

DISTRICT TOWNSHIP

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District Township

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Office Hours:
Mondays, Tuesdays,
and Thursdays from
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

EASTERN BERKS COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Dear Residents of District Township:

During much of 2003, the Township was actively engaged in development of a Joint Comprehensive Plan with neighboring communities Rockland Township, Longswamp Township, and Topton Borough. The Joint Committee met monthly, rotating meetings between the various communities. The document was developed section by section. Public comment was welcome throughout the development process. Considerable time and focus was spent on the concept of large rural conservation zones and establishment of Agricultural Zoning within Rockland and District Townships. An initial draft of the Comprehensive Plan was completed in August of 2003. A public meeting was held in September at the Brandywine Middle School Auditorium to present the Plan to the general public and take comment. In addition, the respective Planning Commissions from each community performed in-depth analysis of various recommendations.



The District Township Planning Commission should be commended for the thorough job they did in reviewing the document. The comments and recommendations from the review were summarized and presented back to the Joint Planning Committee. Changes agreed upon by the Committee were incorporated into a new draft. The most significant change to District Township is the potential for an Agricultural Zone in the southeastern area of the Township along Huffs Church Road from Benfield Road to the Township line. The remainder of District Township is proposed to remain rural with limited growth projected for the area. Currently the Committee is reviewing the draft of an "Implementation Agreement." This document outlines the steps and responsibilities required to adopt and implement the Regional Plan.

Currently there is a delay in the process due to critical decisions required by Longswamp Township concerning future expansion of public sewers. Additionally, Longswamp will be engaging in a water feasibility study related to projected growth. As limited development is proposed in District Township, it is not necessary for District to participate. Next steps in the process will be a second public meeting to review changes from the original proposal and discussion of the implementation agreement. We anticipate the process will be completed late second quarter. Notification will be published in local newspapers and posted at the Township Building. As always, your participation is encouraged in this process. This is a critical period for all communities involved. The Plan will provide the roadmap for development, agriculture, and conservation for the entire area.

The next scheduled Joint Planning Committee meeting is May 18, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the Topton Borough Municipal Building. The meeting is open for public comment. Please plan on attending!

FUN AT GORDON PARK

BY SUSAN MANWILLER

Looking for a great place to have a family picnic or just a quiet afternoon with the kids? District Township's Gordon Park offers many features for all family members, including

a tennis court, baseball field, volleyball area, playground, and picnic pavilion. District Township residents may rent the pavilion for private parties—just \$25 for groups un-

der 50 people and \$35 for 50 people or more. Public restrooms are available. Please contact the Municipal Secretary at 610-845-7595 for reservations.

CELL PHONES!

Cellular service coverage in District Township is best with AT&T GSM since the tower was activated in December 2002.

**WANTED!
RECREATION
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS!**

Anyone interested in serving the community as a member of the Recreation Committee, please contact the Municipal Building at 610-845-7595. Join the fun!

**NATURE TRAILS TO
BE ESTABLISHED**

The Environmental Advisory Council has been directed to establish a nature trail system around the perimeter of all Township property. Volunteers will be needed to clear and mark trails. Please contact the Township Secretary if you wish to help. 610-845-7595.

ACT 45—UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE

BY BART FLANNERY

In November 1999 Pennsylvania passed ACT45, mandating adoption of a statewide building code. The Uniform Construction Code (UCC) was to be implemented within a year throughout the state. This created a significant amount of controversy within local government as Pennsylvania went from practically no building code to one of the strictest in the nation. Significant issues needed to be addressed as was no formal certification or inspection process to support the implementation on such a large scale. Subsequently, the implementation has been delayed for almost four years to allow local government agencies and industry experts to adequately address issues and the impact of the ACT. A

huge education initiative was required to adequately train and certify a network of inspectors statewide to deal with the sheer volume of requests that would be created. The final version has been approved by the House and Senate, and effective January 1st of 2004 every community in the state has 90 days to determine how the UCC will be implemented. Adherence to the UCC is not optional. Basically the only decision the Township must make is whether the Township itself will be involved in the administration of the UCC (Opting In) or let the State Department of Licensing and Inspection (L&I) or private inspectors administer the code (Opting Out). "Opting In" requires the Township to adopt the UCC by ordi-

