

April 2007

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

The **Harding Environmental Commission** invites you to Harding Clean-Up Day, **Sat., April 21st, 9:00-11:00AM, Bayne Park**. Come to the park and get a free Tee shirt (while they last), a street assignment where you will go to pick up debris, and a garbage bag. Refreshments provided. We need your help to keep our town beautiful. (Rain date is April 22nd).

THE LIBRARY (Harding Library: 973-267-8000 X 132)

Sunday "Craftafternoons" Continue...Sunday, April 29 and May 6, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building...craft-inspired sessions created by local artist and costume designer, Bettina Bierly. *Slumberific Sleepover Pillows (4/29)*: design and sew your personalized sleepover pillow using soft fabrics and decorative ribbons. *Pretty Picture Frames (5/6)*: bring a photo and create a gift just in time for Mothers' Day! Registration and a \$3 materials fee are required. Sign up at the Library or on our website: hardinglibrary.org.

Evening Book Group...Wednesday, April 25 at 7:30 p.m. Join us for an evening of stimulating discussion! The book selection for April is *Roma: the novel of ancient Rome* by Steven Saylor, an epic saga of the city and its people spanning 1,000 years. The novel follows the shifting fortunes of two families through the ages, weaving history, legend, and archeological discoveries into a spellbinding narrative. The book may be obtained at the Library.

The Annual Meeting of the **Harding Land Trust** on **Thursday, April 26, 2007, 7:15 PM** in the New Vernon Firehouse, will celebrate newly protected open space, honoring the landowners who have recently preserved open land in Harding, including the Devine, Haeberle, Thebault and Scaff family farms and the Anderson Woods. Wade Martin and Dave Johnson, UBS Financial Services, will also present a short talk on "Financial Alternatives for Land Conservation Transactions".

Harding Twp Recreation Association ANNUAL MEETING Thursday, April 26th, 7:30 PM at the Harding Township School Library. Any questions please call Jerry O'Loughlin at 973-425-0155.

SPECIAL RECYCLING ANNOUNCEMENT FROM HARDING TWP:
Tracy Toribio of the DPW department has reminded all of us that

Commingled Recyclables: consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, and only plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol, and #1 or #2. Try to crush plastic bottle to conserve space. Please remember no plastic or paper bags.

Commingled Mixed Paper recycling; consists of all paper, cardboard, news paper, office paper, magazines, and books. Please put loose or shredded paper in paper bag. Please flatten all boxes or fill with other paper products.

Other accepted items; Batteries; automotive (car) and household (rechargeable accepted); Computers and all related peripherals, i.e. printers and monitors; Automotive and light truck tires, (on or off rim) and Propane tanks (BBQ size only)

The Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 7AM. to 12noon (7– 9AM self service); and **Saturdays:** April 14th and 28th; May 12th and 26th; and June 9th and 23rd. Any questions, please call Tracy Toribio at 1-973-267-2448.

The **Harding Alliance against Substance Abuse** invites you to the following free informative session: *The College Experience: Beyond the Books*, **Tuesday, April 24, 7:30 to 9 PM**; Madison High School, Ridgedale Ave, Madison, NJ. No registration is required. Harding Alliance meetings are always open to the public. Scheduled Harding Alliance meetings are in the Guidance Office of the Harding School at 8:45 AM on June 6 and Sept. 19, 2007.

Harding Township Health Department will hold an Adult Health clinic on **Thursday, April 26, 2007, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** at the Municipal Building. **Registration for all clinics** is open to Harding Township residents, eighteen years of age and older. There is no fee. You can register in person at the Health Department office or by calling 973/267-8000, ext 125 between 9 - 2 Mon, Tues, Thurs or Friday.

The New Vernon Garden Club will meet on **Thursday, May 17 at 9 AM**, in the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon. Bruce Crawford, a professor of horticulture at Cook College of Rutgers and Director of Rutgers Gardens, will demonstrate how to design and care for unique container gardens.

All Harding Township residents are invited to attend the program. For more information, please call Patti Wood (973) 425-0878.

Enrollment continues for the HTRA Summer Day Camp

The Summer Day Camp starts on July 2 and ends July 27, 9 AM- 3 PM Mondays through Fridays. Children from 3 - 12 years of age can enroll for 1-4 weeks. Located at the Harding Township School on Lee's Hill Road in New Vernon, the daily activities include Arts & Crafts, Swimming, Sports & Games, Camp Crafts, Computer

Lab and Drama. All children participate in groups with children of their own age. The Polliwog program is for 3 and 4 year olds and runs from 9 a.m. till noon, however, for those that wish to enroll in the extended day till 3 p.m. that option is available for 4 year olds. A science enrichment program is offered for children in grades 1-4 that are interested and sign up for this activity.

