

February 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

REPORT ON CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETING, FEBRUARY 11, 2008.

At the Civic Association annual meeting "with the Mayor", Dr. Lou Lanzerotti opened with brief remarks, then answered questions from the attendees. Subjects covered involved the Highlands Plan as it impacts Harding (see Highlands discussion below); Glen Alpin (no plan yet to disengage the Township from the financial burden of restoration of the historic house on the property); walkways in the Township, or at least within the "town center" (none are proposed or planned).

LIBRARY FUTURE: There was somewhat more extensive discussion in response to a question from Nick Platt, regarding the future impact, financially, regarding the library building, should the library not prove to be a viable institution. Platt raised the issue of maintenance of the structure, to be built on Township property and leased to the private library association. Should the library "fail", who would be responsible for the building? Lanzerotti replied that contract negotiations were ongoing regarding those issues, and that no final decision had been made.

ATHLETIC FIELDS ON RT 202: Many residents from Blackwell Ave were present at this meeting, and a number, including Peter McGratty, raised questions regarding an issue of serious import to the Township as a whole. Morris Township has been in discussions with the Planning, Zoning and Legal subcommittee of the Township Committee, comprising Administrator Gail McKane, John Murray and Marshall Bartlett, regarding the possible annexation by Morris Township, of one parcel of open undeveloped land in the back of the office complex on Rt 202. This is a 15 acre parcel, block 23.02 lot 5, contiguous to Frederick Pl in Morris Twp. Negotiations have been conducted by Morris Township officials, including Mayor Nace, although the land is privately owned. Sources have said that Lot 5 is owned by SK Development and the office complex is owned by Brickman Associates. It is believed that Morris Township is negotiating with SK Development to purchase the property and with Brickman as backup for access and parking. Another parcel of undeveloped land contiguous to Blackwell Ave, block 23.02 Lot 15, 25 acres, may also be owned by Brickman, but this parcel is not "in play" and apparently will remain in Harding Twp.

The proposed use is as a 2- athletic field complex. The property is completely in Harding Township, and is presently zoned for R2 residential use under Harding law, but is accessible only through the office complex entrance on Rt 202.

Reached for comment after the February 11 meeting, Lanzerotti and John Murray issued the following statement: "We have been in substantive negotiation with Morris Township, on behalf of Harding residents for several months, and have their agreement on a full range of issues should Harding's approval be given. Following is an overview of the most important: Lighting will be of the high cut-off type that will produce

no direct glare. Any light leakage from the site will be reflected to the field only. Noise maker use is limited, e.g., no air horns. There would be a PA system directed toward I-287 that would not be used for play-by-play but rather public service and safety announcements only. Attendance is to be limited to 300 people per event. Storm water runoff will be monitored for possible contamination affecting the GSWA property on the other side of 287. No professional sports, i.e., sports with paid athletes. Fencing on the back (Harding end) of the fields has been requested by Harding and is under consideration by MT.”

Many of the Harding residents opposed to the transfer of the land jurisdiction from Harding to Morris Township believe that Harding will lose any authority to control or enforce these conditions once the land is ceded to Morris Twp. The Blackwell Ave residents are skeptical about the credibility of any Morris Twp. agreement to conditions, and have urged Harding officials to not permit transfer of the land out of Harding.

Recently, the Morris United Soccer Club through its travel arm, announced that Morris Township had “authorized the purchase of the land from Harding Township” (sic: Editor’s note: confusing, as Harding does not own the land) and stated their plans called for the construction of 2 lighted turf fields off Mount Kemble Ave. (Rt 202), (Morrisunited.com, website updated 12/26/2007). At a Morris Township meeting regarding this matter on December 20, 2007, Mayor Nace indicated that artificial turf, night lighting, and holding games seven days per week until 10 PM were “non-negotiable”. Residents at the meeting questioned why elementary school children would need an 8 PM to 10 PM play time, when their children were already in bed. Some Harding residents believe that the complex would also service adult leagues and be rented on a fee basis.

