

December 2007

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

**About The Harding Township Civic Association:** this private, non-governmental volunteer organization serves an unusual role in the community. Its goals are: to foster public interest in government, and to assist in achieving and maintaining good mutual understanding between citizens and public officials, to promote knowledge and appreciation of public problems through non-partisan publicity and to inform, arouse and lead public opinion toward the solution of public problems. To these ends, and for over 50 years, the Civic Association has been staffed by volunteers who attend meetings of the Township government, and report and publish on those meetings. These reports appear in The Thumbnail, the monthly newsletter which you are reading. Although the Civic Association asks you, and everyone living or working in the Township to join the Civic Association as a dues-paying member, the Thumbnail is mailed to every home in Harding Township, regardless of whether or not you contribute.

### **STATEMENT OF THUMBNAIL EDITORIAL POLICY**

The main purpose of the Thumbnail is to report Township government actions at official Township Board and School Board meetings not reported anywhere else. The content is provided by the volunteer Civic Association members who attend the tedious township meetings for many hours and write up concise reports, which even then get edited down ruthlessly. As an additional feature, Thumbnail provides timely community information, but this is very space sensitive. We try to keep Thumbnail to about 12 pages, and our annual budget is less than about \$25,000. We use the US mail to deliver it to your home so you have a hard copy to read at your leisure.

The Thumbnail Editorial Policy is that objective, non-selective and unbiased reporting is the fundamental principle of Thumbnail accounts. Thumbnail reporters serve the interests of all Harding residents and recognize the essential contribution diversity of thought makes to the vitality of our community. Should you find that we have erred in some factual matter, or we have failed to attribute an idea to its source, or that the reporting implies an inappropriate value judgment, please let us know, and we will correct our oversight in our next edition. Please send your written corrections to The Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976, or by email to the editor: hesnaj@verizon.net.

We also invite your participation in the Civic Association- we welcome new members to the Board of Trustees. None of us are "professional" reporters, just citizens doing a service for all of us who cannot attend meetings due to other commitments. Thumbnail was started over 50 years ago, in response to the lack of

civic news coverage in the “regular” press, and the problem still exists. If you are interested in participating, please get in touch with the Association at the above address. We also thank you for your support of the Civic Association, in both your interest and comments, and with your financial contributions through dues. Don’t forget, the Harding Twp Civic Assn. has a WEB SITE, on which Thumbnail and the Township Directory are posted, <http://www/hardingcivic.org>. The current website includes a listing of **community announcements**, a **community event calendar**, **electronic versions of the Thumbnail** (including back issues), online **special reports** on a variety of Harding matters, as well as information about the Civic Association. We would be interested in hearing any comments about our website including likes, dislikes, and requests for new features or functionality to be considered for the new site. Please contact Alf Newlin at [alf.newlin@verizon.net](mailto:alf.newlin@verizon.net) with all comments.

In addition, the Civic Association also publishes an annual compendium of township officials, both elected and appointed, “The Directory of Community Services”, and also provides a “welcome packet” of information to newcomers into our community.

The Civic Association is most proud of its role in sponsoring and planning the Memorial Day Parade, a unique celebration of civic pride as well as an expression of gratitude for those who have served our community, in all its aspects: local, regional, and national. Over the past 40 years, a “citizen of the year” has been named at this event: someone in town who has contributed through his or her or their volunteer efforts to promote the interest and welfare of the Township and its residents and to preserve the general character of the Township. These have included some familiar, and some not-so familiar names, as many have been named for contributions which are not widely public, but none the less valuable to all of us. If you have nominations for “citizen of the year”, please send on to us. We encourage people to speak up, as we cannot be knowledgeable about every private citizen’s contributions to the town.

If you are interested in more active participation in the Civic Association, send an Email to the editor, [hesnaj@verizon.net](mailto:hesnaj@verizon.net), or write The Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976, or come to the next meeting, at Kirby Hall, **7:30 PM, Monday January 7.** The **Civic Association Annual Meeting will be Monday February 4, at 7:30 PM**, in the Township Hall.

### **THE LIBRARY**

**Storytime with Lynn Hughes:** an engaging, interactive exploration of our neighborhood and environment. For two- and three-year-olds with their parents or caregivers. Upcoming dates and themes: **December 19 and 26: No Storytime.** **January 2: Rescue Heroes.** **January 9: Who Delivers Our Mail?** Meet at New

**Vernon Post Office.** Unless otherwise noted, Storytime is held in the Court Room of the Harding Municipal Building. Please visit and enjoy the Storytime themed displays on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in small Conference Room opposite the Library.