The Camp Director, LuAnn Romano, is an elementary school teacher and has been with the HTRA Camp for over 25 years. Most of the adult staff are also long-term associates, and are employed in local schools as teachers or teacher's aides. Also, anyone going into grades 7 and 8 wishing to be a counselor-in-training or anyone age 14 and older looking for a counselor position, should contact Pat Romano. **For more information, call (973) 605-5866 or e-mail to promano59@patmedia.net.**

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Plant Material not Favored by Deer The following list was prepared in collaboration with members of the New Vernon Garden Club and reflects the experience of gardening in Harding. Residents might find it helpful in planning their spring plantings. Deer in our area rarely damage the plants listed. Nevertheless, they will browse at any plant, if no alternative food is available. In addition, each deer herd is different. The young deer eat what their mothers eat; eating habits may vary from herd to herd. Deer will usually not eat any leaf, which is gray and/or furry. Many herbs fall in this category.

Trees

Cedar
Fir
Maples, ornamentals
Spruce
Dogwood
American Holly

Shrubs

Leucothoe
Andromeda
Boxwood
Cotoneaster
Skimmia; Juniper

Perennials

Euphorbia (Spurge); Iris
Foxglove; Lily of the Valley
Hellebore; Daffodil, (Jonquil)
Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)
Cimicifuga, (Fairy Candle)
Lavender; Coreopsis; Ferns
Buddleia (Butterfly bush)
Aquilegia (Columbine)

Groundcover

Pachysandra
Lamium
Ornamental Grasses
Ajuga

TOWNSHIP NEWS

Township Committee – March 7, 2007

Attendance: Township Committee

Present: Mr. Dinsmore, Mr. Ward, Dr. Lanzerotti

Absent: Mr. Murray, Mr. Bartlett

Town: Linda Peralta, Township Clerk,

Gail McKane, Township Administrator

Maryann Nergaard, Township Attorney

Announcements

- Future meetings: The March 21st meeting will be cancelled due to lack of quorum
- On April 4th the 2007 Budget will be introduced.

Reports

Highlands Regional Master Plan

Ned Ward gave a report on the status of Highlands Regional Master Plan. Mr. Ward attended a hearing on the plan held in Chester by the NJ Highlands Council - one of several hearings held in the area. The Highlands Regional Master Plan is a draft plan that describes the implementation of the controversial Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, passed in 2004. The State is receiving comments on the plan until May 11th. The Highlands act, whose stated objective is to protect drinking water sources for Northern New Jersey, will also impose sweeping development and environmental regulations on the 860,000 acre Highland region, primarily comprised of Summerset, Warren, Morris, Hunterdon, Passaic, and Sussex counties. Municipal land subject to the Highlands Act is either in a preservation area (where the regulations mandated by the legislation are mandatory) or a planning area (where the regulations are voluntary or the municipality can 'opt-in' to make the regulations mandatory). Harding is in a planning area, and, at least in principle, has the option whether or not to subject itself to the Highland regulations.

The Highlands act is being implemented by the NJ DEP, which has established the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council for this purpose. The Highlands Council has 15 members (8 of which must be from the Highlands region) and has presented a draft implementation plan, the Draft Regional Master Plan, for public comment. The 200+ page Master Plan designates distinct land use zones within the Highlands region: a "protection" zone which will limit development, a "planned community" zone which will support development growth, and a "conservation" zone which designates farmland where development should be restricted.

The NJ DEP has designated Harding land into the three zones. For an informative interactive map showing the zone designation, go to <http://maps.njhighlands.us/default.asp> and select Harding Township.

Since Harding is in a planning area, the Township will have to decide whether or not it wants to opt in and become a preservation area. The Highlands Council offers incentives to municipalities which may include legal shield/legal representation benefits and Highland Council/Smart Growth grants. If Harding were to become a preservation area, disadvantages could include loss of local control of development/land use and strict restrictions on property improvements. The Township has just started its analysis of the legislation, but will be following up with the State to urge corrections to land use designations they consider inappropriate.

