

**January 2008
Happy New Year!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Civic Association News

The annual meeting of the Harding Township Civic Association will be held **Monday February 11, at 7:00 PM**, in the Township Kirby Hall. A brief business meeting, (including election of the nominees for the Board of trustees: current candidates: Stephen Balog and Bridget Berman; incumbents for re-election include Ann Campbell, David Hodgson, Lyn Hughes, and Alf Newlin,) will be followed by "An Evening with the Mayor", Dr. Lou Lanzerotti, starting at 7:30 pm. There will be an opportunity to meet other Township Committee members. Please come and bring your questions.

Highlands: Special Public Meeting on the Highlands Regional Master Plan

The Township will hold a special meeting on **Thursday, January 17th at 7:30 PM** at the Town Hall concerning the recently issued draft of the Highlands Regional Master Plan ("RMP"). Eileen Swan, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Council, the State agency responsible for the RMP and implementing the Highlands legislation, will attend the meeting and answer questions from the Township. The Township Committee has many questions about how the RMP draft rules might impact Harding - specifically including the proposed RMP zoning map of Harding - which it hopes to cover with Ms. Swan. The Township has until the end of February to submit written comments about the RMP draft to the Highlands Council.

The Township Committee has identified the Highlands RMP as one of the most important topics for the Township in 2008 and urged members of the public interested in Highlands to attend the meeting. For more information on this meeting as well as information provided by the Township, please see the Harding Township Civic Association website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>, the Highlands section under Thumbnail & Reports | Special Reports, as well as the Township Committee report, below.

Harding Township Historical Society

The Annual Meeting of HTHS will take place at the New Vernon Firehouse on **Thursday, January 24** starting with a brief business meeting and refreshments at **7 PM** and program at **7:30**. Guest speaker is Dr. Joanne Freeman, professor of history and director of graduate studies at Yale University. A member of the prestigious Organization of American Historians, she is among the most respected Alexander Hamilton scholars in the country and has appeared on numerous

television documentaries and educational programs - most recently "The Duel" on the PBS American Experience series. Her talk is entitled "Duelling as Politics: Reinterpreting the Burr-Hamilton Duel." Admission is free for HTHS members, \$5 per person for non members. Seating is limited to 100 and reservations are suggested. Call (973)292-3661 or email hardinghist@patmedia.net .

From the Harding Township Tax Collector: February 10th is a Sunday in 2008; therefore the grace period for tax collection in Harding Township is extended to Monday, Feb 11, 2008, for the 1st Qtr 2008.

BLOOD DRIVE

Saturday, January 26, is the Harding Township's Annual Blood Drive, at The New Vernon Presbyterian Church on Lee's Hill Rd. from **8:30 AM till 2:00 PM**. This is co-sponsored by Christ The King, The Green Village United Methodist Church, and The New Vernon Presbyterian Church. The American Red Cross needs your blood to provide a safe and adequate supply of blood to local hospitals. Please call Sue Sameth at (973) 267-0552 to schedule an appointment or drop in at your convenience on Saturday.

TOWNSHIP NEWS

Harding Township Committee Reorganization Meeting, January 4, 2008
Attending: Mr. Bartlett, Mr. Rybka, Dr. Lanzerotti, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Murray
Oaths of Office

James Rybka was sworn in as Township Committeeman. Mr. Rybka won last year's primary and general election to replace Mr. Dinsmore whose last term expired at the end of 2007; Dr. Lanzerotti was nominated and sworn in as Chairman of the Township Committee for 2008. Dr. Lanzerotti was also the Chair in 2007. (This position is informally titled "Mayor"); Mr. Bartlett was nominated and sworn in as Vice Chair of the Township Committee.

Remarks from Committee Members

The Committee members, led by Dr. Lanzerotti, addressed the public on several issues including the Township's challenges and objectives for 2008:

- Dr. Lanzerotti cordially welcomed Jim Rybka to the Township Committee. Lanzerotti said that he particularly enjoyed the opportunity to meet and talk with Township residents for advice and feedback and hoped this would continue in 2008.
- Mr. Murray spoke about the quality and contribution of the Township's sub-committees, which are staffed by approximately 200 citizen volunteers. Mr. Murray noted that the challenges of 2008 included efforts to maintain Harding's home rule and manage its tax structure. Mr. Murray stated that it will be

important to “keep the Trenton Camel from getting its nose under the Harding tent.”