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade Book Club:** This Book Club is currently closed to new members. Meets every other Tuesday, 4:30-5:45 p.m. Upcoming meetings: **January 8, and January 22.** Book titles in progress are: *Flush* by Carl Hiaasen and the *Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan.

**5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Book Club:** There are a few openings in this group. Using a literary circle format, the Book Club is designed to involve both reluctant and enthusiastic readers in the exploration of great, age-appropriate literature. Meetings are every other Thursday, 4:30-5:45 p.m. in the Judge's Chamber. Next meetings: **December 20, January 17, and January 31.**

**Crafternoons – Workshops for the Whole Family:** Spend a Sunday afternoon being inspired by our wealth of local talent! Every other Sunday, 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the Court Room of the Municipal Building. Upcoming workshops: **December 16:** *European Holiday Decorating*; **January 13:** *African Print Making*; **January 27:** *Knitting for Beginners.*

**Evening Book Group:** No meeting in December...next meeting, Wednesday, **January 30,** 7:30 p.m. We will discuss Richard Russo's new novel, *Bridge of Sighs.* Set in small-town upstate New York, it is an unfolding saga of the Lynch and Marconi families

The library will be closed December 24, 25, and 31 and January 1, 2008.

Library Phone: 973-267-8000 X132

Library Web site: [hardinglibrary.org](http://hardinglibrary.org)

**From the Friends of the Library: Harding Township Library to benefit from the sale of Justine Westhead's art.** La Galerie du Bel Event, the impressionist art gallery at 4 Village Rd, New Vernon, will be donating 20% of the purchase price of every work of art sold through December 31st to Friends of the Harding Township Public Library. Additional information can be found by inquiring at the Library or La Galerie du Bel Event; phone 908-451-5738.

#### **NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.**

The NVVFD Auxiliary is selling Unique New Vernon Totes, Great for gifts, shopping, carrying mail, books, groceries, toys, etc. All proceeds benefit the NVVFD. \$30, payable to NVVFD Auxiliary, on sale every Saturday morning at the Sunrise Market in New Vernon near Post Office, limited supply. For further information call Sue Heineman 973-267-7731 or Bernice Paton 973-539-5168. ***The NVVFD is the only independently owned Fire Department in NJ & does not use your tax dollars.***

**From the Harding Township Police, CELL PHONES AND 9-1-1**

What's unusual about calling 9-1-1 from a cell phone? Because of the way cellular telephone calls are routed, calls to 9-1-1 may not reach the proper dispatch operators. Generally, the police agency that receives a cellular 9-1-1 call is determined by the origination of the call in relation to a specific cellular tower. The Harding Police have received 9-1-1 calls from cellular users from many other townships. If you are reporting an emergency via cellular telephone, it's crucial to inform the 9-1-1 operator of your exact location. The appropriate and closest response can then be activated.

**From the Harding Twp. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

A note of caution regarding Deer/Motor Vehicle Accidents

Precautions: When you see a deer entering the roadway, do not watch where the deer is going but rather where it is coming from. More likely than not, there are others following, and they might enter the roadway too.

Try not to swerve upon encountering a deer! You might hit a fixed object such as a telephone pole or a tree, resulting in serious injuries. Travel slowly in the evening hours when vision is limited. When a car in front of you brakes or slows down, do the same. It is possible that the driver has spotted a deer about to enter the roadway.

Accidents: If you have a collision with a deer, pull the vehicle off the road with 4-way flashers on. If in Harding Twp. call the Harding Twp. Police at (973) 455 0500, or 911 if you are elsewhere. Wait for the police to arrive. They will take a report and provide other assistance.

**Harding Alliance Against Substance Abuse**

The website is <http://hardingalliance.hardingnj.org>, containing the meeting schedule, mission statement, useful links to substance abuse prevention websites, current programming and more. Harding Alliance meetings are always open to the public. Questions? email [Judymotown@patmedia.net](mailto:Judymotown@patmedia.net). Next meeting is in the Guidance Office of the Harding Township School at 8:45 AM on January 16, 2008.

**From the Board of Health, regarding Safe Syringe Disposal**

The improper disposal of needles and syringes, used by individuals in the home for medical care, can pose a potential health hazard to others such as family members, sanitation workers and people in the community. Diseases and injuries can result from accidental needle sticks.