Glen Alpin Strategy Committee

Steve Balog, the chair of the Glen Alpin Strategy Committee, gave a presentation on the committee's progress. A condensed version of the handout accompanying the report is shown below:

Committee Charter: Goal is to reduce Harding's financial and management responsibility for Glen Alpin. Investigate, analyze and present realistic options to the Township Committee for a decision.

Financial Status to Date:

- a. Acquisition - 10 acres plus the house for \$1,400,000
 - i. Morris County \$575,000
 - ii. Green Acres Trust \$450,000
 - iii. Harding Land Trust \$200,000
 - iv. Harding Township \$175,000
- b. Restoration to date (ROOF, tree work, professional services)
 - i. Expenditures..... \$967,990
 - ii. Contractual Obligations remaining...\$275,668
 - iii. Total.....\$1,243,658
- c. Cost to complete restoration is likely over \$4 million
- d. Spending is \$214,000 below the \$968,000 cap that the Township Committee imposed last year.

List of Encumbrances

- a. Acquisition grantors – see above
 - b. Restoration grantors:
 - Conservancy & Garden Club -- \$16,500
 - NJ Historical Trust -- \$50,000, awarded but not received
 - Morris County Historical -- \$423,000, awarded but \$255,200 not received.
 - c. Questions remain: How might these encumbrances be relaxed? What about the grants that were awarded but not received?
- The committee reviewed some similar situations. They are legion. No magic model...yet.

Brainstorming options

- a. Transfer responsibility to Glen Alpin Conservancy, Morris County, NJ, National Park Service
- b. Private ownership – commercial; residential.
- c. Preliminarily, because of the encumbrances, it appears that GA is the Conservancy's to lose.

Ordinances

A public hearing for ordinance 1-07, a budget cap ordinance was held. This ordinance allows the township to exceed the expenditures on items subject to the budget cap by 1%, a difference of about \$55,000. The ordinance was passed.

Resolutions

The Township Committee passed the following resolutions:

- Authorization for an engineering contract for a new town hall parking lot and engineering services related to the Township's responsibilities related to the new library. The amount is not to exceed is \$21,000 and includes work for soil testing, storm water management, driveway design. The library has its own parallel contract related to their construction responsibilities.
- A resolution to the State confirming that the Township does not support a detour through Harding due to planned construction on Route 202.
- Authorization for a NJAC grant to help pay for work to update the Township open space plan, as well as an analysis to calculate how much of the remaining open space is still developable. The grant application is for \$15,000 with a matching requirement of \$13,500.

Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee –March 13, 2007

Projects' Status- Anderson Property – acquisition could close this month. All preparation is complete and the Town Council will likely provide final approvals for purchase in March.

Eggert Property – the Trust for Public Land (TPL) continues to be responsible for all necessary demolitions and modifications. Any possible purchase contract may be extended to mid-July depending on any new issues identified.

Farmland Preservation – early, coordinated closings for the Devine, Scaff and Haerberle farm properties are on track including a special, coordinated recognition celebration.

Finance and Stewardship – a financial projection and analysis through 2015 was presented by Gail McKane. This information provides the Committee details of future receipts, including taxes and grants, as well as projected, committed purchases, interest payments and stewardship expenditures. It also includes the projection of 10% of HOST tax revenues recommended for future historic preservation of the Glen Alpin property. McKane will update future forecasts including additions and

corrections.

It was noted that the Township Committee is considering a grant application to the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions for funding of planning studies of open spaces, land uses and conservation which can be used as part of the Township Master Plan. The Plan would link open spaces plans with the Planning Board including documentation of build outs and other development activities.

The creation of the HOST Information Handbook is taking shape with specific content including the mission, history, membership, financials, maps and acquisition history and criteria.

Finally, the Committee plans to submit a request to the Town Council for a small budget to fund stewardship baselining for previously acquired HOST properties. Establishment of a baseline by a professional would assist the Committee with future property inspections and tracking. Fees and formats were discussed.

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, March 26, 2007

PROPOSED BUDGET. School elections are scheduled for **2 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, April 17** at the Harding Township Municipal Building.

The proposed budget is **\$8,692,963**. This represents an increase of \$486,351 (or 5.93%) from the 2006-07 budget, which was \$8,206,612.

Under the proposed budget, the **tax levy** will increase by **5.22%** (as compared to 3.99% in 06-07). In other words, a home assessed at 1 million dollars will pay \$4,227 in school taxes, which represents an increase of \$177.

According to Dr. Dennis Pallozzi, the proposed budget maintains all the current District programs, services and staffing needs.