There are plans for a public meeting in Harding with both Harding and Morris Township officials to discuss the property development and the conditions for the proposed athletic fields. No definite date was set as of this writing, when Thumbnail went to press in late February.

NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT Soup Contest - It's time once again for the Auxiliary sponsored "Home-made Soup Contest" , on **Sunday March 30**, 5:00-6:00 PM; Fire House, Village Rd; Cost: \$6.00 for soup, bread, coffee. Homemade desserts and soda will be available for sale. Come early! Vote for your favorite soup. Prizes will be awarded. If you would like to enter a soup in the contest, entry is free. Please contact Pat O'Reilly 973-301-2151 or Connie Cherrillo, 973-539-9383.

Thanks to all the donors and volunteers who participated in the Harding Blood Drive on January 26. And, thanks to the congregations and staff members of Christ the King Church, The First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon, and the United Methodist Church of Green Village sponsors of this drive.

THE LIBRARY

New Feature! Listen up to **downloadable audio books via OverDrive**, a new digital library. Starting in February, patrons can download titles and listen to them on their home computers, burn selected titles to a CD, and transfer them to some compatible WMA/MP3 devices. OverDrive replaces a former subscription to NetLibrary. Come to the Library to find out more.

Evening Book Group, Wednesday, February 27 at 7:30 p.m. Join the Library book group on the last Wednesday of every month for spirited discussions of a wide variety of genres, including new literature, historical fiction, and non-fiction. This month's selection is *Musicophilia* by renowned neurologist, Oliver Sacks. This fascinating collection of case stories examines the interplay between the brain and music.

Storytime with Lynn Hughes, every Wednesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Storytime is intended for youngsters ages 2-3 accompanied by caregivers or parents. Each story hour provides the child with a highly interactive, themed story experience featuring stories, music, and crafts.

Leap Year Night Storytime! Fairytale Forests, Friday, February 29, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Join Lynn Hughes and company for a special evening story hour with dragons, princesses, witches, and more. Wear your pajamas and bring a teddy and pillow for the fun. Appropriate for ages 2-5. Please sign up at the Library.

4th Grade Book Club, Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.; 5th-6th Grade Book Club, Thursdays, 4:30 p.m. Please call the Library for this month's titles and dates.
Stay up to date via the Web (hardinglibrary.org).

FROM THE NEW VERNON FIRST AID SQUAD:

We need you! Last year our squad members gave more than 25,000 total hours of volunteer time, while on-duty during the week and responding to 911 calls. We are made up entirely of volunteers, who respond to emergency calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; we need to maintain a sufficient number of members to ensure a timely response. Our members represent the diversity of our community, from high school students to retirees, from busy professionals to stay-at-home moms. Many of our members work full time. The time commitment requires just one 12 hour shift "on-call" per week, with a rotating periodic weekend night and holiday shift. Volunteers on our evening shift sleep as usual and respond only to the very occasional middle-of-the-night call, perhaps once a month; volunteers on our day shift respond from home to day calls, three or four calls per month. You can "try us out" by joining a crew and riding along, and all necessary training is free. Please contact us and we will answer any questions you might have. Susan Godfrey, Captain 973-425-6491 or: godfreyssae@verizon.net
Kate Crowley, President 973-656-0488 or: kkcrowley@verizon.net

FROM THE HARDING TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The female cancer detection program will be held on Thursday, March 6, 2008,

from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Municipal Building. The male cancer detection program will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2008, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The programs include: testing, examination, and education.

An Adult Health clinic will be held on Wednesday, April 30, 2008, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Municipal Building. This program will include, blood pressure, fasting blood chemistries; including cholesterol typing and information on nutrition. An optional Dermascan Screening, which indicates sun damage to skin, will be performed by Morristown Memorial Hospital free of charge.

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 located on the second floor of the Municipal Building or by calling 973/267-8000, extension 125 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

THANK YOU FROM BRIDLE PATH

Harding Township/Green Village Bridle Path Association members, both biped and quadruped, thank you for your generosity in responding to our appeal for funds. We are a non-profit organization devoted to maintaining a trail network that enhances our town's rural character and open spaces, as well as giving us wonderful opportunities to ride. The funds pay for insurance, repairs to equipment used in trail maintenance, and support of the Show Grounds on Sand Spring Lane. We organize a couple of horse shows or clinics each year and send out a quarterly newsletter. We recognize that it's a privilege to ride across your meadows, through your woods and, occasionally, down your driveways. Thank you for supporting us and for making room for horses in our community. Be sure to visit our web page at www.bridlepath.org.

TOWNSHIP NEWS

Highlands: Special Public Meeting on the Regional Master Plan

The Township Committee held a special public meeting on January 17, and is reported as a summary, below. For a more complete report, including a copy of all documents referred to in the summary below, see the Harding Township Civic Association website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>, the Highlands section under Thumbnail & Reports | Special Reports.

HARDING TOWNSHIP - SPECIAL HIGHLANDS MEETING

- The subject discussed at this meeting was the recently released Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) draft, in the public comment period through February. The purpose of the meeting was for the Township Committee (TC) and Harding citizens to discuss the RMP draft with Highlands Council representatives prior to the end of the comment period. Pending the release of the final RMP plan, the Township has not determined the process or timeline it will follow in order to decide whether or not to "opt-in". The Township has not considered whether or not to hold a voter referendum on the Highlands "opt-in"

decision. ***The TC has determined that no official response needed to be made to the RMP draft at this time.***

Harding is located entirely in the Planning Area of the Highlands, which means that the Township will have the option of whether or not to join the Highlands Plan when it is finalized. Other municipalities are in the Preservation Area which means they must conform to the Highlands Plan.

The Highlands Council was represented by Eileen Swan, the Executive Director, and Tom Borden, the Deputy Director and Chief Counsel. TC members present were Bartlett, Rybka, Lanzerotti, and Ward; also Nergaard, Township Attorney and Kimball, Planner. An overview of the Highlands legislation was provided by Swan, and handouts distributed that included a list of seventeen exceptions to the Highlands rules for property owners and a list of the benefits and incentives for municipalities that join Highlands. Over 3,600 comments had been received on the prior RMP draft.

Township Questions

The Township asked questions of Swan and Borden. Below is a compilation of the information discussed during the meeting, including questions raised by members of the audience, as a summary organized by topic.

Topic	Notes
Highlands Zoning Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Highlands RMP provides a detailed land use zoning map for the Highlands region including Harding. RMP interactive property search map is at http://maps.njhighlands.us/default.asp, select Harding for more information. ▪ The RMP defines “Existing Community Zones” as areas that have been developed or can support additional development. “Protection Zones” are defined as areas that should not be developed or where additional development is strongly discouraged. ▪ The Township questioned the RMP land use zoning map why certain areas of Harding were labeled as Existing Community Zones and why others were labeled as Protection Zones. The TC was concerned that some of the RMP land use classifications directly contradict Harding’s Master Plan as well as Harding’s State Planning Designation (which is PA-5: environmentally sensitive). For example, the RMP lists a substantial area on Van Beuren Road between Red Gate and Spring Valley as an area that could be developed. Currently this area is zoned RR or R-1. Another example is that the RMP land use shows the New Vernon village area as Protection Zone (i.e. where development should not occur). Swan was not able to answer why the New Vernon village was not shown as an Existing Community Zone as she not familiar with the RMP zoning specific to Harding. ▪ According to Swan, the RMP land use zoning map is a regional map generated entirely by a computer model with inputs based on scientifically collected data. Also according to Swan, there has been no ‘human correction’ yet of the zoning map and that all such changes to RMP maps will be made later.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Borden noted that the land use map was only one of 5 maps. Others include water and sewer maps and are equally important. Borden stressed that it was important to review all of the maps and that the zoning map should be used more as a guide than a detailed zoning plan. ▪ Changes to any Highlands map will have to be done by petition (see more information on this topic below). ▪ TC was concerned that the RMP-designated Existing Community Zones might force Harding to accept development in areas that cannot support additional development under current Harding zoning. According to Swan, all growth provisions (i.e. development) are entirely voluntary by the municipalities. The Township asked about the definition of “Smart Growth”. According to the Highlands, Smart Growth aims to situate development growth where there is sewer and potable water capacity.
Great Swamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The TC asked about the RMP's zoning treatment of the Great Swamp and whether the Highlands Council consulted with the U.S Department of the Interior. The Township noted that there were at least two different zones (Protection and Conservation) designated for the Great Swamp and that this appeared strange, perhaps calling into question the basis for the zoning designations in Harding. Swan explained that no consideration was given to the Great Swamp specifically and that the Highlands Council did not consult the Department of the Interior. This was because the RMP zoning map was generated by computer model. In the event of any contradictions between the RMP zoning and any Federal/local parks, refuges, protected land etc., the latter would prevail and the RMP zones would be adjusted accordingly.
Harding Conformance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should Harding decide to opt-in to the Highlands, it would have to rewrite its Master Plan and its ordinances to conform to the RMP. This effort could require substantial work and cost. ▪ Once a municipality seeking conformance has had its master plan approved, it must maintain conformance for at least six years. According to Swan, the municipality could then drop out. According to the RMP draft, a municipality that fell out of conformance during the six year period could be subject to repayment of any incentives received.
COAH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TC is very interested in understanding the linkage between Highlands conformance and future COAH (NJ mandated municipal low cost housing) obligations. Future COAH financial obligations are a big concern to the Township. Swan could not give any specific COAH-related benefit to a municipality with a conforming master plan, but did say that the Highlands legislation did require COAH to take the RMP plan into account when determining municipal third round (upcoming) obligations. She said that hopefully COAH would take into account RMP reduction of developable land when determining vacant land area and fair

	<p>share housing requirements. Ward asked about the existence of any Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with COAH. Swan said that the Highlands Council had only recently met with COAH and estimated a MOU would be publicly available within 3-4 months. As far as Swan knows, COAH will not require municipal conformance to the RMP, however RMP conformance does require a municipality to have COAH certification.</p>
Incentives	<p>According Swan, municipalities will have incentives primarily consisting of grants, legal protection, and technical help. A planning grant would help municipalities partially offset the costs of reworking their master plans. The total funding averages \$187,500 per municipality or \$50,000 per municipality per year. There was no information regarding grant eligibility or grant award criteria however, so it was not discussed how much if any grant money might be available for Harding. Technical assistance would be available for necessary studies such as a nitrate dilution analysis. Dr. Lanzerotti noted that Harding recently completed an extensive nitrate dilution study. It appeared that the RMP does not provide for any payment to landowners for any lost land value, at least in so far as the RMP would pertain to Harding.</p>
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are initial and ongoing financial costs associated with the Highlands RMP compliance including the initial costs of rewriting the Townships Master Plan, ordinances, and completion of necessary studies, and the ongoing planning and administrative costs of incorporating and working with the Highlands Council review process. <p>It has not been determined whether or not there would be property valuation changes (and hence property tax revenue implications) due to RMP related zoning changes.</p>
Highlands Council Vs. Harding Planning Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Township asked about the interaction between a conforming municipal planning board and the Highlands Council and whether all applications from a conforming municipality have to be reviewed by the Highlands Council. ▪ According to the Council, the local planning board would still operate but would have to conform to the Highlands rules and oversight. The Highlands Council said all planning applications over 2 acres must be submitted to the Highlands Council after local approval. The Highlands Council would then have 30 days to decide if it would review the application, and if it decided to perform a review would then have another 60 days to reach a conclusion. Presumably nearly all subdivisions in Harding would exceed the 2 acre cutoff and therefore have to be submitted to the Highlands Council. ▪ There is also a ‘call-up’ procedure where applications could require review by the Highlands Council. A call-up could be triggered by a member of the public. Dr. Lanzerotti commented that this Highlands review process would be an added layer of government to Harding’s current planning process, and would severely undercut Harding control over its land use and planning processes.

Water Deficit	The revised RMP had the surprising conclusion that much of Harding had a water deficit. According to Swan, 4% of Harding was non deficit, 29% was non deficit but had little capacity, and the remainder was in deficit. The prior (2006) version of the RMP did not show Harding having a water deficit. The Highlands representatives said that they used DEP methodology (but were more conservative), and also used US and NJ Geological survey data. Swan said that the Highlands study used data from test wells and stream flow samplers. Dr. Lanzerotti noted that he was not aware of any test wells in Harding and that there may be a water flow meter in the Passaic but it may also be downstream from Harding.
Highlands Vs. State Development Plan	The TC had a number of questions regarding RMP consistency with the State Development Plan, particularly since nearly all of Harding is located in the State Planning Area 5 (Environmentally Sensitive Area). The only exception is the Affordable Housing complex (the "Farm"), which is located in PA-1. The Highlands representatives said that the state would make certain that the RMP would conform to the State Development Plan and that Harding's State Planning Area designation would not change. TC noted that three of the four community zone designations for Harding were contradictory with the Planning Area 5 designation and that there is no infrastructure in these three areas to support community development. It was strongly recommended that this issue be corrected in the RMP land use map.
Highlands Plan Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Township asked for an explanation of the available procedures for requesting RMP Map changes and the definition of terminology. There are two basic types of changes: 1) <u>RMP updates</u> are 'factual' updates to the plan and have to do with RMP accuracy. Sufficient supporting information must be provided to support an Update. 2) <u>Map Adjustments</u> involve policy changes and have to be done by a petition process to the Highlands Council. The petition process goes through three reviews (staff, committee, and then council). The Council decision is final.
Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the RMP, land acquisition in the Protection Zone is a priority for the Highlands Council, but the available funding is primarily from Green Acres and NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust, in turn funded by state open space related debt sales. The Highlands Council has given Green Acres a confidential list of properties to acquire.

HARDING TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING, January 16, 2008

Mr. Bartlett, Mr. Lanzerotti, Mr. Murray , Mr. Rybka and Mr. Ward were all in attendance.

Announcements & Reports

Gail McKane suggested to the Committee that Chris Allyn be appointed as the third representative from Harding on the Ten Towns Committee (together with herself and John Murray). Ms. McKane felt Mr. Allyn's technical expertise was need and it would

save from having to pay the Township Engineer Paul Fox to attend meetings. There was a brief discussion on whether Harding's participation in Ten Towns yielded value in excess of the \$12,000 in yearly dues. It was also noted that Ten Towns may become less relevant given the rise of regional planning and regulations such as the Highlands.

Resolutions TC 08-41 and TC 08-42

These resolutions approved the issuance of a total of \$8,725,000 of Municipal general obligation bonds to refinance short-term debt. The Township's CFO, Himanshu Shah and the Township's Bond Counsel gave a presentation on the expected terms of the upcoming offering which is summarized as follows:

Term – 20 year maturity with a 10 year no-call period. Callable thereafter at 100%

Interest – 3.7% to 3.8% expected based on similar recent offerings

Offering - An official disclosure statement will be published around Feb 21st after the bond issue has been rated. The official statement will be published in the Observer Tribune and the Bond Buyer and available online on the Township's website: www.hardingnj.org. The bonds can be bid on electronically by the public, but bids must be for the entire issue. There was some discussion which followed concerning the timing of the offering given the expectation of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve, changes in inflation expectations and economic growth. The CFO and Bond Counsel stated that over the last 5 years, similar bonds have sold for yields ranging from 3.4% to 5.0% suggesting that today's yield would be at the lower end of the range. They also thought the expected interest rate cuts were priced into the market and an offering by Harding would benefit from investor interest in high quality bonds given the current turmoil in the credit markets.

Announcements

The Committee received correspondence on the proposed Morris Township Athletic Complex; Ms. Nergaard reported that the Library lease is in good shape with the biggest question being insurance; Morris County has hired a special counsel to advise on Glen Alpin matters and Ms. McKane expects to hear a response from the County soon.

Contract Awards

Resolutions TC 08-24 through TC 08-39 were unanimously approved and awarded contracts as follows:

Township Auditor – Suplee, Clooney & Company (Robert Swisher, Principal Auditor). Basic fee of \$27,450 for 2008 Audit and preparation of the Annual Financial Statement.

Township Attorney – Woolson, Sutphen, Anderson & Nergaard, PA (Maryann Nergaard, Esq.). Hourly rate of \$160 for attorney and \$100 for paralegal (same as previous year).

Special Counsel for Open Space – Dillon, Bitar & Luther LLC (Peter Henry, Esq.). Hourly rate of \$185 for transaction work and \$210 for litigation.

Special Counsel for Open Space – Lindabury, McCormick, Estabrook & Cooper, PC (Thomas Sataery, Esq.). Hourly rate of \$175.

Special Counsel for Glen Alpin – Mason, Griffin & Pierson, PC (Katherine Buttolph, Esq.). Hourly rate of \$175 for attorney and \$75 for paralegal.

Township Engineer – Apgar Associates (Paul Fox). Hourly rates ranging from \$46 to \$177 (same as 2007 rates).

Risk Manager – James F. Hurley Insurance Agency. Fees pursuant to Morris County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund Bylaws.

Professional Planners – Kimball & Kimball Professional Planners (Susan Kimball). Hourly rate of \$135.

Bond Counsel – Rogut McCarthy Troy LLC (Steven Rogut, Esq.). Base fee of \$5,000 plus \$1.00 per \$1,000 of bonds approved.

Labor Counsel – Laufer, Knapp, Torzewski & Dalena, LLC (Frederic Knapp, Esq.). Hourly rate of \$125 (same as 2007)

Personal Hearing Officer – Ruderman & Glickman, P.C. (Steven Glickman). Hourly are of \$160.

GIS Consultant – Christopher Allyn to provide Geographical Information Systems consulting, webmaster support and information systems support at an hourly rate of \$75 with a cap of \$40,500.

Tree Conservation Officer – Shade Tree Department LLC (John Linson). Hourly rate of \$85 with cost not to exceed \$12,000.

Insurance Broker, Health & Prescription – Bruce Kaplan. Fee is 3.25% of annual premium to Horizon BCBSNJ (total fee of \$29,000 based on estimated premium).

Employee Assistance Program - Atlantic Health System. Total cost of \$2,500 covers employees and family members for up to ten sessions of counseling per problem.

EDITOR'S Notice: Both Thumbnail Reporters have been appointed by the Township Committee to the Planning Board.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING, January 24, 2008

Organizational Items: Re-appointed Terri Eichler and Lorne Sheren as alternates; Present: Keefauver, Rosenbach, Eichler, Olcott, Gannon, Sheren; Absent: Winnow, McCormack; New chair & vice chair: Keefauver and Rosenbach. Appointments: Counsel – Gary Hall (McCarter & English); Engineer - Paul Fox (Apgar Associates); Planner – Kimball & Kimball.

Resolutions: New Vernon Volunteer Fire Department, 22 Village Road – construction of storage barn. Approved.; Ursula and Edward Carr – 27 Jenks Road – Approved

Prior Approval Issue: Robert and Dana Hamwee, 28 Copper Tree Lane. Fence around sports court was determined not to be integral to the court. No variance needed.

Pending Applications:

1. Flanagans, 6 Meyersville Road; deferred for 90 days at request of applicant.
2. John McFayden/Tom Luciano (contract purchaser from estate of Ethel Conger), 147 Pleasantville Road. Site visit was made during December. Changes made to original proposal include reducing garage from three bays to two, reducing terrace area, changing flood lights to down lighting. Mr. & Mrs. St John, the closest neighbors expressed overall approval of the plan but expressed three concerns – possible noise from the patio, lighting and privacy. Board stated that excess noise is addressed by existing ordinances. The new plan calls for down lighting, not flood lighting. A permanent prohibition on floods was recommended to be added to the deed. And “natural permanent screening” consisting of 12 trees, 8-9 foot in height and randomly spaced will be added by the new owners to solve the privacy problem. The township arborist will consult on the placement of the trees. Lastly the contract purchaser agreed to reduce the patio width 5 feet.