The improper disposal of needles and syringes is also regulated by NJ state law. Violators of this statute can be fined and/or imprisoned.

Morristown Memorial Hospital operates a Safe Syringe Disposal Program

and will provide containers for disposal of needles, syringes and lancets. When the container is full, it is returned to the laboratory in exchange for a new one. For information on this program, call 973-971-5271.

In NJ, needles and syringes may also be disposed in the municipal trash IF the following steps are carefully followed:

1. Empty laundry detergent bottles or 2 liter soda bottles with screw-on caps may be used to dispose of needles and syringes
2. Place a large label on the container: SYRINGES –DO NOT RECYCLE
3. Seal the bottle tightly with its original lid and wrap duct tape over the lid
4. Dispose of the tightly sealed full container of needles and syringes in your household garbage – NOT in your recycling bin

#### **TOWNSHIP NEWS**, November 19, 2007 Meeting

Attending: Mr. Bartlett, Mr. Dinsmore, Dr. Lanzerotti, and Mr. Murray

Absent: Mr. Ward.

#### **Future Meetings**

- December 19<sup>th</sup>, Public hearing on the Bond Ordinance.

#### **Announcements & Presentations**

The following were discussed during the meeting:

- **Route 202 Detour:** The Township Committee gave an update on the pending Route 202 detour. The five mile detour through Harding will begin in January and is expected to end in March, but in any event should not last more than 120 days. The detour is for north bound Rt. 202 traffic and will go from Glen Alpin Road to Blue Mill Road, Blue Mill Road to James Street, and James Street to Harter Road. The detour will be from 10 AM through 8 PM weekdays.
- **Affordable Housing Debt Refinancing:** Gail McKane, Steve Roga, and Bob Swisher, the Township Auditor, gave a presentation regarding the refinancing of the debt for the Affordable Housing complex (aka “the Farm at Harding”). The original financing was short term and will be coming due. As a replacement, the Township is planning to issue 20 year municipal debt with a principal amount of \$3,816,000. Mr. Roga and Mr. Swisher received many questions about the associated finances including questions about the estimated \$184,000 of associated expenses, which include \$50-\$60 thousand of dealer commission costs. The response was that these were projected amounts only, and that specific costs would be identified when the planned refinancing was more imminent.
- **Glen Alpin Management Plan.** On behalf of the Harding Land Trust (“HTL”), Suzanne Engel, a HTL Trustee, presented a management plan for the “open-spaces” portion (approximately the front six acres) of the property. HTL is a minority co-owner of Glen Alpin along with the Township. The plan does not

address the Glen Alpin house or grounds around the house. Under the terms of the co-tenancy agreement, HTL is to present a report to the Township on a regular basis. It is up to the Township to pay for and implement any approved upon plan. A reprint of the main recommendations listed in the plan are:

- 1) The front field should be mowed once a month during the growing season, to allow public enjoyment of this space.
- 2) Remove snow from the driveway as necessary.
- 3) The driveway should be returned to being a continuous "circular" drive, either by exchanging some Glen Alpin land in the rear of the house, with the neighbor behind, for the small part of the existing drive now on his property, or, by constructing a new section of driveway to fill in the "missing link". This will greatly facilitate the access and egress to the property.
- 4) Investigate a semi-buried slate slab in the same area as the Kemble Gravesite. If it is of historical significance, an iron or other type fence should be built around it and the Kemble Gravesite together. If it is of no significance, it should be filled in, as there is a possibility of someone falling into it as it currently exists.
- 5) The Kemble Gravesite, with or without the inclusion of the above-mentioned slab, should have a fence around it, to prevent further degradation or vandalism.

The report also identified other maintenance projects mostly involving the removal of trees and tree stumps.

There was considerable discussion about Glen Alpin costs, as well as how the maintenance has been funded to date. Dr. Lanzerotti noted that the Township had paid in the past \$20,000-\$30,000 for an archeological study and asked whether that study had covered the grave sites. Dr. Lanzerotti also noted that the mowing has been performed to date by the DPW and has been paid for from general Township funds, but that in the future, maintenance should be paid for by HOST funds. Phil Rosenbach, also a HTL trustee, stated that it was important to have an adequate maintenance budget adequate for open space properties.

