Schedule of Events

January 23, 2013: Town Morristown Master Plan Open House, 5:30pm (~8:30pm), Town Hall, 200 South St., Morristown
BPA Meeting, 7:30pm, 19 Upper Field Rd., Morristown (The Bruen’s house)

Check Morristown at www.townofmorristown.org and Morris Township at www.morristwp.com for upcoming municipal meeting schedules.

For information on the Moms & Tots activities, events and get togethers, check: https://www.bigtent.com/groups/motownmomtot

Burnham Park Association Board of Trustees

TRUSTEES:
Joe Attamante (Vice President, Newsletter Author, Arbor Day Coordinator) (973) 538-7863
Debbie Bruen (Secretary) 201-919-6105
Sharon Cain (Newsletter Designer) 539-2039
Christopher
Jennifer Carcich (Moms & Tots) 451-9090
Bill Claxton 267-2706
Kathy Claxton 267-2706
Johnathan Darwell/Suzanne Mutz Darwell (T-shirt chair, Addler)

ADJUDICIAL:
Elihu Davison/Sheira Greenwald 539-9015
Mary Ann Gazal 538-0822
Kay Kribs 539-9312
John Mahoney Codd
Susan Mellen (Newsletter Distributor) 401-9244
Buffy O’Brien (Flier Designer) 539-6461
Bill Pezzuti (Webmaster) 644-0421
Lynn Siebert (President, Newsletter Editor) 540-1586
Don Siebert (Treasurer) 540-1586
Edwin Villhauer 539-7128
Douglas Vorolieff (Addler Chief)

ALTERNATES:
Marla Weetall Moster 292-3026
Scott/Deborah Wild 455-1520

Everything you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask about Jones Woods

Anti-Littering campaign: We owe a debt of thanks to Vice President Joe Attamante for his efforts to get Township to provide anti-littering signage in the wooded area. Special thanks now also go to Township Administrator, Tim Quinn, for being so responsive to Joe’s efforts, providing and installing high quality, permanent signs – in both English and Spanish – with the anti-littering message. We also owe a longstanding debt of thanks to BPA trustee Edwin Villhauer, who, for years, has regularly put in empty garbage bags and hauled out full

The reservoir in Jones Woods

www.burnhampark.org

Fall/Winter 2012-2013 Volume, 55, no. 1

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garbage bags from the reservoir area, in a personal effort to keep the woods clean. We are hopeful that all who use these woods share in caring for them and keeping them clean of trash.

**Deer hunting:** We want all BP residents to know that some deer hunting occurs in Jones Woods and it is probably advisable to wear brightly colored clothing and/or one orange article of clothing if you plan to walk, run or otherwise use the woods.

Some of you may recall the BPA meeting at which Township police officer (and Deer Manager) Steve Summerer spoke to us about ongoing efforts to curb the deer population via hunting in Jones Woods. We have voiced our concerns to him repeatedly about having signage similar to that employed in the Morris County parks which alerts visitors to the fact there might be hunting...to insure safety of anyone using the woods to wear bright colored clothing and be alert to the possible presence of hunters (and vice versa). Our concern is for safety of the people using the woods for recreation.

Thanks again to Vice President Joe Attamante for first following up with Officer Summerer to remind him of that concern and subsequently to talk with Township Administrator Quinn to request some form of safety warning signage for those using the woods. It is our understanding that any hunter using Jones Woods is registered and licensed to do so and primarily would be using bow and arrow rather than firearms. Dropping deer populations (due to a recent deer virus) have also resulted in less hunting activity than usual.

**Background on Jones Woods:** The nearly 100 acres collectively known as Jones Woods is owned, in part, by the SMCMUA (Southeast Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority – ie our water company), Villa Walsh, the Morris County Park Commission and the Township of Morris. In the late 1870s, it was part of the Morris Aqueduct System, a pioneering water supply system which supplied pure water to the Town of Morristown from the underground springs and two constructed surface reservoirs in Jones Woods. The high elevation of the property (ca. 700’ ) allowed gravity to do most of the work of getting water down to Morristown.

**Location:** Jones Woods is bordered by Picatinny Rd., Rt. 124(Mendham Ave.), Villa Walsh, Edgehill/Fairmount/ Hillcrest and Dorothy Drive...Most gain access from the dirt path/gate where Hillcrest (178) meets Fairmont Ave (85)....at the top of the green strip between E. and W. Lake Blvds.