Of the \$486,351 increase, \$244,022 (or 50%) is due to an increase in tuition costs for students who attend Morris Vo-tech, require special education services or attend Madison High School. Tuition, which will total \$2,061,389 (as opposed to \$1,817,367 in 06-07) is mandated and represents a major part of the budget increase. (The District pays Madison High School a flat fee which increases by \$50,000 each year.)

Other causes of the proposed increase are salaries, benefits and supplies. For instance, the proposed budget includes additional funding for the child study team: (1) an increase of a .6 Learning Disabilities Consultant to a 1.0 position; (2) an increase of a .4 School Psychologist to a .6 position; and (3) a social worker 2 days/week. These changes ensure that there will be a professional in the child study team office every day.

In addition, the proposed budget includes monies for the District's technology goals, including laptops for all staff members in 07-08 and laptops for all middle school students in 08-09. Moreover, the District hopes to add new music and

language arts material for new curriculums.

The proposed budget calls for three capital projects to be paid for out of the \$225,000 capital reserve: (1) the installation of air conditioning on the third floor of the middle school building; (2) the replacement or restoration of the columns on the front of the building; and (3) a drainage project near the bird park. There is no current plan to air condition the gymnasium.

Mr. Peter Pearson further explained that State aid will increase 3% for the first time in five years. That increase yielded \$12,000 to the District for a total of \$548,425 (or 6% of the total budget). The local tax levy, not State aid, provides the bulk (91% or \$7,861,922) of the District's budget.

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

The President of the Board of Education, Ms. Evelyn Douglas, read the following report.

"Report on Follow Up and Action Plan Regarding Madison Bullying Incident"

"At the first Board meeting after learning of a bullying incident which occurred to a resident of Harding who attends Madison High School, the Harding Board had its initial meeting to discuss the incident and develop a plan for follow-up regarding these events.

"Initially, we received a report from our Madison Board of Education representative, Angelo Santoro, who addressed certain follow up questions through the administrative personnel at both schools. Our understanding was that there were both specific incidents at a summer basketball camp (non sanctioned by MHS) as well as ongoing taunting of this same student since the beginning of the year. There were also unaddressed concerns by the student's parents regarding the consequences applied that warranted further inquiry by the Board.

"We believed that a public meeting to facilitate a common understanding of MHS' policies surrounding this issue and to focus on the future plans in both districts to address these types of behaviors, was essential. Madison High School's administrative team was invited and did present at our meeting on February 12, 2007. In addition the HTS administration was also asked to prepare a presentation on activities at HTS around the policies, practices and incidences related to these same issues.

"At the February 12 meeting, proposed policy changes were presented including: plans for additional professional development activities and future programs and assemblies to address issues of harassment, intimidation and bullying. There was extensive public input regarding the recent summer basketball camp incident, as well as other incidents which reportedly occurred at MHS in recent years. The public input was overwhelmingly critical in tone. Suggestions were made that the administration at MHS had been ineffective at responding to these incidents and was not creating and maintaining a culture at MHS which did not tolerate this

sort of behavior.

“The February 12th meeting ended with an expression of concern from the public that in responding to the questions raised at the meeting, the administration from MHS was not being straightforward or completely honest in describing the recent events.

“In response to this session, the Board concluded that a great deal of additional follow up was required. The Board's objective was to ensure that all accurate facts were understood and acknowledged, a commitment is made to improve and be proactive in identifying and preventing potential problems, the updated Policy be aggressively pursued in the future, and the results made transparent to the Harding Board as well as to parents of MHS students.

“To this end, the parents of the recent victim graciously agreed to attend an Executive Session with the Harding BOE to answer both our questions for clarification as well as review any aspect of the incidents they believed were relevant. This session was very helpful in providing additional factual background and in answering remaining questions asked by Board members.

“Subsequently, an executive session was held between the Madison Board of Ed and the Harding Board of Ed (also attended by Dr. Pallozzi and the Madison administrative team) on March 7 where the recent incidents were discussed in great detail and questions posed and initial feedback presented.

“In addition, Mr. Santoro held further meetings at MHS as follow up to the joint executive session.

“Also in February and consistent with the plans reviewed at our Harding Public Session, additional anti-bullying programs run by Michael Pritchard were initiated at both the Junior School and the High School in Madison. Students in the Harding middle school attended the Junior School program. In addition, Harding parents were invited to Dr. Pritchard's evening session for parents, also held in Madison. Although parental participation was disappointing, these programs were seen as valuable and positive by those who attended. Student feedback was also very positive.