#### Correspondence

- Ms. McKane announced that a revised Highlands plan was about to be released. The revised plan would be available for public comments until December 23<sup>rd</sup>, with final adoption scheduled for the end of January 2008.

#### Hearing Persons Present

- Glen Alpin Expenditures. Steve Balog, chair of the Glen Alpin Strategy Committee, asked the Township Committee for an update on Glen Alpin spending specifically inquiring if actual spending had been tracked against the \$968,000 spending cap agreed upon by the Township Committee. John

Murray responded that there was not a detailed reconciliation, but that details could be provided.

- Judy Ward spoke out strongly against the termination of Linda Peralta, the former Township Clerk. Reading from a prepared statement, Ms. Ward underscored that the termination was not handled well, that it appeared to be unduly rushed, and that Ms. Peralta's termination was at odds with the quality service Ms. Peralta had given to the Township and Harding residents. Other than thanking Ms. Ward for her thoughts, the Township Committee had no comment.

The reorganization meeting of the Harding Township Committee originally scheduled for January 2, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at Kirby Hall, Harding Township Municipal Building, Blue Mill Road, New Vernon, NJ has been **CHANGED to Friday, January 4, 2008 at 7:30 p.m.** Formal action is expected to be taken at this meeting.

#### **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**, November 15, 2007

The following items were on the agenda for the November 15, meeting

Application 21-07 David and Barbara Bugen, 42 Woodland Road, Block 12 Lot 3 Zone R-1, asking for a "C" Variance

Application 22-07 Jeffrey and Tracey Flanagan, 6 Meyersville Road, Block 12 Lot 13 Zone R-3 & R-1, asking for a "C" Variance

Application 23-07, Mary Jane Turnbull, 9 Douglas Rd, Block 9, lot 25, asking for amended approval for a "C" variance.

#### **PLANNING BOARD** – November 26, 2007

The meeting was originally scheduled to be a joint meeting of the Planning Board and the Township Committee with proposed COAH (Coalition on Affordable Housing) regulations on the agenda. The agenda was revised to be a regular Planning Board Meeting after COAH was dropped from the agenda.

##### **Mount Kemble Recreation Complex - *Courtesy review***

The meeting room held nearly 30 members of the public from Morris Township and Harding Township to participate in a review of a proposed recreation complex to be built by Morris Township on land in Harding currently zoned as R-2 Residential.

The deputy Mayor of Morris Township started with a presentation on the complex, pointing out that a recent article in the Daily Record had the map wrong. He showed that the proposed complex would be built on approximately 15 acres near Frederick Place in Morris Township and Blackwell and Sand Spring Roads in Harding. The complex would include two full artificial turf, lighted soccer fields. Access to the fields would be through existing office building property. The property is owned by SK Associates LLC (an affiliate of the Cushman family - real estate developers) and Morris Township has a signed contract to purchase the property

subject to rezoning by Harding. According to the Deputy Mayor, as currently zoned, the property could be developed into 12 homes. The Deputy Mayor implied that the tax revenue gained if houses were built, would not cover the cost to Harding of providing municipal services. In the past, the Planning Board said they had reviewed other alternatives for the site including a hotel and a school. Isabel Olcott, a Board member, said she was in favor of the complex as it “was a good use of the land.”

Jim Rybka, a Board Member, asked what benefit Harding would receive from making the zoning change. The Deputy Mayor said that the 12 houses if built would be a burden to Harding, as Harding would have to plow roads, fix pot holes, etc. Bob Edgar, asked about the possibility of transferring the property to Morris Township so they would bear the responsibility and cost of providing municipal services. The advisors to the Board counseled that while that was a possibility, it could not be accomplished to meet Morris Townships March deadline, but could be accomplished later.

Marshall Bartlett, a Board Member, said he was in favor of rezoning, but wanted Morris Township to help Harding by providing more parking spaces for Harding residents at Convent Station.

Several residents from Morris Township and Harding Township that live near the property in question spoke. Several raised concerns about the negative impact of lighting and noise on their neighborhood. Others were concerned about security and the possibility of people hanging out on the property after hours, out of sight, as well as the likelihood of an increase in traffic. Others spoke in favor of the project noting the lack of available playing fields for children. One person questioned whether the property could ever be developed given its environmental sensitivity and asked about other uses for the property. There was also concern expressed for the loss of natural habitat animals that would result from development.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend the zoning change to the Township Committee with Mr. Murray abstaining. Several members qualified their approval with reference to the need for an acceptable site plan, details on acceptable usage (hours and events), and the eventual transfer of the property to Morris Township so they bore the cost and responsibility of providing municipal services. Mr. Bartlett was in favor of using the approval to aid in bargaining with Morris Township to get more parking at the train station for Harding residents.