- Mr. Ward summarized his first year on the Township Committee, noting the learning curve and looking forward to contributing to the work ahead for 2008.
- Mr. Bartlett also acknowledged the work performed by the sub-committees. Mr. Bartlett stated that two of the most challenging issues facing the Township were the Highlands legislation implementation and Harding’s management of its COAH obligations.

Dr. Lanzerotti listed the main challenges and priorities for the Township in 2008. A copy of this portion of his statement follows:

“Municipal Taxes. Prudent use of tax dollars must continue to be the objective for the Harding Township budget as we progress through 2008. Shared services should continue to be vigorously pursued whenever they make fiscal sense.

Glen Alpin. I noted last January that ‘the Township’s direct responsibility for the Glen Alpin house must end quickly and efficiently in order to halt the further expenditure of public resources’. I acknowledge tonight that transfer of direct responsibility has not happened as expeditiously as I had hoped. I believe it is both my and the Committee’s goal to succeed in this endeavor before the end of this year.

Highlands Act. In the first quarter of 2008 the Township Committee must obtain a much better understanding of the implications of the Highlands Act on our town, and convey this information to our residents. While Harding is in the state-designated Planning Area, we have little understanding to date of the meaning of this for responsible local planning and control of our town.

COAH. The state recently issued a set of new COAH rules for the next round of affordable housing. There are numerous changes in the rules that will impact our town. The Township Committee does not have an understating as yet of the implications for Harding. The Committee has just established a small subcommittee to begin to obtain this understanding. Public discussions will ultimately be held to inform residents of our understandings and to seek public inputs.

Public Safety. The Township Committee must continue to work closely with the New Vernon Volunteer Fire Department, uniquely the only self-funded department in the entire state, to ensure adequate water supplies for fire personnel and general public safety.

Citizen participation. One of the outstanding qualities of Harding is the active involvement and participation of citizens in civic issues and activities via Township boards and committees. The Township Committee instituted

an outreach effort last year to enlarge the pool of interested citizens. I think that this has been a success, and will be continued.

Library. The Harding Library has continued a close collaborative relationship with the Township Committee over the last year to ensure the Library’s implementation. I look forward to ground-breaking, finally, this year.

Open Space. Protection of its environment and of its open spaces has been a hallmark of Harding even before the Great Swamp was saved in the early 1960s. The Harding Open Space Trust Committee has begun to work on priorities for maintenance and acquisition of open space to ensure that limited volunteer time and limited public resources are devoted to the highest priority projects.

Township employees. The Township Committee must continue to encourage and empower the Township’s administrator and all Township employees to provide cheerful and helpful service to citizens.”

Sub-Committee Organization, and respective chairs are as follows:

Committee	Chair	Vice Chair
Planning, Zoning and Legal	Murray	Bartlett
Finance & Insurance	Murray	Rybka
Public Safety	Rybka	Murray
Public Works and Building	Lanzerotti	Rybka
Personnel	Ward	Lanzerotti
Recreation Commission	Ward	Bartlett
Freeholder Liaison	Rybka	Murray
Glen Alpin Strategy Liaison	Murray	Ward
School Board Liaison	Lanzerotti	
Open Space Liaison	Murray	Bartlett
Board of Health Liaison	Rybka	
Local Assistance Board	Ward	
Ten Towns Liaison	Murray	
Redevelopment Steering Committee	Murray	Bartlett
Library Liaison	Murray	
Bayne Park Management Planning	Ward	

Highlands: Special Public Meeting on the Regional Master Plan

The Township will hold a special meeting on Thursday, January 17th at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall regarding the recently issued second draft of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (“RMP”) and its impact on Harding. This last draft of the RMP is open for public comment until the end of February after which it will be finalized. The RMP implements the 2004 New Jersey Highlands legislation restricting development in the 859,000 acre Highland region of northwest New Jersey covering Warren, Morris, Hunterdon, Passaic, and Sussex counties. The Highlands legislation designates boundaries within the Highlands into two categories: Preservation Areas and Planning Areas. Counties and municipalities must comply with RMP rules for land in the Preservation Area, but have the option of whether or not to follow RMP rules for land located in Planning Areas. All of Harding lies in the Planning Area and therefore Harding appears to have the choice of whether or not to adopt RMP rules. Adoption means Harding’s master plan and zoning ordinances must conform with and would be subordinate to RMP rules as supervised by the NJ State Department of Environment Protection (“DEP”). In addition to compiling comments to the RMP draft to be submitted to the Highlands Council prior to the end of the comment period, the Township Committee is starting the analysis necessary to understand the pros and cons of modifying its master plan and zoning to be in compliance with the RMP.

