, 502 Spring Valley Road, Charles Zimmer-Concept Review.** This property is a contributing residence in the Green Village district. Mr. Zimmer presented plans to enlarge the existing non-conforming residence, and to demolish the detached garage. The Commission recommended that the “Craftsman style” features of the home be maintained and consideration be given to retain the detached garage. Comments were also given to lower the elevations closest to the Church located near the home. The Commission thanked the homeowners for the opportunity to comment.
- **Block 18, Lot 8, 5 Village Road, Dr. Jeff Flamme-**This property is in the New Vernon Historic District. Plans were presented showing proposed changes to the doors of the existing garage on this property. The homeowner proposes to replace the two existing garage doors with one larger door, and would like to add a sliding barn door to the rear of the garage. Commission members suggested that the single garage door

have architectural features which would maintain the look of two garage doors, such as hinges and handles.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- Township Engineer, Mr. Paul Fox presented the new plans for the New Vernon Village Municipal parking lot. Changes included the following items. The lot will be entirely gravel and the size has been reduced to 14 spaces. Lighting fixture locations have been modified to reflect the reduced size and configuration of the lot. The proposed landscape berm between the fire cistern and adjacent residences has been included and the guide rail around the cistern has been replaced with post and rail fencing. The reconfiguration of the pathways was outlined and included the plans for the future extension to the pathway to the Tunis-Ellicks house and to Village Road, a 24" high parking guide rail is provided in front of each parking place. Members of the HPC expressed concern of how the traffic will flow into the parking lot and building.

**Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee – November 28, 2006**

Projects Status - Anderson Property – all necessary acquisition funding including related borrowings have been successfully completed with a “no interest-no principle” payment schedule arrangement. This acquisition will be included on the Township Committee December meeting agenda for a final discussion and decision. HOST will contribute \$120,000 to this attractive purchase located off Tempe Wick Road.

Farmland Preservation – funding agreements for three farm properties (Devine, Scaff and Haeberle) on Lee’s Hill Road have been approved by the State. These properties will add 155 acres of protected farmlands adjacent to the Great Swamp Watershed in 2007. Surveys and final contracts are now being completed.

Glen Alpin – consistent with previously approved provision of the Trust charter, the Committee voted to approve (6 “ayes”, one abstention) renewal of application of up to 10% of HOST revenues to support restoration of the Glen Alpin project. Future funding would support interest payments related to the cost of historic restoration and preservation. Decisions about 2007 disbursements will be included in the Township Committee December meeting.

Eggert Property – the Committee discussed the property selection criteria, sources of funding and critical questions and comments by the public related to this potential acquisition. It was agreed to recommend positively to the Township Committee to proceed towards acquisition of this property which is

adjacent to the Jockey Hollow National Park. A \$325,000 grant has been approved by Morris County Open Space Fund. Additional grants of \$125,000 from NJ Green Acres coupled with HOST funding of \$125,000 would not require any borrowing. It will, however, require a special Town ordinance to finance that HOST portion of the purchase cost. It was agreed to request that the National Park Service coordinate future maintenance of this property in the event of actual acquisition.

Thebault Property – acquisition process is proceeding well.

Finance and Stewardship - the mission, role, funding and scope of maintenance of previously acquired property by HOST was broadly discussed. The Committee agreed to begin to assemble a baseline inventory of current easements, development rights and acquired properties to better understand future maintenance requirements. There was recognition that the Trust does have an obligation under its Charter to assure future maintenance and correct use of designated properties. The Committee will recommend that the 2007 Township budget include provision to hire a professional to monitor the maintenance of HOST properties. Additionally, procurement of appropriate, discreet signage and related funding for existing HOST properties was discussed. The purpose, cost, deployment and logo of signage were considered. Finally, Gail McKane was commended for the analyses and forecasts of the complete status of tax receipts, cash balances and forecasts of committed future HOST expenditures through 2015.

**Planning Board**, November meeting cancelled. No report

**Board of Adjustment**, November 16 meeting decisions

127 Glen Alpin Rd, BI 35, lot 21.02. James and Susan Heineman. Approved variance to construct a side/rear addition and patio with minimum setbacks of 89' and 75' from the 100' requirement; and to authorize an existing shed with a set back of 22' from the north lot line.

241 Blue Mill Rd, BI 4, lot 2. Marion Pinheiro and Xin Zhao. Variance granted from the 10% max lot coverage ratio to permit construction of a replacement driveway; ratio increases from 9.86 to 10.74%.

**Harding Township Environmental Commission (HTEC), November 6, 2006**

The Commission received an update on Green Building technologies. Significant innovation is underway. HTEC will continue to receive updates to assist in promoting relevant innovations within the Township.



The HTEC formed sub-committees to focus on key areas of interest:

Non-point source pollution; Fences; Ridgeline protection; Native plantings; and Highlands Regional Master Plan

A lawn care brochure is under development, to assist residents in fertilizing and maintaining lawns in an environmentally-friendly manner.