#### **Frelinghuysen Property – Public Hearing**

Representatives of Peter Frelinghuysen were on hand to update the Board and the public on a subdivision plan that was approved 10 years ago. The property is 147 acres on the west side of James Street that would be accessed from Sand Spring Lane via two new cul de sac roads. The original subdivision plan included 260 acres land on the east side of James Street that has since been developed. The revised plan includes 13 lots, one less than in the original plan. Since 1997, new



wetland regulations resulted in the need to move one of the access roads, thereby eliminating a lot. Several of the lots are large and could be subdivided in the future.

There was discussion among the Frelinghuysen representatives and the Board and its representatives concerning bridle path easements, storm water management, road placement, appropriate setbacks and clearing of trees.

The most contentious discussion centered on the plan to use municipal water to serve the development. Several members felt that public water should be used since it was adjacent to the property and it would aid in fire fighting and leave more well water for other residents. Others felt that extending municipal water would be in conflict with the Master Plan and would make further development of the property more likely as well as set a precedent for extending municipal water in other areas in Harding. The point was made that cisterns could be installed to provide water for fire fighting. The Frelinghuysen representatives said they would ask Mr. Frelinghuysen about increasing the setbacks from Sand Spring Lane, which by regulation would only need to be 100 feet (plus 13 feet of bridal path) rather than 150 feet, as the lots would not be considered to have frontage on Sand Spring Lane, but rather front the access roads. They said they would also consider additional conservation easements and try and move one of the access roads so as to be farther away from a resident's driveway on the other side of Sand Spring Lane. The representatives said Mr. Frelinghuysen was in his 90s and was in good health and had no current plans to develop the property. The application to renew the subdivision approval will be heard at the next Planning Board meeting, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **From the Environmental Commission**

This is the second in series of three articles highlighting technologies and methods homeowners can use to conserve and save \$\$\$. This installment focuses on the subject of energy-efficient heating. Heating and cooling makes up a significant portion of residential energy usage.

According to the US EPA, a two-degree reduction in the temperature setting on the thermostat will cut energy use by 1%. Houses that are well sealed and insulated actually use less energy, as the heating system doesn't have to run as hard. Replacing an older furnace with an Energy Star listed model costing \$4,000, is projected to result in an estimated net equipment-lifetime savings of \$3,269, according to the EPA calculation, and a new replacement furnace can cut carbon dioxide emissions significantly.

Take these steps to increase the efficiency of your heating and cooling system: Change your air filter regularly; Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly; Install programmable thermostats; Seal your heating and cooling ducts; and Consider installing ENERGY STAR qualified heating and cooling equipment if needed. Another useful aspect of the Energy Star program is that a number of tools have been

developed to help consumers gauge what savings might result from various actions. Among the tools are home energy audits; see websites [energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=home\\_energy\\_yardstick.showStep2](http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=home_energy_yardstick.showStep2) and [energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new\\_homes\\_partners.showHomesSearch](http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showHomesSearch) and ([energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home\\_improvement.hm\\_improvement\\_hpwes](http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_improvement.hm_improvement_hpwes)).

The Environmental Commission is interested in your response to this general topic. Please let us know what you thought of this article and what you think of the series. Please also tell us whether you would be interested in a public seminar on general topic, possibly with commercial vendors of some of the options available. You can reach us at [environmental@hardingnj.org](mailto:environmental@hardingnj.org) or 973-267-8000 x139.

#### **Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee**

No meeting in November.

#### **BOARD OF EDUCATION, HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

No reports this month.

#### **TOWNSHIP RECYCLING**

**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, newspaper, 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 are** 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:** Jan 5 and 19.

**Civic Association: THE DEADLINE FOR THE next two issues OF THE THUMBNAIL is January 18 (NOTE CHANGE) and February 15.** Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are posted on our Website- Also on the website is a town-wide events calendar. Check it out: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. Send questions or comments about Thumbnail to editor, **email address: [hesnaj@verizon.net](mailto:hesnaj@verizon.net)**, or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

**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 Preservation Comm (1stThursday)	7:30 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)	7:30 PM
Shade Tree (2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday)	3 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM