

Honey Brook Township News

Honey Brook Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania

An Official Publication by the Board of Supervisors, Honey Brook Township, PA

Board Of Supervisors

- Lew Wertley
Chairman
- John McHugh, Vice
Chairman
- Joe Fenstermacher
Member

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Parks and Recreation Committee Returns

After several years without a **Parks and Recreation Committee**, Supervisor John McHugh asked for volunteers from the community to reestablish one. The Committee's discussions include, but are not limited to, various uses in and for the James A. Umble Memorial Park on Suplee Road. The Committee generates ideas and recommends programs to the Board of Supervisors for their vote. The first meeting was held on July 19.

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The Parks and Recreation Committee currently has five members: Lee Hellers, Beth McHugh, Therese Mauchline, Deb Oldham, and Joe Fenstermacher. Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm in the township administration building's meeting room. All meetings are open to the public.

More volunteers are needed. If you are interested in serving on or helping with the Parks & Recreation Committee, contact the Township office at 610-273-3970.

A 10-week summer

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

There are many questions which frequently come up at the Township Administration office. Here are some answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

724-978-0300. They became the collectors for townships and school districts in Chester County as of the fourth quarter in 2010.

Question: "How do I get a building permit?"

Answer: Fill out a permit application, available either at the Township Administration building or on the township website, www.honeybrooktp.com. Click on the button on the left-hand side that says "Forms." There will be links to the permit applications that can be opened and printed. *Building permits* are for such things as new building construction, additions/remodels,

Question: "Who do I call about my tax bill?"

For Township or Chester County *real estate tax*, call Berkheimer at 866-300-1744.

Answer: This depends upon which tax you're talking about:

Berkheimer is still responsible for *all* taxes due for tax year 2009 and prior.

For Township *EIT (Earned Income Tax)*, or Twin Valley School District taxes, call Keystone Collections Group (Irwin, PA) at

Please note that taxes are *not* collected at the Township Building.

(see Q&A page 2)

IMPORTANT DATES

(subject to change):

OCTOBER:

- 10 Board of Supervisors mtg.
- 18 Parks & Recreation mtg.
- 25 Planning Commission mtg.

NOVEMBER:

- 6 Election Day (no walk-up counter service)
- 12 Office Closed (Veteran's Day)
- 14 Board of Supervisors mtg.
- 15 Parks & Recreation mtg.
- 20 Land Preservation Committee mtg.
- 22 Office Closed (Thanksgiving)
- 29 Planning Commission mtg.

DECEMBER:

- 12 Board of Supervisors mtg.
- 20 Parks & Recreation mtg.
- 25 Office Closed (Christmas)
- 27 Planning Commission mtg.

JANUARY:

- 2 Board of Supervisors reorganizational mtg.

All meetings are held at the Township Administration Building unless otherwise noted and are subject to change. Check the township website for updates due to inclement weather.

Q & A (continued from page 1)

accessory buildings/sheds in excess of 500 square feet, and decks over 30" from ground level. Zoning permits are for such things as sheds (under 500 sq. ft.), decks (under 30" off the ground), and agricultural buildings.

Question: What am I allowed to build? What rules or restrictions are there?

Answer: This depends upon what your property is zoned. If you are unsure about what your zone is, contact the township office. You will then be referred to the codes officer for Honey Brook Township at 610-286-1622, extension 100, for further information about what is and is not permitted in your zone.

Question: How long will my application take to be processed?

Answer: The general rule of thumb is five to ten business days after pickup by the zoning officer. During extremely busy times (once weather becomes nice in spring, for example), it could be longer. You will be called by the

Township Administration office at the phone number you provided on your application once the permit has been issued. If you would like to check on the status of the application before the township calls you, please call the zoning officer directly, at 610-286-1622, extension 100.

Question: when is trick-or-treating in Honey Brook Township?

Answer: The township does *not* regulate trick-or-treating. If you are part of a Homeowner's Association, check to see what has been organized for your neighborhood. Otherwise, it is up to the residents to decide for themselves whether to participate or not.

