



WEISENBERG TOWNSHIP

The Official Newsletter of Weisenberg Township

Spring 2009

*Your support
is crucial to
the success of
the Weisenberg
Volunteer Fire
Department.*



OUR FAMILY PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY

This year will be an exciting year for the Weisenberg Volunteer Fire Department! We have purchased our first fire truck, the building plans are finalized, and we are expecting to break ground on the new building this summer with completion by the end of the year. The Emergency Services building will be located on Golden Key Road at the intersection with Seipstown Road, will house the Fire Department and an ambulance, and can serve as a disaster sheltering facility for the township.

Weisenberg Volunteer Fire Department is estimated to go into service late summer 2009. We will be working closely with both Fogelsville and New Tripoli Fire Departments to maximize emergency coverage until we are fully operational.

In December, 2008, after an extensive research and test period, Weisenberg Township purchased our first apparatus, a 2007 109' HME

Quint demo. It has a 7 man cab (5 SCBA seats), 2000 GPM pump, 500 gal poly water tank, 30 gal poly foam tank and pre-installed shelving. Over the next few months we will be holding driver training sessions, sending the truck out for final decals/lettering and installing all required equipment. We are actively searching for one used tanker (min 3000 gal tank, commercial 2 or 3 man cab acceptable) and one used engine (small, less than 30', preferably a 4x4, and custom cab).

The Fire Department holds regular monthly meetings on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Weisenberg Municipal Building on Seipstown Road. All residents interested in supporting the Fire Department are encouraged to attend. Regular firefighter practice meetings are being scheduled. Firefighter and Supporter applications are available on our website.

The Fire Department wants to meet the challenge of providing the highest quality fire and emergency service apparatus, equipment and support to answer calls for help in our community. Manpower will be the most important piece of the puzzle, both in fighting fires and in other support roles. Many jobs are necessary to make this a successful department. If you are interested in supporting the Fire Department, please attend one of the monthly meetings or reach out to the department via our website.

Monetary donations supporting the Weisenberg Volunteer Fire Department are being accepted at the New Tripoli bank branches or can be mailed to the address below. If you have any questions concerning any part of the fire department please mail your questions to Weisenberg Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 51, Kutztown Pa. 19530 or visit our website at: www.weisenbergfire.com.

UPDATES ON LAND PRESERVATION

When surveyed, our residents have always indicated that what they like about living in Weisenberg is the rural atmosphere. With the intent of retaining the rural character we completed some steps in 2007 that are beginning to bear fruit. It has taken us several years to develop a means to keep Weisenberg from becoming another overbuilt sprawling community. We have been able to do this by putting into use the Open Space Plan prepared by our Environmental Advisory Council. With it we were able to purchase open space easements on 3 parcels of land consisting of nearly 100 acres. These are the first easements purchased by our Township to prevent properties from becoming developed. We were informed by Jeff Zehr that we are the first municipality in Lehigh County to put an open space preservation act into effect. Jeff oversees the preservation of farmland through the Agricultural Farmland Preservation Act for Lehigh

County. Through this program the County has preserved approximately 20,000 acres of farmland in the County. Of the 20,000 preserved acres more than 4000 acres are in Weisenberg. The County is restricted to farms with more than 50% of the land used for agricultural purposes. This excludes many parcels in our Township that are partially wooded or that rate low on an agricultural scale. The County has funds to preserve no more than about 10% of the eligible farms each year and many wait for years to be included. Some farmers give up applying, and some have passed away before having their farms preserved.

Our plan differs from the County plan in that we will preserve open space in order to keep it from becoming developed. The land does not have to have 50% used for agriculture. Our first two preservations were farms that had been listed for a number of years with the County and the owners then

applied to Weisenberg. Their owners opted to accept our easements in order to insure that their land would remain open. The Open Space preservation program was initiated several years ago with our Environmental Advisory Council putting together the Open Space and Recreation Plan. This plan allows us to purchase these easements. Upon receiving applications they talk to the homeowners, rate the property, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning the applications.

We have been able to purchase these easements without raising taxes and in fact Weisenberg taxes haven't been raised in more than 20 years. They have been reduced 5 times in the past 10 years.

Congratulations EAC members for a job well done.

'Just Say No'

Reprinted from an article in *Pennsylvania Township News*

To Comply with State Laws, Township Supervisors Sometimes Have to Make Unpopular Decisions.

Wal-Mart is coming to town and wants to build its new store near your neighborhood. The township supervisors should just say no.

A pig farmer wants to set up shop down the road from your new dream home. The township supervisors should just say no.

A local businessman wants to open an adult bookstore a few doors away from your church. The township supervisors should just say no.

It's that easy, right? Well, not really.

When making land use decisions, township supervisors must comply with a handful of state laws, including the granddaddy of them all, the

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, which was enacted in 1968 to guide local officials as they develop their communities.

And while the MPC, the courts, and the legislature have given township supervisors a certain amount of latitude and flexibility in making local land use decisions, they have been very firm about one thing: Townships with zoning ordinances must allow for every use.

