

Schedule of Events

Mom and Tots (see article on pg.2 for dates)

NOVEMBER 5,

Next BPA Meeting

(at 178 Hillcrest Ave., 7:30pm), Annual Elections to take place. Refreshments (see ballot below).

NOVEMBER 6:

Election Day...

be sure to vote.

For Town of

Morristown Meetings,

calendar and events: visit

www.townofmorristown.org

org

For Township of Morris

Meetings, calendar and

events: visit

www.morristwp.com

For calendars of

upcoming arts and

cultural events, visit

www.morrisarts.org

(click on On the Marquee)

For general calendar

of local events visit

www.morristourism.org

Check out

www.burnhampark.org

for BPA history and

photos



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2007 Volume, 49, no. 3

Burnham Park Association Board of Trustees

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Tina Bologna
267-1976

Paul/Marla Moster
292-3026

Laura Bolson
285-0383

Happy Trails to You...

Township and Morris Land Conservancy initiate new Trails Plan

Morris Township Open Space and Trails Committees took a major step towards expanding and connecting to existing trail networks by hosting a public workshop on September 26, 2007 to discuss the development of a municipal Trails Plan. The goal of the Plan is to enhance the recreational opportunities for local residents by linking parks, schools, neighborhoods, historic areas and transit stops. The Trails Plan will also attempt to provide connections between local trails, regional trails and trail networks in neighboring

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municipalities. The plan, still in its nascent stages, received a boost from the active involvement of Morris County Park Commission Executive, Director, Dave Helmer, and Morris Township Planning Board Chair, Rick Haan. The Morris Land Conservancy's Andrew Szwak and Thomas Kenny are guiding the work and presided over the discussion. The BPA wholeheartedly supports implementation of a plan that provides both the opportunity for healthy recreation and an alternative to transportation reliant solely on burning fossil fuel.

The Bear Facts: Bear Sighting on Hillcrest Ave.

On Friday evening, October 19th, in early evening (~6pm) a black bear was sighted rooting around foundation plants at 178 Hillcrest Ave.. After a short while, the bear then ambled up Hillcrest Ave. towards the school's wooded area. The police were informed.

Many times young male bears roam near wooded areas in search of new territory since they cannot stay with their original family as they approach maturity. Usually they are not aggressive but they are wild animals and caution is always best, esp. if you have young children and/or pets.

Several things you can do to make your home less attractive to bears...

1. Don't have bird feeders or animal food outdoors until bears are safely hibernating for the winter...Bears are omnivores and will eat seeds, nuts, berries, etc.
2. Don't put out your garbage (if possible) until the morning of pickup and, when you do, put some noxious smelling stuff into the can... (ammonia on a rag or paper towel) to make it less attractive for a bear to search for food.
3. Don't leave small pets out at night.
4. Keep your grills clean (the smells of grilled food/fat can attract bears)
5. and most important, don't leave small children unattended in the yard.

BPA MOMS & TOTS Growing and Growing!



The summer was wonderful! We met so many new friends and welcomed new babies to the group. Thank you to Carolyn Erickson and Lorene Nilles for compiling our official Moms & Tots spreadsheet. It is very helpful in arranging play dates! This summer, we took trips to Sunrise Lake and to The Land of Make Believe. Our Fall happenings are so vast we couldn't publish everything... Go to the web calendar www.momstots.carcich.net to see everything. Here is some of what we have planned:

All ages play dates: on Mondays around 4:00 as we meet at local parks. Please call or email Carolyn Erickson for details on the location: (973) 401-0631 or cmv12@yahoo.com. The parks are also listed on our web calendar.

Infant play-dates will continue on Wednesdays at various times of the day. We rotate homes so check your email and the web calendar. Contact Jen Carcich for details on location: 973-451-9090.

Dinner Play-dates will be held on Thursday evenings at 5:30 at playgrounds and various families' homes. Although created for working parents, all are welcome. The Annis family's "Euro" themed dinner and the Erikson family's "Breakfast for Dinner", both held at Burnham Park, were huge hits! Strangers were even asking about our "parties". Weekly emails will be sent to announce the locations. If you are willing to host a dinner play-date in October or November, please let Jen Carcich know ASAP.

Nature Walks will continue on Fridays at 10:00 We meet with the kids in strollers or packs at the South Street entrance to Loantaka Park.

Day out With Dad - a train ride to Summit for lunch and to play at the playground by the train station- will be posted on the web calendar.