“At the completion of all of these activities, the Board believes it has been able to ascertain that the Harding Township Board of Education and the Madison Board of Education are operating on a common factual basis. We have had the opportunity to provide an assessment and feedback on this incident to both the Madison Administration and the Madison Board of Education.

“The Harding Board remains focused on articulating its very firm and high expectations on this subject. Both the Harding Township School and Madison High School must maintain policies, programs and disciplinary processes and actions which are designed to prevent incidences of hazing, harassment, intimidation or bullying. As well, if an incident does occur, the applicable administration must

appropriately address any acts of hazing, harassment, intimidation or bullying at either school or at school or related activities.

“As far as HTS is concerned, the administration has presented proposed policy changes to the Board at its last two meetings which have been discussed at length and will be discussed again this evening. When all members are satisfied with them, these policies and amended procedures will be approved by the Board and put into practice at the school. In addition, the administration and the staff have been actively working on the new programs which will be initiated within the district and will present those programs for the Board for approval prior to the beginning of the next school year.

“The additional activities at MHS around these types of behaviors have also begun as well and will be followed closely by the Harding Board of Ed both as a whole Board and through the participation of its Madison Representative.

“Additional activities relating to student and parent experiences at Madison High School are under way in order to receive even more feedback on the quality of the experience offered the Harding students at MHS. The MHS administration has reiterated a number of times its invitation to have Harding Board members and other members of the Harding Community visit Madison High School. The Harding Board and administration will work with Madison to publicize this invitation and to help facilitate these visits. In addition, members of the Harding Board will be commencing a comprehensive program requesting feedback from parents with students currently attending MHS. In this way, our intent is to provide means for parents who are intending to send their children to Madison High School have a broad set of resources to understand the total experience they can expect at MHS.

“In closing, we appreciate the opportunity to address these serious issues that affect our community. We encourage all parents to continue to be involved in their children’s education and activities, and to feel comfortable in continuing to provide input to the Administrations at Harding and at Madison and to this Board of any future concerns that might arise relating to this issue or to any other. We thank all of the participants involved in this matter for their cooperation and the forthright and often difficult discussions, which have allowed us to reach closure at this time.”

Board of Adjustment, March 15, 2007

The variance application of Kris and Dave Alvey to permit rear additions to 17 Lake Trail West was approved; the total building area will be 2736 sq.ft.

Application of James and Amelia Nagle, 21 Pleasantville Rd, approved: increasing the total building area of 3029 sq ft, max building ratio of 8.6%, and side setback of 13.8’, from the code requirements of 3000 sq ft, 8% and 20’, respectively.

Application of Carmine and Grace Petti, 112 Village Rd, approved: to permit an addition and to approve the existing setbacks for the attached garage. The lot coverage ratio would increase to 12.6% from the required 10%;

Application of Stephen and Sandy Cullis, Block 23.03, lot 1, Sand Spring Rd, approved to permit an addition in back of residence and modifying the front porch. New building area ratio will be 17.2% instead of ordinance requirement of 15%.

Application of Anita Schroeder, BI 21, lot 15.02, 34 Glen Alpin Rd, to have the undersized lot classified as conforming, approved.

April 19, 2007: The application of Nicole and Duncan Lamonte was heard, 26 Primrose Trail, to request approval of a 2.42' side yard, a total side yard (both sides) 11.72', and a building area of 19.33%, instead of 4', 15' and 15%, respectively.

PLANNING BOARD, March 26, 2007

At the Planning Board, the Crimi subdivision application hearing started. The request is to subdivide Block 49, Lot 36, Welsh Lane into 2 lots. The proposed lot 36.01 would require a building envelope variance of 100x78 feet instead of the required 100x100 feet; proposed lot 36.01 would also have 295.99 feet frontage instead of the 300 feet frontage required by the zoning ordinance.

At the next planning board meeting, April 23, 2007, there will be discussion regarding amending the Township Master Plan to incorporate a revised and updated land use plan element that will include a summary of recommendations concerning New Vernon Village and other matters.

Harding Township Historic Preservation Commission, no report this month
Civic Association News: Thank you to all who have sent the editor information regarding changes to the Harding Township Directory.

DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are May 4 and June 8, 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: Please see the revised Recycling notice on page 2, above.

DATES TO REMEMBER, meetings as noted.

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