In other words, townships must set aside land for such necessary things as homes and businesses and such controversial things as landfills and cell phone towers. And no matter how much residents may protest, township supervisors have very few options when faced with an unpopular use: If the applicant complies with state and

local laws, the township must allow it.

"Township residents may not want an adult bookstore or a hog farm in their community, but the courts have determined that these are legitimate uses," says Elam Herr, assistant executive director of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. "So unless a township wants to wind up in court, spending valuable tax dollars because it sidestepped a state law, it can't ban or say no to these businesses. The supervisors' hands are tied.

"Sometimes, that's difficult for residents to understand," he adds, "but townships must follow state and federal laws like anyone else or face the consequences."

SPEAKING OF LAND DEVELOPMENT

Construction of homes in Weisenberg has continued at a pace of approximately 45 homes per year for the last 12 years. The actual number of residential building permits issued each year has been:

1996	-	58
1997	-	56
1998	-	53
1999	-	49
2000	-	39
2001	-	38
2002	-	43
2003	-	44
2004	-	37
2005	-	66
2006	-	28
2007	-	30
2008	-	23

We also had 8 warehouses constructed 2000 to 2007.

We were generally fairly successful in preventing the type of growth that has been seen by the other Townships bordering the major highways. 2005 was a real concern but we returned to a lesser amount for 2006 and 2007. With the outlook for new home construction having changed dramatically we should see fewer in the near future.

Many times we get asked if it isn't a benefit to build more homes to increase our tax base. The truth is that on average each new home will create the need to educate 2 children at a cost of over \$10,000 per child. The total of about \$20,000 is never collected on any new home. Therefore the expenditures are always more than the tax collected. The school taxes

therefore rise on the remaining homes in the school district.

For many years we were required to allow every category of land use within our Township by the governing law, the Municipalities Planning Code. When the State passed Act 67 allowing neighboring communities to share land uses we initiated and adopted an agreement with the other municipalities that wanted to curb growth. After several years we were able to reach a common goal which allowed us to adopt the Multimunicipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Northern Lehigh. Weisenberg initiated agreements with the Townships of Heidelberg, Lowhill, Lynn, Washington, and the Borough of Slatington. For a time it appeared

North Whitehall would also join, but in the end opted out. This Regional Plan allowed us to share uses and in 2007 we completed the task of modifying our zoning ordinances so that we no longer allow trailer parks, apartment complexes, townhouses, or any other form of high density development. Because we do have the Industrial Park, all the other municipalities are free to eliminate large box commercial buildings. They can eliminate them or restrict the size to whatever they think is appropriate for their municipalities. This means they can choose to restrict large buildings, distribution centers or Walmart type businesses if they so choose.

NOTES

Any person or business or other entity that moves into, out of or within the Township must complete a moving permit. Moving permits are available at the Administration Office. There is no fee. Also, if you have an addition to your family (example newborn baby), please notify the Administration Office. This will help keep our census records updated.

Waste Management's drop-off center is located at 2710 Golden Key Road, Kutztown, PA 19530. Household trash drop-off hours (*for Residents only!*) are:

Saturday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Tuesday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

Stay Informed & Get Involved

All meetings begin at 7:30 • Weisenberg Municipal Building
610.285.6660 • Weisenbergtownship.org

Board of Supervisors
Planning Commission
Zoning Hearing Board

2nd Monday of the month
Last Thursday of the month
2nd Wednesday of the month
(*as needed*)

Environmental Advisory Council
Weisenberg/Lowhill Historical Society

3rd Tuesday of the month
4th Tuesday every 3rd month

3rd Annual Golf Tournament Scheduled!

The Northwestern Lehigh Educational Foundation's 3rd Annual Golf Tournament has been scheduled for Friday, August 14th at Olde Homestead Golf Club. The event will begin at 9am with a shotgun start. For more information, please contact Mark Henry at 610-739-7127 or visit www.nwlef.org.

Book Plate Drive

The Northwestern Lehigh Educational Foundation is sponsoring a targeted fundraiser to support the elementary Libraries at both Weisenberg Elementary and Northwestern Elementary. In the fall of 2009, our 5th grade classrooms return to the elementary buildings from the Middle School. This is an exciting change for our district, and also one that requires support for the libraries. By sponsoring a bookplate, you are helping us provide funds to the libraries so that they can purchase additional books and periodicals to support the 5th grade curriculum. We will place a sticker in the front of a book as an acknowledgment of your gift, or you may choose instead to have the bookplate placed in honor of or in memory of another individual or family. For additional details, please contact Clare Coupe-Scott at clare@coupeware.com or visit www.nwlef.org.

Are you a Leader? – Then We Are Looking For You!

The Northwestern Educational Foundation Governance Committee is currently seeking professionals who are interested in supporting the Foundation by serving on one of our committees or serving on the Board of Directors. For more information, and an application packet, please contact Don Billig 610-298-8338 or Cathy Venusto via email at venustoc@nwlehighsd.org.