Nature Walks/Runs will continue on Fridays now at 9:00 We meet with the kids in strollers or packs at the South Street entrance to Loantaka Park. (Some of us started running to prepare for the 5K to help the Interfaith Food Pantry on Thanksgiving at 8:30 am. Register at www.active.com. Join us! We are super slow!)

Monthly Arts & Crafts especially for our group: Jen Carcich will be reading Halloween & Thanksgiving stories and bring all the stuff to make a Halloween/Thanksgiving crafts just for BPA's Morristown Moms & Tots at the Morris County Library in the Children's Arts & Crafts room. FREE. All ages welcome 3:30-4:30 Tuesday, October 16 & Monday, November 5 (this will take the place of the All ages play date that week).

With the cold months on the way, We were trying to think of some free indoor things to do and this seemed simple. Jen could only book through November. if any of you would like to run the book and craft one month, please let Jen know! PLEASE RSVP so I cut out enough artsy stuff;) Grandparents & caregivers welcome!!! School age kids can and if your child (or you) needs volunteer hours for scouts or college applications, I would gladly have them help during these classes.

Two Discussion groups are forming for the fall

For parents: "Healthy Children, Healthy Planet" and

For all members: "Voluntary Simplicity".

\$20 gets you the book and then you meet at various homes weekly to discuss each section. There are 8 sections in each book and they are easy and informative reads. (The classes are run by the Garden State Earth Institute www.gsearchinstitute.org) **Healthy Children, Healthy Planet:** to understand how the effects of our consumer culture influence a child's point of view and to discover ways to create meaningful times and healthy environments for our children. **Voluntary Simplicity:** to live more simply is to live more purposefully and with the minimum of needless distractions.

If you are interested in joining either group, please email Jen at fadoo3@aol.com since she will be contacting the facilitator.

We will continue with outdoor play and exercising until the weather is just unbearable. Thank-you to Kim King for taking on the role of updating our web calendar with all that the County and Town/Township Libraries have to offer.

Check the web calendar for more events and details www.momstots.carcich.net Enjoy your families. -Jen Carcich

Create a Wildlife Haven (but not for bears) in Your Backyard!

You can join 90,000 wildlife enthusiasts who have been recognized for creating wildlife-friendly havens in their own backyards. The National Wildlife Federation is sponsoring the program. To get certified, you pay \$15 and provide elements from each of the following areas:

Food Sources. For example:

Native plants, seeds, fruits, nuts, berries, nectar

Water Sources.

For example: Birdbath, pond, water garden, stream

Places for Cover.

For example: Thicket, rock pile, birdhouse

Places to Raise Young.

For example: Dense shrubs, vegetation, nesting box, pond Sustainable Gardening. For example: Mulch, compost, rain garden, chemical-free fertilizer...

Once certified, you receive a 1 year subscription to the National Wildlife® magazine, email newsletter, a certificate and listing in the roster of certified properties. Then, you can buy a Certified Wildlife Habitat yard sign showing a commitment to conserving wildlife.

For more info, go to <https://secure.nwf.org/backyard/certifv.cfm>

STATE PLAN ISSUES: What's up?

In a May 1, 2007 letter, Morris Township urged that Planning Area 5 (Environmentally Sensitive) designations be downgraded to "Fringe" Planning Area 3 in the Jones Woods environs, Picatinny Rd., Bailey Hollow Rd., and Western Ave.. Additionally, the Township is proposing "Metropolitan" PA-1 Designation for Gaston Rd., Jacob Arnold Rd. (both in Washington Valley) as well as for Bradford Estates (on Sussex) and Spencer Estates (on Kahdena Rd.). We have grave concerns about the implications of such recommendations.

Why are we concerned?

These recommendations fly in the face of the State Plan's delineation criteria and contradict its goals to limit sprawl by directing development (and redevelopment) to areas with current infrastructure in place.

A. RE: Jones Woods and environs...

The State Plan's Delineation Criteria for PA-5/ Environmentally Sensitive areas include:

Watersheds of pristine waters, trout streams and drinking water supply reservoirs, recharge areas for potable water aquifers, habitats for endangered and threatened plant and animal species, freshwater wetlands, prime forested areas, scenic vistas, etc.

Compare these criteria to the facts: Jones Woods includes state documented endangered species, exceptional resource value freshwater wetlands, mature forest contiguous with county forest/parkland, steep slopes, a trout maintenance stream, historic structures (remains of the Morris Aqueduct System), use for potable water storage by SMCMUA, and lack of sewers. A portion of Jones Woods was purchased with Township Open Space funds, and is identified in the Township's Land Use Plan Element Update of 2000 as "open space." Moreover, Jones Woods serves a vital role providing groundwater recharge area and stormwater management capability for the adjoining, uphill Villa Walsh.