According to Dr. Lanzerotti, the Township Committee wants to clarify the many unanswered questions about the Highlands RMP and how it affects Harding. Ms. Gail McKane, the Township Administrator, said that a list of the Township’s questions will be compiled and made available to the public prior to the meeting.

Eileen Swan, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Council, the State agency responsible for the RMP and implementing the Highlands legislation, will attend the meeting and answer questions. Jack Schrier, Vice Chairman of the Highlands Council and Morris County Freeholder, has also been invited but has not yet agreed to attend.

The Highlands legislation designates boundaries within the Highlands into two categories: Preservation Area and Planning Area. Counties and municipalities must comply with RMP rules for land in the Preservation Area, but have the option of whether or not to follow RMP rules for land located in Planning Areas. Harding lies within the Planning Area and therefore will likely have to make a choice in the future of whether or not to adopt RMP rules. Adoption means Harding’s master plan and zoning must conform with and would be subordinate to RMP rules as supervised by the NJ DEP. The RMP draft includes a zoning map for the Highlands region including Harding Township. Harding land has been assigned to one of three zones: Preservation, Conservation, or Community. Land within a zone may be further assigned to a sub-zone. Information on the Highlands or a copy of the RMP draft maybe obtained from the Highlands website www.highlands.state.nj.us. For an

informative interactive zoning map provided on the Highlands website, see <http://maps.njhighlands.us/>, follow the instructions and then select Harding Township.

The Township Committee is studying the RMP draft in order to understand its potential impact to Harding as well as to ultimately identify the pros and cons of whether or not to modify its master plan and ordinances to be in compliance with the RMP. A preliminary analysis of the RMP by the Township's planner is shown in The Harding Township Civic Association website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. The Township's first priority, however, is to submit its comments on the RMP draft before the expiration of the comment period. According to Dr. Lanzerotti, the Township Committee has many questions about the RMP draft, specifically including the zoning map for Harding, it would like answered prior to submitting its comments. A list of the Township's questions it plans to discuss during the meeting is also listed in the Civic Association website. Dr. Lanzerotti, Mr. Murray, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Bartlett have all identified the Highlands RMP as one of the most important topics for the Township in 2008 and urged members of the public interested in Highlands to attend the meeting.

Township Committee – December 19, 2007

Mr. Lanzerotti, Mr. Dinsmore, Mr. Murray and Mr. Ward of the Township Committee were in attendance. Susan Kimball, Township Planner was present as was Ms. Negaard, Township Attorney and Ms. McKane, Township Administrator.

Donald Dinsmore

Mayor Lanzerotti recognized Donald Dinsmore for his 15 plus years of service to the Township noting in particular, his contributions on affordable housing and negotiations with Morris Township. The mayor said he hoped that Don would be available to serve on a committee from time to time. In a Resolution, it was noted that Mr. Dinsmore served for four years as Mayor, one year as Deputy Mayor, five years on the Planning Board as well as the Board of Adjustment and Open Space.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance 14 – 2007 – Fee Ordinance. This ordinance revised fees for various Township services. The discussion focused on fact that fees were required to be paid for such routine actions as the installation of a satellite dish and a washing machine. The Committee noted that the fees were intended to offset the cost to Township of approving such installation to ensure it was done properly. A member of the public asked why these sorts of regulations and fees were on the books if the Township wasn't going to enforce them.

Ordinance 15-2007 – Bond Ordinance. This ordinance approved up to an \$8 million offering of municipal bonds by Harding to refinance short-term borrowings. The Township Committee and the financial staff noted that the current short-term borrowings were at approximately 3.75% with the affordable housing corporation

debt that the Township must assume at 5%. Based on current market conditions and the Township's excellent credit profile, the debt could be issued for a fixed rate of approximately 4%. This slight premium to current short-term rates would eliminate the risk to the town of a rise in rates over the term of the bonds. The Committee stressed that the bond offering was only to refinance existing debt and did not represent new borrowings.

DEP - Historical District Update

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection has jurisdiction over historical preservation issues. The DEP maintains that they can overrule local authority with regard to historical district regulations including the granting of demolition permits for example. Ned Ward noted that the Silverlake Historical District was created in 1996 to protect the area from possible road widening and the installation of sewer and water lines. At the time, many residents objected to being included in a historical district because it would infringe on private property rights. Now it appears that the historical district designation may not provide the intended protection while still restricting private property rights. Ms Negaard, the Township attorney said she would investigate the issue.