Question: When does the Zoning Hearing Board meet?

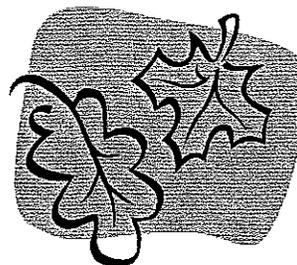
Answer: Newly enacted in the latter part of 2012, the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) meets the third Monday of the month on an as-needed basis. If there are no applications, the ZHB does not meet. The potential does exist

for more than one hearing to be held in the same evening, and hearings have the potential to be continued to the next month. Hearing announcements are posted at the Township Administration building and in the Legal Announcements section of the *Daily Local News*.

Question: I need to apply for a variance or a conditional use; what do I do?

Answer: fill out an application for a public hearing, available either at the Township Administration office or online at the township website. The same form may be used for both kinds of hearings.

Applications for the ZHB must be submitted by the third Monday of the month for a hearing to be held on the third Monday of the following month. Applications for conditional uses, which are heard by the Board of Supervisors on their regular meeting night, must be submitted 30 days prior to the regular Board meeting date.

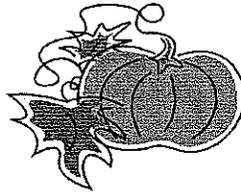


Family Fun Slated for Oct. 20

Bring the whole family to the James A. Umble Memorial Park on Suplee Road on Saturday, October 20, from 1-4 pm. Pumpkins will be available for \$1. Those purchasing a pumpkin can have their child participate in the candy drop.

In the event of rain, the rain date Oct. 21, 1-4 pm.

For those unfamiliar with a candy drop, it is a fun activity for children to obtain candy that literally falls from the sky. Supervisor Joe Fenstermacher, who is a pilot, will be dropping candy from his plane on that day.



Feedback Sought

A Land Preservation Committee Update is on page 4. The Board of Supervisors would like to know whether or not the Land Preservation program has met your expectations.

You are welcome to attend the meetings, held on the third Thursday of odd numbered months (see p. 2 or the township website for specific dates) to share your thoughts. You may also call the Township Administrator at 610-273-3970 or e-mail hbadmin@ptd.net to voice your opinion about the program.

Roads Department Has Reminders As Winter Approaches

Winter approaches with the anticipation of snowfall. There were very few snow events in 2011-12, so there are a few things to keep in mind for this coming winter season.

Regarding driveways. If you plan to pave or repave your driveway, you need a permit from the Township. This is to ensure that the proper swale is kept where the driveway meets the road. This helps to eliminate ice conditions in winter months. For more information, refer to Ordinance 84-1/12/2000 on the Township website (copies are also distributed with driveway permit applications).

When clearing your driveway during a snow event, please do not plow snow from the driveway into the road. Not only is this a dangerous practice for your neighbors, it is

against the Township's snow emergency ordinance #122-2006. Plow operators have an obligation to open a road completely.

They would prefer not to plow in a recently cleared driveway, but they have to clear the road.

Regarding parking in the street during snow events. The Township specifically prohibits parking in the street during a snow event, and with good cause. A vehicle parked in the street reduces efficiency, increases the risk to the plow driver and increases risk to the parked vehicle. Cul-de-sacs are especially hard to clear if cars are parked in the bulb. If the plow operator can't effectively do his job because the street is blocked, he will move on to another street and it may be several hours or even days before your street is com-

pletely cleared.

Regarding keeping the Right-of-Way clear. Earlier in the year, the Board of Supervisors passed the Right-of-Way Ordinance #161-2012, which addresses this and other problems of items in the Right-of-Way. In essence, this ordinance states that items such as mailboxes, rocks, signs, etc. should not be in the Right-of-Way. This ensures that the Township can clear the road effectively during snow events (and can mow effectively in summertime). If there are items in the right-of-way, they could cause damage to Township equipment.

Please keep trash cans off the roadways as well during snow events. Also, mailboxes should be positioned so that they do not extend over the edge of the road.