Chris Allyn has been appointed President of the ANJEC Board of Trustees for 2007/2008.

#### **December 4, 2006**

Some residents have inquired as to why plastic bags from supermarkets are not accepted for recycling at the Department of Public Works. Apparently it is not economic to do so, but King's will accept such bags if residents choose to recycle them.

A draft Highlands Regional Master Plan has recently been issued for comment. Commission members will consider the impact of the document on current HTEC thinking and strategies.

It was suggested that a "baseline" be established to protect Township-owned properties from encroachment. The baseline might include photographs and tree descriptions, to provide a point-in-time reference point against which the future state of these properties could be compared.

The plantings and related fencing around portions of the pond at Bayne Park were discussed. The visual impact of the plantings is not ideal, some of the plantings are not being well maintained, and the fencing restricts access to the pond. It was suggested that it may be time for the Township to consider a part-time Park Commissioner to provide professional advice on plantings and maintenance. It was noted that the Township Committee soon will be considering the Eggert property acquisition. HTEC members were generally supportive of this acquisition.

#### **HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, November 13, 2006**

Guidance Program: Colleen Bewalder, the school's guidance counselor, discussed the Harding CARES program. Ms. Bewalder plans to go into each elementary classroom five times a year and do activities with the children, such as worksheets. Ms. Bewalder also described the small group services she conducts. She has created three groups: (1) social skills; (2) friendship; and (3) study skills; children are referred by the teacher. Lastly, the service learning program in which sixth, seventh and eighth graders perform community service was discussed; this was a pilot program last year. Ms. Bewalder is creating project proposal forms for the students to use to describe their projects, which

they find independently (though Ms. Bewalder has a number of suggestions on her eBoard and students may also use hours spent on activities such as Confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Boy Scouts). The school may require students to turn in project certification forms and/or write a reflection essay. There is no consequence, however, for students who do not complete their hours. Moreover, it is the parents', not the school's, responsibility to ensure that the community service site is safe for their child to work at. Revised General Music Curriculum: Diane Pivarnik and Susan Englesman described the Revised General Music Curriculum, which will be expanded to include all genres of music as well as different means of approaching music (e.g., using dance as a way to enhance music understanding). This approach was demonstrated via a video of sixth graders recreating – with musical instruments and through dance – an English “sword dance.” They are reviewing new textbooks, which may update the 5 year old ones that are currently used, and will re-present the curriculum to the Board in the spring. The art curriculum will also be supplemented by trips to the NJPAC, the Newark Museum, etc. Revised Art Curriculum: Amy Norris presented the Revised Art Curriculum, which will make minor changes in three areas: (1) color theory: exploring color using means other than just painting; (2) printmaking scope and sequence; and (3) expanded use of technology: the use of computer software to produce works of art. Budget Guidelines for 2007-2008 were not distributed but will be distributed in advance of the November 27 meeting when they will be presented for adoption. Dr. Palozzi reported orally that the Finance Committee is building the budget from a zero base, expecting a 3% budget increase and no additional state aid. **November 27, 2006**, Presentation of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR): Mr. Timothy Vrabel reported to the Board that there were no findings and that the financial condition was strong. As required by the state regulation S1701 the school is not permitted to have more than 2% of the budget as excess. Currently they have \$54,000 over that cap. He stated that this was not an issue as this sum will be moved to cover additional unbudgeted expenses that were incurred due to special education costs.

**Harding Township Educational Foundation (HTEF) and Dr. Mel Levine's Schools Attuned Program**: Dr. Palozzi presented the survey results from the teachers that had participated in the initial evaluation of the Schools Attuned Program. The survey was designed to get anonymous feedback on the interest level in trying to use this program as part of the Professional Development curriculum for the staff at Harding Township schools. The results from the survey

were not a ringing endorsement of the program, Dr. Palozzi, and the BOE and Harding Staff will attend a workshop with Dr. Levine for more information. They will reach a final decision in early January 2007. The goal would be to get ~ 20-25 teachers involved in Dr. Levine's program. Ms. Ellen Wraith, an HTEF trustee that was on hand for the meeting, stated that the cost for attending these workshops would be \$1500 per teacher and that the HTEF had received a gift which would cover the complete cost of implementing the Schools Attuned Program at Harding.

**Civic Association DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are January 5 and February 2**, respectively. ***Announcements should be complete and concise to help the editor.*** Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are posted on our Website- check it out: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. Send questions or comments about Thumbnail to editor, ***email address: hesnaj@verizon.net***, or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

**RECYCLING:** Commingled recycling of plastics, aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles/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 from 9-12 AM. Please do NOT leave recyclable materials if the center is closed.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**, meetings as noted.

Municipal Court (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)	4 PM
Municipal Court (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday)	11AM
Environmental Commission (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
Seniors (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday)Chrst KingCh	11 AM
Planning Board (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
Hist Preservtion Comm (1stThursday)	8 PM
Board of Health (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	8 PM
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
Township Committee(1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed)	8 PM
Shade Tree (2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday)	3 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association	7:30 PM