New Applications:

Susan Kiley and James Taylor, 7 Youngs Road. Property is a 2.2 acre lot in a 5 acre zone. Plan is expand the property – convert existing garage to family room, laundry, powder room; add 4 feet to the rear and side; add a new two car garage that will connect the house to an existing finished barn structure and add a full bath in the barn which is used as a recreation room. In addition, owner desires to add pool with patio. This is a “C” Variance -- set backs on the front and side are less than the 100 feet allowed and the lot coverage is greater than allowed. First, the Board of Health’s opinion was made public that the plan as presented would not be approved because a full bath being added to the rec room barn would constitute a 5th bedroom. This would require an expansion of the septic system. Neighbor Marshall Bartlett raised concerns about the accuracy of the data in the application and testimony but more importantly about the serial expansion of this dwelling over the years requiring variances – “How many bites at the apple should be allowed” before the zoning rules are made a hash. Bartlett objected especially strongly to the pool.

The Board gave guidance to the representative of the owners (who are out of the country) regarding their issues with the proposal -- accuracy of calculations, lack of specificity on what variances are being requested, pool, substantial lot coverage. A site inspection was scheduled for February 2.

Thirty One Youngs Road LLC, 31 Youngs Road. Applicant is seeking a variance to construct two attached garages and replace an existing, but non-conforming, pool. The proposal stated that “even though the dwelling does not meet the front yard setback requirement, the proposed garage additions will fully comply with the zoning requirements.” This is because the garage addition will not cause further offense to the zoning requirements. The pool will be replaced by an identical one in the same location as the existing pool. After testimony from landscape and building architects and questioning by the Board, the proposal was approved as proposed.

PLANNING BOARD, January 28, 2008

Two applications were heard. The first, **Frelinghuysen**, was for preliminary and final approval of a major subdivision, on James St and Sand Spring Lane. There will be 2 cul-de-sac roads off Sand Spring Lane. The plan was modified from the last meeting to provide 13 instead of 14 lots. The biggest single issue was apparently resolved, that only lots fronting on Sand Spring Lane were going to connect to the public water supply; the other lots were to have private wells drilled. However, the application could not be finalized due to questions raised by the New Vernon Fire Department regarding the distance and feasibility of reaching the water hydrants on San Spring Rd. Despite testimony from the applicant that all lots were within the recommended distance from the fire hydrant, Jim Halsey, a Fire Department spokesman, questioned the safety and ease of using the hydrant for this development. Applicant’s attorney stated that the fire department request appeared to be in conflict with the Planning Board, and emphasized that the Applicant could comply with whichever conditions were imposed, but not with

inconsistent requests. The matter will be continued in February meeting.

The other application was by **Gregory and Amy Mulford**, for a minor subdivision of 18 Meyersville Rd, Block 12, lot 9. This application was originally filed in the name of **Penny and Don Hinckle**, the previous owners, but was amended to include the Mulfords after the closing. The Hinckles, long time Harding residents and environmental activists, had made many public pronouncements regarding their lack of placing any conservation easements on the property, due to its "indivisibility". Their conclusions were obviously erroneous, as the subdivision was approved, even without any site inspection. The property is in a "split zone", with the back of the property in Harding R3, and the front of the property in Harding R2. The latter requires only a 30,000ft² area (less than 1 acre). The applicants requested such a lot in the front corner of the property on Meyersville Rd, this is a fully conforming lot in R2, and was granted. The existing house and the rest of the property is over 6 acres, also in conformity with the zoning requirements. Although the existing house is outside the permitted setback from the extensive wetlands of the property, this is a preexisting use, and therefore was permitted to continue. The other question before the Planning Board was for a Flood Hazard Development Permit, required if any portion of the property is in a designated "Flood Hazard" zone, which this property is; this permit was also granted.