**Conservation battle in 1980s-90s:** In the early 1980s, 38 acres of Jones Woods was sold to developer who intended to place nearly 200 townhomes in the heart of this environmentally sensitive, exceptional resource value wetlands and watershed area. Fourteen years, two site plans and countless hours of citizen activism later, Morris Township purchased the 38 acres, designating 18 of the acres (including an 8 acre reservoir/lake) as protected open space and setting aside the remaining 20 as a potential site for low and moderate income development, depending on the Township’s Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) quotas. Over the years, BPA and its sister organization, Friends of Jones Woods, have lobbied to have those 20 acres reclassified as protected open space since the same environmental conditions which make the 18 acres worthy of preservation apply to these 20 acres as well: namely, documented presence of endangered and threatened species, steep slopes, exceptional resource value wetlands, contiguous mature woodlands, etc., etc.. There is no infrastructure (sewer, water, etc.) to support intensive development in this wooded area, nor does the topography (very hilly), access to public transportation (none), consistency with surrounding zoning (all large acreage residential or institutional use) or even the primary access to the site(a substandard width entry onto Picatinny Rd.) support the concept of dense development. Moreover, any construction in the heart of the forested area results in devastating fragmentation of habitat – destroying and degrading the ecological and environmental integrity of this sensitive land.

**Is this an ongoing concern?** Yes. With every new development approved in the Township (such as the recent Honeywell mixed use plan approval), there are likely to be additional COAH quotas assigned to the Township – with the resulting pressure on the Township to find new sites for affordable housing. We would hope more rational alternatives to building in Jones Woods would prevail under any circumstance but we are watching closely and still hope that those remaining 20 acres will still be added to the Township’s protected open space inventory once and for all.

**Friends of Jones Woods merger with BPA:** After nearly 2 decades, the Friends of Jones Woods, a sister group to BPA solely focused on the well being of Jones Woods, decided it would be more efficient to dissolve as a separate entity and to essentially merge with BPA. At the December BPA meeting, trustees voted in favor of the merger and FJW officers Jane Parks and Tim Tweed proceeded to formally dissolve FJW. Established in the 1990s by Barbara Klingsporn, officers Jane Parks and Tim Tweed proceeded to formally dissolve FJW. Established in the 1990s by Barbara Klingsporn, a longstanding supporter of BPA and activist on behalf of Jones Woods, FJW established closer ties with the Township and continuously advocated on behalf of preservation and conservation of the woods. One of its projects included partnering with Dr. Sarah Webb, biology professor and forest ecologist at Drew University in the construction of a deer exclosure to study the effects of forest regeneration in the absence of deer predation. That experiment is still operational (depending on student interest in any given year). Another positive undertaking with BPA was the Hillcrest School’s “my big backyard” grant from the Dodge Foundation to underwrite the study of flora and fauna in Jones Woods by the K-2 school students at Hillcrest School. BPA fully supports the use of Jones Woods as a living laboratory for students of all ages to learn about our natural world and thanks all who served Friends of Jones Woods as caring stewards of the land.
Strong advocacy for forest protection in the State Senate:

Senator Bob Smith posted a strong editorial in January 6, 2013’s Daily Record advocating protection of our forests. “Our greatest tool for carbon sequestration is our state’s lush green forest land. Forest stewardship isn’t just about preserving open acres of forest land from being spoiled by new development; it’s about ensuring protection of our natural resources to help remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby putting downward pressure on global climate change,” said Senator Smith, chairman of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. His bill has cleared the state Senate. Let’s hope it clears the state Assembly as well. Thanks, Senator Smith for your efforts on behalf of the environment.

The Green strip between E. and W. Lake Blvds.

Illegal Dumping: Each year in early April, BP residents come together to clean up trash from the green strip between East and West Lake Boulevards, as part of the Clean Communities efforts coordinated by Town and Township. Many residents (esp. those who walk the area regularly) also lend a hand to keep the area free from litter. It has come to our attention that there are some landscapers, however, who tend to view this area as a dumping ground for yard waste. If you use a lawn or landscape service, please remind your landscaper/lawn service that this area is NOT a dumping area. If you see illegal dumping in that area, please call the Township Administrator, Tim Quinn or the Township Police department and report the offense. Thank you.

What to do with post Sandy storm debris in the strip? Good news! You may think that messy-looking forests need to be cleaned up. But, according to New Jersey Conservation Foundation ecologist Dr. Emile DeVito, “this type of devastation has happened a thousand times before in the eastern deciduous forest and can actually be beneficial. For millennia,” Dr. DeVito tells us, “natural calamities trigger an ecological process known as ‘gap-phase succession,’ causing an explosion of biodiversity as plants seedlings and saplings compete for light and space.”