COAH

Mr. Lanzerotti said that new COAH (Committee on Affordable Housing) regulations had been firmed up by NJ and the Township Committee would take up this issue over the next several months.

New Highlands Master Plan

Susan Kimball, Township Planner, drafted a memo on the current version of the Plan which is entering a 90 day comment period. The Committee and Julia Somers, Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition praised the report as an accurate summary of the Plan and the issues facing Harding.

Ned Ward attended a Highland Commission meeting recently and complained that they would not answer questions. Ms. Somers confirmed that they would not answer questions during the comment period. It was also noted that the Township commented on the previous version of the plan (to correct mistakes in the map) and did not receive a response from the Highlands Staff.

The Township must eventually decide whether to opt into the Highlands regulations or not. Evidently, there may be some incentives (positive and/or negative) for municipalities to opt in. These incentives could concern money for land acquisition and COAH regulations for example.

Bike Path around the Great Swamp

Chatham Township Open Space Committee has initiated a family bike loop through the Great Swamp. Chatham has "assessed" Harding \$14,000 for signage. Harding Open Space Trust has reviewed the plan and recommended against Harding's participation for safety reasons. HOST noted that the loop uses county roads with 40

mile per hour speeds and high traffic and Pleasantville road which is narrow.

Glen Alpin

Michael Mead asked about the special attorney hired by the Township to review options for Glen Alpin. Mr. Lanzerotti said that Morris County has not gotten back to the Township despite several phone calls that have not been returned. Evidently, Jack Schrier, is Harding's point of contact and Morris County has hired a special counsel for the matter. Mayor Lanzerotti stated that we will resolve Glen Alpin this year but are at a standstill until we hear from Morris County.

HARDING TOWNSHIP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMM, December 2007

From the Planning Board

18 Meyersville Road, Mulford –

- ✓ The property is currently “contributing” because of the existing structure. The new lot created by the subdivision would not be a contributing property.
- ✓ The demolition-delay would apply if an application is made to demolish the existing house.
- ✓ A shared driveway (driveway easement) should be created to have only one entrance off Meyersville road in order to help preserve the streetscape.
- ✓ Due to the proximity of the new lot to the road, the new structure should be appropriate for the area. There are many other houses located on Meyersville Road which reflect the appropriate **mass, scale**, and orientation for the historic district. These are numbers 4, 6, 14, 15, and 30.
- ✓ Native plantings should be used to create a natural property line between the two lots. An example of plantings being used effectively to create this sense of boundary is 121 Lees Hill Road.
- ✓ If the septic tank for the new lot were to create a mound it would be detrimental to the streetscape.

It was also requested that further review would be required by the HPC including new lot owner for suggestions of enhancement of the buildings compatibility with surrounding lots and district landscape

From the Board of Adjustment – 147 Pleasantville Road, Conger Estate – This is a small vernacular home in the Individual Sites Historic District. The following comments were given with regards to a renovation proposal:

- ✓ The **scale, mass, and materials** are appropriate for this structure and historic district.
- ✓ The line of the existing shed roof should be continued to the addition.
- ✓ The applicant sought the suggestions of the HPC prior to commencing design; the proposed plan incorporates many of those ideas and will work to preserve the modest scale and street orientation of the remaining rural elements of Pleasantville Road.

New Vernon Fire Department – The firehouse is a contributing property in the New Vernon Historic District. The application is for a storage shed to be build on the property. The HPC commented as follows”

- ✓ The **materials, scale,** and placement are appropriate for this structure.
- ✓ The absence of exterior lighting is appropriate for this structure.
- ✓ The storage shed doors should match those of the firehouse.
- ✓ The removal of the existing shed and the new location of the proposed structure will improve streetscape along Millbrook Road.
- ✓ The proposed location of a fenced-in garbage dumpster should be changed to minimize visibility from both Millbrook and Village Roads.