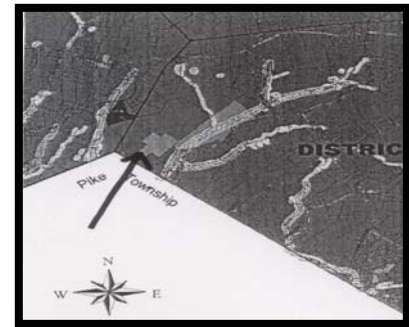
nance and arrange for administration of inspection process by a local engineering firm or internal zoning officer. Opting In also requires the Township to establish a formal appeals board. "Opting Out" takes the Township out of the process but leaves the individual citizen to obtain necessary inspections from private inspectors or L & I. The availability of the licensed inspectors and the costs are subject to market demands. Currently the Township is leaning toward Opting In. We feel it provides some level of protection and consistency for residents. The inspection schedule and costs need to be discussed, developed, and incorporated into local ordinances. A formal decision will be made by the Board in March. In either case, the ACT will take effect in July.

NATURE PRESERVE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

BY ED OVERBERGER

The Pine Creek Watershed Association recently acquired land from the Berks Conservancy for permanent preservation. Granted exemption from all property and school taxes, the land is open to the public for hiking and exploration. The 44-acre tract is landlocked and accessible only by parking along Long Lane and

entering through the 117 acre State Game Land area. Maps are being prepared by the Environmental Advisory Council and will be available at the Township Building.



DISTRICT TOWNSHIP CRIME WATCH

BY FRED GRAMPP

The recent vandalism in District and surrounding townships reinforces the fact that everyone is on the frontline when it comes to keeping our community crime-free. There were 49 incidents (and counting), with damages in excess of \$20,000. The suspects involved were out between midnight and 5:00 a.m., per the Police. The cooperation of the community in helping the State Police during this time

was exemplary. All of the community must participate in zero tolerance when it comes to vandalism of any kind. A call to the State Police at 610-378-4011 with a plate number and description (vehicle model, color, number of occupants) of any vehicle acting erratically in your neighborhood might prevent a future event and save a neighbor problems. A goal for all District Township residents

should be to get to know your neighbors. When a new neighbor moves in, go and introduce yourself. It only takes a few minutes and it will pay dividends for years to come. Neighbors watching out for neighbors is an effective tool in fighting crime. Let's work together for a better community. The District Township Crime Watch meetings are scheduled quarterly. Call the Municipal Building for dates and times.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWS

BY RUDY KELLER

The EAC has organized two Earth Day related events for your participation:

Watershed Snapshot

There will be a Watershed Snapshot at 10:00 a.m., April 18, 2004, at the District Township Municipal Building. The District and Pike Township EACs are collaborating to give this statewide event a local focus by looking at two of our exceptional value streams, the Oysterville and Pine Creeks. Faith Zerbe, monitoring coordinator for the Schuylkill River office of Delaware Riverkeepers, will give a brief indoor introduction to some of the commonly monitored indicators of stream

health, such as streambank plant cover, water chemistry, and diversity of aquatic insects. Scott Fiegel will have live examples of some of these little monsters and the creatures that eat them. Light snacks more appealing to people will also be provided. Afterward, we'll walk to the nearby Oysterville Creek for a closer look at the stream environment. At 1:00 p.m., we'll meet at a location on Pine Creek at Heilig's School Road, Pike Township (directions provided) where the landowners have undertaken extensive restoration of an eroding streambank. Water monitoring equipment and techniques will be demonstrated at both sites.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Day: April 24, 2004

Each year, PennDot sponsors a statewide volunteer roadside litter clean-up day on which they provide gloves, safety vests, and trash bags to volunteers willing to clean up the State or Township road of their choice. We plan to make this an annual event. If you want to participate, please call the District Township Municipal Building at 610-845-7595 by April 15 and leave your name, telephone number, and the name of the road on which you want to work. If you have no preference, you will be assigned a road. Eileen Pinder, who has volunteered to coordinate this event, will contact you about receiving your clean-up materials. Full bags will be left at designated spots along the roadsides, where the Township Board of Supervisors has volunteered to pick them up and take them to the Township garage for collection by PennDot. Thank you for helping keep the Township clean.