Source: http://www.dailyrecord.com/article/20121212/NJOPINION03/312120002/Storms-could-benefit-state-s-forests

Post and rail fencing: Teardown or replace?

The deterioration of the post and rail fencing around the park has been the subject of BPA concern and discussion with the Town of Morristown which was contemplating complete removal. When issues of safety, especially for children in the park were raised, the Town suggested construction of a black chain link fence around the park’s playground area. However, after much discussion and polling of BPA members and residents (especially those with young children), we have reached an agreement with the Town which will replace failing portions of the post and rail fence with parts salvaged from the dismantling of the fencing bordering the portion of the park along Mendham Rd.. This happy compromise saves Morristown considerable expense and satisfies concerns of residents who want some fencing (to prevent children from running into the street) while preserving the rustic look of the current post and rail fence.
Burnham Park: Restoration of Riparian Buffer Zone

Between 2001 and 2004, BPA partnered with the Town of Morristown, the Whippany River Watershed Action Committee (WWAC), the Morris Land Conservancy and Omni Environmental—with the help of a $100,000 grant, to install a Riparian Buffer Zone around the lower pond in Burnham Park. The carefully planned project, guided by professional environmental engineers/scientists was designed to deter geese, stabilize the banks of the pond, and reduce pond pollution. Sadly, some adjacent property owners did not understand the purpose or appreciate the work and planning that had gone into the RBZ. Instead they viewed the planting and subsequent growth as an obstacle to an unobstructed view of the pond. Inappropriately, some went beyond their property lines onto public park land, mowing or cutting down plantings or removing the temporary protective fencing (only meant to remain until the plantings “took hold”).

Happily, subsequent conversations/meetings among residents, Morristown officials, BPA trustees and particularly discussions with Park Commission naturalist/BPA trustee and Alexander Hamilton Neighborhood Association President Douglas Vorolieff have led to increased understanding about the value of the buffer zone, why it was created and how it benefits all. Parameters for maintenance were established and agreed upon by all parties. Morristown Director of Public Works and Town Engineer, Jeff Hartke will have the Town DPW leave a 12-15 swath bordering the pond unmowed…thus allowing as many of the plantings as possible to regrow. Morristown is also committed to keeping all other areas well trimmed and free of litter, particularly the area closest to homes backing onto the park.

Thanks to the research of Art Vespignani of the WWAC, we now have a list of most of the original plantings as well as an approximate cost of restoration of the buffer, which he has shared with BPA and with the Town of Morristown. Fortunately, many of the original plants (mallows, sunflowers, alders, etc.), once left undisturbed, are returning and thriving!! Because of the spontaneous regeneration, Douglas has recommended waiting until Spring before deciding whether to buy additional plants for restoration. Our thanks to Douglas for his knowledge and for his kindness in bringing people together to benefit all.

Hurricane Relief – At the December BPA meeting, all present voted unanimously to donate $200 to NJ Sandy relief efforts. The check went out later in December to the Community Foundation of New Jersey’s “New Jersey Recovery Fund,” whose mission is described thus:

The New Jersey Recovery Fund is a joint effort among local and national foundations, New Jersey corporations, and individuals to provide support to New Jersey’s communities and nonprofit organizations that are affected by or responding to Hurricane Sandy. The Fund seeks to address the intermediate and long-term impacts of this natural disaster, serving as a flexible source of financial support to local organizations and communities as they lead and participate in rebuilding efforts throughout the state over the coming months and years. Visit http://www.cfnj.org/new-jersey-recovery/ for more details on the fund.
On Jan. 2, 2013, the WSJ indicated that electricity demand for and consumption of electricity is DOWN. Making appliances and other products more energy efficient and the fewer number of goods being produced in the USA are contributing factors to that decline.

Companies “including Public Service Enterprise Group Inc. and Northeast Utilities, are pouring money into high-voltage transmission lines – superhighways for electricity – because federal regulators are allowing them to collect above-average returns from customers on those outlays to encourage new investment in the nation’s aging power networks.”...The article goes on to say “many utilities with regulated and unregulated operations are redirecting spending to their regulated side, where regulators practically guarantee them a profit. PSEG plans to triple its investment in its fully regulated electricity transmission business to $2.4 billion in 2014 from less than $866 million in 2008. Ralph Izzo, the company’s CEO recently told investors that he likes spending on power transmission, because ‘it’s not dependent on [electricity] load growth.’ Part of his motivation is the return on equity of 11.7% to 12.9% set by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.”