B. RE. Picatinny Rd. and environs....

These same criteria could be applied to the areas including Picatinny Rd., Bailey Hollow Rd. and Western Ave. which are replete with streams, steep slopes, wetlands and nearly contiguous mature forested areas including Jockey Hollow Top, Fosterfields, Jones Woods, Jockey Hollow National Historical Park and Lewis Morris County Park.

Despite the Township's implication that the smaller lots of our own neighborhood apply to these areas, residential lots on Picatinny are very large (some nearly 50 acres in size), and several are designated for farmland use – not to mention the acknowledged scenic vista. Lots on Bailey Hollow and Western/Jockey Hollow are also large, heavily wooded, steeply sloped, many with wetlands or streams and on Jockey Hollow, with historic significance in their Colonial era homes and direct lead in to Jockey Hollow National Park.

We feel strongly that Jones Woods and its environs meet the criteria for PA-5 designation rather than the Fringe Area PA3 designation - whose delineation criteria state "Does not include land that meets the criteria for ...Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas" and which allows for convenience stores, as well as commercial and industrial development along the lines of Flemington.

C. RE: for Washington Valley's Gaston Rd. and Jacob Arnold Rd.

The State's own general description of PA-1 says it ranges "from large urban areas such as Newark ...to post war suburbs such as Englewood and Cherry Hill" with "the need to rehabilitate housing" and "a compact settlement pattern where communities stand shoulder to shoulder."

Some of the PA-1 Delineation Criteria include

1. Density of more than 1,000 people per square mile
2. Existing public water and sewer systems
3. ...and access to public transit systems
4. A population of no fewer than 25,000 people
5. Areas more totally surrounded by land areas that

meet the criteria of a Metropolitan Planning Area, e.g., concentration of commercial and manufacturing infrastructure

6. No contiguous open space or farmland

7. Absence of developable land.

Yet, these streets in no sense fit the PA-1 Metropolitan Planning Area designation. They have million dollar homes on large wooded lots. There is no public transportation access nor is the population density remotely close to 1,000 people per square mile.

That Washington Valley is highly sensitive, both environmentally and historically, has been thoroughly proven and documented in recent years. It lies within a State and Federally Registered Historic District, provides habitat to state and federally endangered species, has Category I trout production streams, exceptional resource value wetlands, steep slopes, mature forests, contiguous green spaces, headwaters of the Whippany River (which supplies drinking water to over 1 million New Jersey residents), drinking water wells and the land is contiguous to the nation's first National Historical Park at Jockey Hollow. In its own 1994 Master Plan, the Township urged the state to expand the PA5 designation in recognition of the environmental sensitivity of Washington Valley.

Why would the Township propose such reclassification now?

The most likely reason might be that PA-1 designation – though totally inappropriate - would allow the Township to promote more development in these areas. The State Plan provides the incentives of streamlined funding for extending sewers, water lines and other infrastructure in PA-1 areas. These state financial incentives are designed to encourage development and redevelopment in town centers such as Morristown (which is designated PA-1) rather than to fund continuing outward sprawl.

Applying a PA-1 designation to these areas in Washington Valley would make it financially easier for the Township to extend infrastructure and open these sensitive areas up to future development, in complete violation of the

State Plan's core principals (to limit sprawl and focus development away from sensitive areas). In a very real sense, the Township is, in effect, recommending the use of our state tax dollars to fund the degradation of our own environment!

Concerns about procedures and public involvement:

Once again, the public has not been invited to participate in the decision process which clearly affects public interest. Despite our long record of participation in the State Plan's development (dating back to 1989) and despite local and county agency assurances that we would be notified of ongoing discussions, it was almost by accident that we learned of this latest phase and obtained a copy of the Township recommendations. Even the Township's own Environmental Commission was kept in the dark about the Township's latest response to the State Plan! Since these Planning Area designations proposed by our municipality have significant consequences for us as citizens, homeowners, and taxpayers, it is a grave concern that we have been excluded from meaningful and timely participation.

What can you do to voice your concern?