In coming months, the EAC will be working on ways to enhance the educational and recreational value of the natural area near the Township Building. We encourage your attendance and input at our monthly meetings.

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS NEED YOUR SUPPORT

BY ED OVERBERGER

Many of us are not aware of the challenges meeting our volunteer fire companies today. District Township is unique in that we are served by three primary fire companies: Bally, Bechtelsville, and Seisholtzville. Today, less people volunteer due to busy schedules. Costs are up primarily due to insurance costs,

and funding is difficult due to the economic times. Please consider volunteering your time, or be generous when your fire company is fund raising. Special programs are available for teenagers who wish to become volunteer firefighters.

Dry Fire Hydrant Program

Pennsylvania State has funding available for fire companies in rural areas like District Township to construct "dry" fire hydrants. A dry hydrant is a pipe installed into the side of a pond or stream that allows easy attachment of a fire hose, and allows water to be drawn even when the surface of the pond is frozen. District Township is partnering with Seisholtzville Fire Department by offering equipment for the installation of the pipes. The fire company is identifying ponds at this time and may ask your willingness to install a dry hydrant. Your cooperation and service to the community is appreciated.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

BY ROADMASTER DAN METZKER

January was tough on the roads of District Township. It was C-C-Cold, the coldest January in ten years. Although we did not have a lot of snow, we had a lot of snow and ice events, and the wind would not let up! We had numerous calls about drifting snow and other winter problems at Benfield, Groff, Weil, and all three dirt roads.

Please report problems with Township roads at 610-909-

2684. Leave your name and number, and I will do my best to call you back with an update. Here is a list of Township roads: Groff, Merkle, Hardt Hill, Weil, Kemp, Lutz, Crag, Bull, Chew, Keim, Treichler, Benfield, Delong, MaryAnn, Dogwood, Stone, Mine, Haas, and Weidner. Please report problems with State roads to 610-929-0766.



District Township's Newest Workhorse: Ford F550 Stainless Steel Dump and Spreader for Extra Long Life.

**Newsletter of
District Township
202 Weil Road
Boyertown, PA 19512**

*Just a friendly reminder—don't forget to have your septic systems pumped!
Call 610-845-7595 to have your name added to our pumping list for a discount rate.*

Meeting Schedule:

Board of Supervisors: 2nd
Thursday of each month at
7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission:
1st Thursday of each month at
7:00 p.m.

Environmental Advisory
Council: 1st Monday of each
month at 7:00 p.m.

Recreation Committee: 2nd
Thursday of each month at
6:30 p.m.

Crime Watch: Quarterly at
7:00 p.m.

Watershed Snapshot Workshop:
April 18th 10:00 a.m.

Keep PA Beautiful Day:
April 24, 2004

YOUR DISTRICT TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

Board of Supervisors:

- Bart Flannery, Chairman
- Ed Overberger, Vice Chairman
- Dan Metzker, Member

Planning Commission:

- Ed Overberger, Chairman
- Lou Farina, Vice Chairman
- John Chenosky, Member
- Piper Sherburne, Member
- Pam Geisinger, Member

Zoning Hearing Board:

- Charles McCreary
- Michael Anderson
- Heinrich Jensen

Tax Collector:

Linda Collom

Secretary:

- Susan Manwiller

Treasurer:

- Sonya Hughes

Emergency Management:

- Alex Harkins

**Zoning, Sewage Enforcement,
and Engineering:**

- LTL Consultants, Ltd.

Township Solicitor:

- Terry Parish

Auditors:

- Blaine Stoner
- Lucille Grampp
- RuthAnn Lasso

Road Crew:

- Dan Metzker, Roadmaster
- Gene Bardo
- Paul Moyer
- Paul Hertzog
- Leonard Kelsch
- Doug Seifert
- Clarence Updegrave

**Zoning Hearing Board
Solicitor:**

- Eugene Orlando

Recreation Committee:

- Stuart Cox

**Environmental
Advisory Council:**

- Rudy Keller
- George Benjamin
- Scott Fiegel
- Piper Sherburne
- Richard Weinstein