This once again questions the validity of proposed massive transmission projects like the Susquehanna/Roseland line which, in the face of declining demand, are clearly being driven by regulatory profits rather than public need.

As of Dec. 6, 2012:

Preliminary Injunction filed.
A coalition of national, regional and local conservation groups filed a motion for a preliminary injunction in federal court today to stop construction of the Susquehanna-Roseland transmission line through three popular national parks – the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail – while the court considers claims that the power line will cause irreversible ecological and scenic damage. The National Park Service (“NPS”) approved the supersized transmission line on October 1, 2012, despite the agency’s conclusion that the project, as approved, would cause serious and enduring impacts on the parks.

BPA Elections
Each year at this time we vote for our Bd. of Trustees. Nominations are open to all BPA members – self nominations are welcome. New members/Trustees are encouraged. We invite you to submit your ballot (and/or nominations) by mail to our recording secretary, Debbie Bruen (19 Upper Field) in advance of the January meeting if you are unable to attend in person but wish to participate.

Our current ballot includes the following:

Joseph Attamante
Debbie/Scott Bruen
Sharon Cain
Jennifer/Christopher Carcich
Bill/Kathy Claxton
John Mahoney Codd

Jonathan Darwell/Suzanne Mutz-Darwell
Elihu Davison/Sheira Greenwald
Mary Ann Gazal
Kay Kribs
Michael Luteran
Susan Mellen

Buffy O’Brien
Bill Pezzuti
Lynn/Don Siebert
Douglas Vorolieff
Edwin Villhauer

Please indicate your vote, tear off your ballot and mail it (or email your response) to Debbie Bruen, Recording Secretary, 19 Upperfield Drive, Morristown, NJ 07960 (or email Debbie.Bruen@coldwellbankermoves.com).

a) for the entire slate ______

b) for all but the following___________________________

c) the additional nomination of the following for positions as Trustees: __________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
Welcome to new neighbors:

We are delighted to welcome the Luterans, O’Connors and Walshes and other new neighbors who have recently moved into Burnham Park. As you’ll discover it’s a great community and we hope you’ll feel free to contact any of us if you have questions about our neighborhood or just want to get involved. We welcome all to attend BPA meetings…our next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 23, 2013 at the home of Debbie Bruen (19 Upper Field) starting at 7:30pm.

Other nice news:

113 Acres preserved in Harding: On January 4, 2013, the Daily Record announced the purchase of Primrose Farm Estates, “highlighting how critical protected natural areas are to the quality of life in New Jersey…,” said Anthony Cucchi, the Trust for Public Land’s New Jersey director. Previously approved for a 13 lot residential development this land was preserved with combined funding through the Harding Land Trust Green Acres grant, Harding Green Acres grant, Harding Open Space Trust fund, Trust for Public Land Green Acres grant, Morris County Open Space Trust Fund, Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority and Great Swamp Green Acres grant. 97 of the 113 acres will be owned and managed by the Harding Land Trust which will maintain some of the existing farm fields and possibly restore others while developing a trail network. The MUA will place a conservation easement on the land trust portion of the property because of the watershed value of its location. It is one of the largest remaining tracts of land available in Harding Township and one of the most ecologically valuable and vulnerable. This will be “a place where the public can visit and take in all of the natural beauty that the property has to offer,” said Tina Bologna, executive director of the Harding Land Trust. Congratulations to all involved in completing this long and complex transaction!!

Fill in your name, address and telephone number on this stub. Make checks payable to the Burnham Park Association. Send to our Membership Chair, Kathy Claxton, 32 Dorothy Drive, Morristown, NJ 07960. Thanks to those neighbors who have supported BPA so generously. DUES PAID IN THE THE LAST 3 MONTHS OF 2012 GOT CREDITED TO CALENDAR YEAR 2013

Membership/Dues Payment /We enclose our 2013 Burnham Park Association dues of:

|$10 Basic/Pine  | $25 Sponsor/Maple  | $50 Patron/Beech  | $100 Benefactor/Oak  | $250 Thomas Paine Club

Name:_____________________________________________________________
Address:_____________________________________________________________________
Telephone: ______________________ Email:_____________________________________

If making additional contribution, please indicate amount and purpose (e.g. plantings for Arbor Day, etc.)

Amount:____________________ Purpose: __________________________________________

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