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, January 14, 2008.

Update on Middle School Advisory: Principal Dee Klikier discussed the review process for the Middle School Advisory. Ms. Klikier surveyed Middle School students and teachers separately. The student surveys indicated that students generally felt Advisory was very positive: they enjoyed the time to have a break and good discussions. The teachers also indicated that it helped student/teacher relationships and had a positive impact on the Middle School. Ms. Klikier recommended that the school (1) pursue options regarding the amount and number of meetings (a longer time period 1 or 2 times a week is a strong possibility if scheduling can be worked out); (2) consider mixing students between grade levels or between the Advisories during the year; and (3) provide additional teacher resources.

Budget Priorities: As to *Personnel and Management*, Dr. Pallozzi reported that small class size and appropriate student/teacher ratios would remain priorities when building the budget. Dr. Pallozzi does not foresee additional staff being hired; if anything, staff size could be reduced due to enrollment patterns. (For example, there is currently only one kindergarten at the school, and it is unclear how many there will be next year). Finally, Dr. Pallozzi reported that the school will enter into a Shared Services agreement with Fraida Yavelberg's consulting group and Long Hill Township for Ms. Yvalberg to continue as the Interim Supervisor of Student Services. As to *Curriculum*, Dr. Pallozzi reported that the school will be buying materials for language arts, grammar, writing and social studies (the last of which will be the most expensive). Curriculum cost \$40K in last year's budget, but Dr. Pallozzi estimates that the amount may be slightly lower this year. As to *Facilities and Finance*, Dr. Pallozzi noted that \$225-250K is typically budgeted for building improvements so the question becomes how to earmark those funds among the many necessary projects: The next phase of energy conservation? Air-conditioning the entire Middle School building (which would require upgrading the electrical transformer this year, then adding air conditioning piecemeal in following years)? Modernizing the bathrooms on the 1st floor of the

Middle School building? Upgrading the second floor of the Middle School building? Dr. Palozzi is collecting estimates on those projects.

Leadership Search Update: Ms. Regina Egea presented the timeline for the Leadership Search. An advertisement for the superintendent position resulted in the receipt of 12 applications as of Jan. 14. Interested parties had until Jan. 30 to send a resume and interest letter to the Board of Education. Qualified applicants had until Feb. 8 to complete an application. From there, a search committee will convene to screen the applicants. The following groups will be asked to nominate a representative to serve on the search committee: the Harding Township Education Association, the PTO, the Educational Foundation, the Vision Council, the Civic Association, the HTRA, the Senior Citizens and the Township Committee. Two Board of Education members and Ms. Klikier will also serve on the search committee. By Feb. 25, the search committee has the goal of isolating 3-6 candidates. On March 12 and 13, the entire Board will meet (either at the school or off-site) to interview each of the candidates individually. Follow-up interviews, if necessary, will be on March 25 and 26. By the start of April, the Board hopes to start contract negotiations with the candidate selected.

Harding Open Space Trust (HOST) Committee has sent its recommendations to the Township for no reduction of the Open Space tax for 2008; in 2006, the dedicated tax rate was 0.045 cents per \$100 of assessed value. For 2008, this rate is projected to yield about \$900,000. In 2007, \$684,000 of dedicated tax reserves were used to reduce short term debt incurred for previous acquisitions, reducing reserves to \$2,066,850 as of 12/31/2007. Currently remaining debt attributable to open space properties totals \$4,925,000, including the Glen Alpin property and Margetts Field. The approximate annual cost to service this debt load is \$250,000, charged against tax revenues.

Civic Association DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are March 7 and April 11, respectively. ***Announcements should be complete and concise to help the editor.*** Thumbnail issues and 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 (3/1, 3/15, 3/29, 4/12, and 4/26) 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