From the Construction Department – 563 Tempe Wick Road – Huff – James MacDonald, Esq. attended the meeting to present plans for extensive renovations to this contributing property in the Tempe Wick Historic District. Comments are as follows:

- The 31 acre property occupies a prominent curve along Tempe Wick Road. The house is visible when traveling eastbound along the roadway and the increase in size may affect streetscape.
- Continuing the materials of the existing structure onto the addition is highly recommended. Stone is not endemic to the area and was typically used only for property walls and foundations; thus including stone on the addition is not recommended.
- Removing the peak roofline on the right side and continuing the existing roofline onto the addition is recommended.
- Placing the windows on the front or back, rather than on the side of the structure, is also recommended.
- Avoiding rounded design elements on the proposed front entrance would be more in keeping with the house’s historic style. Using linear edges would be more consistent.
- There is the possibility that the house will no longer be a contributing structure. However, due to the rural character of the fields and barns, the property will still be contributing and therefore will not change the make up of the Tempe Wick Historic District.
- The barn plans shown, but not submitted to the HPC, feature second story windows that are much larger than seen on historic barns. It is recommended that those windows be reduced in size to conform with windows typically found in older barn structures.
- The comments the Commission made in responses to the applicant previously are still relevant.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, December 12, 2007

New Applications: New Vernon Volunteer Fire Dept -- 22 Village Road

The Board unanimously approved the fire department's application to build a 30' by 30' pole barn at the rear of their property. The barn will be used to store equipment and inventory for the Country Auction. The prefab barn will sport a tin roof, clapboard siding and will match the firehouse in style and color. The plan was developed and revised over a two year period with input from neighbors and consultation with the Preservation Commission. Board member Wendy Montgomery communicated the Preservation Commission's support for the application since it will significantly improve the Millbrook Road streetscape because (a) the existing dumpster/garbage area will be moved next to the new barn and will be screened with fencing, and (b) greenery will be planted along Millbrook Rd. The variance was requested to increase the lot coverage from the current 8.4% (already over the 6% permitted by code) to 9.5%.

John McFayden/Tom Luciano --147 Pleasantville Road

The Board deferred a decision on this application. The application is to expand an existing 1200sf home to 3800sf. The current home will be demolished to the foundation and rebuilt incorporating the design of the old façade. The footprint is proposed to be expanded at the rear and right side, and two out- buildings are to be demolished and replaced. Applicant is a builder who is under contract to purchase the property from the Estate of Ethel Conger subject to receiving the variances.

Ursula and Edward Carr – 27 Jenks Road

The Board unanimously approved this application to convert a "Florida room" an enclosed space that would be usable year round. No change in the footprint of the house.

Jeffrey and Tracy Flanagan (Part 2), 6 Meyersville Road – deferred to 1-17-08

Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee, December 12, 2007

New Chairman Loren Pfeiffer presided over the meeting. It was announced that Messrs. John Olson and Bill Paton will resign from the Committee after long service and that the Committee will search for replacements, especially for someone knowledgeable about bridle path issues. The Committee then discussed revisions to the Open Space Element of the Township Master Plan. These reviews and revisions were consistent with the Master Plan Reexamination Report adopted by the Planning Board in 2006. HOST member suggestions and comments, along with those from the Environmental Commission, were included in this final document. Both stewardship of existing HOST properties and any future HOST role in the stewardship of the Glen Alpine property were discussed.

It was then noted by Mr. Murray that one proposal for the 2008 Township budget be a rollback of the Open Space Tax of from a half to one cent per \$100,000 of valuation. The tax currently yields approximately \$1 million annually and any

rollback could be close to \$200,000. Future HOST tax receipts will be used to pay down existing debt as well as fund any future acquisition projects. The Committee then agreed to suggest to the Township Committee an offer to take over the stewardship of the Glen Alpine property which would include tree maintenance and removal, landscaping and possible redirection of the driveway. This suggestion, as an alternative to a tax rollback, is to be directed to the Township Committee by February. Finally, the Committee agreed on a proposed HOST budget for 2008 not to exceed \$15,000. These funds will be mostly for stewardship baseline assessment reports.

PLANNING BOARD, no meeting in December
HARDING TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (HTEC)
HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

No reports this month

Civic Association DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are February 15 and March 7, 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.

Please send the editor any information regarding changes to the Harding Township Directory to be published later this year. If you have responsibility for a listed service or organization, please take a moment to review and update your listing. Send an Email to the editor. ***Remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that your organization's listing is correct.***

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 1st and 3rd Saturdays (1/19, 2/2, 2/16) from 9-12 AM. Please do NOT leave recyclable materials if the center is closed.

DATES TO REMEMBER, meetings as noted.

Municipal Court (1 st and 3 rd Tuesday)	4 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)	7:30 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)	7:30 PM
Shade Tree (2 nd Monday)	3 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association (1 st Monday)	7:30 PM