You can urge the state to preserve PA-5 designations for these areas and share your concerns about the lack of public participation opportunities in our municipality on this issue. Letters can be sent to:

Mr. Ben Spinelli, Esq.
Executive Director
Office of Smart Growth
Department of Community Affairs
101 South Broad Street
PO Box 204
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204 and to

Lisa Jackson, Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
401 E., State Street
PO Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

As the Billboard Turns (an ongoing saga)

One billboard, adjacent to the monument to the Revolutionary War Park of the Artillery (on Mendham Ave., opposite Burnham Park), the site once occupied by a thousand men under the command of General Henry Knox (Washington's Chief of Artillery) during the winter of 1779-80, was removed from 31 Mendham Ave., while one measuring 12x25'x 17.3' high remains next door at 41 Mendham Ave., within view of the monument. What to do with the remaining billboard is the subject of contention before the Morris Township Board of Adjustment. On September 24, William Farley, owner of the property, testified that he cannot remove the billboard because he does not own it and these facts prevent him from selling the remaining house he developed on the site(#41). The land was sold to Mr. Farley in 2005 and permits were duly issued. However, the property came with the encumbrance of a pre-existing, non-conforming use: the billboards, owned by CBS Signs who acquired the permanent easement under a permit issued in 1956.

Applicant Mr. Farley proposes to relocate and maintain the 10.5'x22.8'x 17.3' billboard (reduced from its present size) on the existing single family residential property and create a front yard setback of 7 feet where a minimum

setback of 60 feet is required. Testimony from his attorney, planner, as well as a representative of CBS signs revealed that:

The billboard(sign), A pre-existing, non-conforming use, is one of two principal uses for the property (its use as a residence is the other).

Board attorney Oller opined that the billboard had "no legal right to be constructed" even though a permit and easement were issued in 1956.

The billboard generates \$1500.00 per month income.

The permanent easement allows the sign company access to the entire residential property to perform maintenance. The CBS sign representative testified that his company would work with the Board of Adjustment to make the sign less obtrusive, and perhaps move it to a commercial zone, but would not consider a buyout or its permanent removal.

Mr. Farley's attorney has applied for a hardship (which, if accepted, would grant relief through approval of his application), maintaining that Farley cannot sell his property with the sign in place and probably cannot obtain a certificate of occupancy. Despite this plea, several board members said that a hardship cannot be "self-created" since Mr. Farley should have known of the encumbrance and easement prior to purchase.

If the application is approved, the sign's owner(CBS) testified that up to six mature trees might be removed to make the sign visible from road. Board Attorney Oller indicated that he will determine prior to the next meeting whether or not the billboard has a legal basis to remain on the site. Several neighbors also objected to the sign's presence in a residential area. The Board will render its decision following the November 26 public hearing.

In an August 24, 2007 letter to Chairman Vitale and members of the Board of Adjustment, Dr. Lynn Siebert, President of the Burnham Park Association, summarized our thoughts that such a sign is out of place on this site. It does not belong in a residential area and adversely impacts a unique historic monument and possible park (of the Knox Artillery Encampment). We urge the owner of the sign to agree to its removal to a suitable commercial site. Failing that, we urge the Board of Adjustment to deny application to relocate on this site and instead to recommend that the Morris Township Committee (or other appropriate municipal body) rule that the easement permitting such a sign be revoked, allowing for its removal. Stay tuned for the next installment (Nov. 26) of As the Billboard Turns....

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, Mary Ann Gazal (34 Dorothy Drive) in advance of the November 5th meeting if you are unable to attend in person but wish to participate.

Our current ballot includes the following:

- Joseph Attamante/Michelle Esposito
- Imre Bajusz
- John Bartholomew
- Sharon Cain
- Jennifer/Christopher Carcich
- Bill/Kathy Claxton
- Elihu Davison/Sheira Greenwald
- Mary Ann Gazal
- Kay Kribs
- Fred Mayer
- Bill Pezzuti
- Lynn Siebert
- Edwin Villhauer
- Alternates:
- Scott/Deborah Wild
- Rick Bye/Deborah Macomber
- Paul/Marla Moster

Please indicate your vote

- a) for the entire slate _____
- b) for all but the following _____
- c) the additional nomination of the following for positions as Trustees: _____

Fill in your name, address and telephone number on this stub. Make checks payable to the Burnham Park Association. Sent to our treasurer, Bill Claxton at 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 2006 GET CREDITED TO CALENDAR YEAR 2007

Membership/Dues Payment I/We enclose our 2007 Burnham Park Association dues of:

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

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

Amount: _____ Purpose: _____

Classified

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Realtor for over 23 years!
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