(see Winter page 4)

Plowing snow from driveways into the road is a violation of the Township's snow emergency ordinance.

Parking on the street during a snow event is a violation of the Township's snow emergency ordinance.

Placing objects (temporarily or permanently) in the right-of-way is a violation of the Township's Right-of-Way ordinance.

Honey Brook Township

Administration
Building located at:
500 Suplee Rd

Office Hours:
9am-3pm Mon-Fri
(see important
dates for holiday
closures)

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1281
Honey Brook, PA
19344

PHONE:
(610) 273-3970

FAX:
(610) 273-3909

Zoning or Codes
questions:
610-286-1622 x100

TOWNSHIP
E-MAIL:
hbadmin@ptd.net

Newsletter editor:
Kristy Deischer-Eddy

Township Administrator
Antoinette Antonini

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.honeybrooktwp.com

Check the website often for
meeting minutes, forms,
announcements, and other
general information.

Winter *(continued from page 3)*

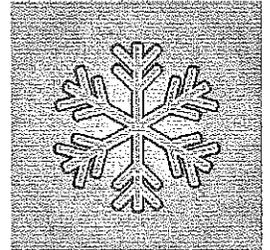
Plowing procedure.

The Township's initial mission is to make roads passable based on the extensiveness of use. A road that has typically has 25 trips per day will be a lower priority than a road that has 800 trips a day. Cul-de-sacs are plowed with one lane in and one lane out.

The Township is divided

into segments with each truck in the fleet receiving an assigned segment. After achieving an initial opening, and as the storm ends, the truck returns to push back from the road edge and clear cul-de-sac's thoroughly. It's during this process the Township hears the most complaints both from citizens and road crew workers. Adhering to the

ordinances and suggestions presented here will go a long way towards making the best of bad winter weather.



Land Preservation Committee Update

The **Land Preservation Committee** meets on the third Tuesday of odd-numbered months, generally at 6:30 pm. The January meeting has for several years traditionally been a farmer's breakfast at 8:00 am. The purpose of this committee is to review applications for preservation and recommend farms to the Board of Supervisors for their vote.

Several farms have been preserved in the last few years, six in 2011 and four so far in 2012. Preserved farms total 2,451.1 acres in Honey Brook Township, roughly 15% of the Township's total acreage. Last year there were more Honey Brook farms preserved through the Chester County Agricultural Land Preservation Program than in any other township in Chester County.

To review, the revenue for land preservation is generated from the Land Preservation EIT of .05% that is collected annually. For every \$10,000 of earned income (salaries, wages, and tips; *not* retirement or social security),

there is a \$50 payment to save farms and open space. The money is kept in a separate account only for land preservation. That fund, coupled with a loan the township took out to jump-start the funds for preservation, is used during the application process to get matching funds from the county. The Chester County Land Preservation program allows the Township to get a dollar match for each dollar it puts up. This in essence doubles the township's "buying power" for land preservation.

Once preserved, the Township would not own a farm, the farmer continues to own it and farm it. The Township is merely purchasing the development potential. The Township places a legal easement on a preserved farm so it would not be developable. Many farmers want to continue farming, but the amount of money offered and the pressure from other development makes it very tempting to sell. The Township has the ability to talk money with farmers thanks to the Land Preservation Fund.

Why is land preservation advantageous? Most residential development actually costs \$1.07 in services for every \$1.00 it pays in revenue. In contrast, agricultural land costs \$.06 in services for every \$1.00 it pays. Farmland doesn't need snow plowing and pothole patching. Farmland doesn't need classrooms. Buying the development rights ensures that the farmland remains farmland in perpetuity. The farmer gets to keep farming, food growing ability is protected, and the community remains agricultural and rural.

One might ask, couldn't the Board just stop development by not approving development plans? That is simply not feasible. State law requires each municipality to have some area designated for its fair share of residential development. The taxpayers would run a terrible legal and financial risk if the Board didn't follow the law with respect to plan approvals. A far better solution is to be proactive vis-à-vis land preservation.