The Foundation Board meets the first Monday of the month at 7pm in the District Administrative Offices Board Room. All are welcome to attend.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Although many residents are unaware of the degree to which we work cooperatively with nearby Townships, we are currently near to adopting a Regional Recreation and Open Space Plan. The municipalities involved will be the same 6 that we entered into for land planning purposes. Heidelberg, Lowhill, Lynn, Washington, Weisenberg and Slatington. The plan has been worked on for nearly three years and will be finalized in early 2009.

We have held two public hearings to review the plan and surveyed many of our residents to get input for inclusion of items in the plan.

We also work with Lowhill, Lynn, and Heidelberg when we do road reconstruction. We share both equipment and manpower. We have formed several Councils of Government to purchase equipment jointly in order to save money on needed equipment. There are some pieces that can be used jointly and therefore the cost and use of the equipment can be shared.

We meet quarterly (sometimes more often) with the 4 Townships in our School District, North Whitehall, and Washington Townships to discuss items of common interest and to

join in quantity purchasing of road materials such as salt.

We have started discussions concerning regional emergency services planning which will probably encompass several years before coming to fruition. On an ongoing basis we look for ways to work cooperatively with our neighbors to improve the Township and to save on spending your money.

The Weisenberg Township Environmental Advisory Council is looking for members interested in studying environmental issues affecting the township. The EAC advises the township on issues related to township planning and zoning decisions. EAC members have helped develop the EAC Newsletter, the Weisenberg Township Park Plans as well as the Weisenberg Township Open Space Plan. A new project for 2009 will be development of an Official Map to help guide the future development of the township. If interested, please contact Carl Zvanut at (610) 285-4082.

Weisenberg Park Volunteers needed.

The EAC is looking for volunteers to assist in projects around the township park. Examples of projects include elimination of invasive species, trail maintenance, simple construction projects and park planning. Special thanks to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts who have already created bridges and garden stones! Any residents interested in volunteering or finding out more information, please contact Carl Zvanut at (610) 285-4082.

The Weisenberg Township Open Space Program

What is the Open Space Program?

The goal of the Open Space Plan is to preserve and protect land or farmland based on the following criteria: adjacency to preserved lands, streams, scenic views, wildlife, and steep slopes. Township, County and State funds will be used to give landowners the opportunity to protect and preserve the beauty and quality of our township land.

Weisenberg Township wants to preserve either open space or farmland in a manner similar to the Agricultural Farmland Preservation Act. We will purchase the development rights on eligible properties to insure they remain free of future development.

How can I benefit from this program?

You will be paid to sell your development rights to the property, while still owning the land and keeping it for future generations. This is a means to keep your land free of future development and still obtain value for this act. The payout can be in one lump sum or can be taken over a 5 year timeframe with 5% simple interest per year. This option may be of benefit for tax purposes.

How can this benefit our Township?

Our township remains more open and rural for the future. It also benefits economically by slowing the need for even larger and more expensive schools. Each home built puts two children into our schools with an educational cost of slightly more than \$10,000 per year. An investment to reduce this growth gives all of us an economic benefit and keeps our township rural.

What type of land qualifies?

All parcels of land larger than 15 acres. When the committee evaluates applicant parcels, consideration will be given to various items such as: proximity to preserved lands, likelihood of being developed, viewsites, wetlands, wooded slopes and other items of environmental value.

How do I apply?

It is simple. Fill out an application (available at the township building or on the website) and drop it off or mail it to the Township Building. To learn more about the program please contact EAC Chair Carl Zvanut at (610) 285-4082.

Township Environmental Information on the Web

To keep updated on environmental issues affecting our township, review status of the park and open space plans or to discover community resources visit the EAC Website at:

weisenbergtownship.org/eac_homepage.htm

Cleansweep 2009

Sponsored by the Rural Preservation Association of Northwestern

Lehigh County, PO Box 91, Germansville 18053

Saturday April 4 • 8am-12 noon

at the Lowhill Township Building, Route 100

The RPA-NLC will sponsor a scholarship to a Northwestern Lehigh senior with proceeds remaining after disposal fees are covered.

Salvation Army will be on site to accept donations of useable household items
furniture, books, toys, stuffed animals, clothes, craft items, working appliances

Donation Schedule

- auto and pick up tires \$2 each
- auto tire on rim \$1 extra
- truck tire on rim \$3 extra
- non-auto tires \$5 each (*golf cart, motorcycle, ATV, wheelbarrow*)
- tractor tires \$10 each
- oversize tires \$5 per ply (*large tractor, OTR, etc- ply on sidewall*)
- appliances w/ freon \$30 each (*A/C's, refrig, freezers, dehumidifiers*)
- white goods w/o freon \$5 each (*stoves, washers, dryers*)
- trash calculated on the basis of \$40.00 per pick up load
- fluorescent lamps 50 cents each
- propane tanks \$3 each
- electronics:
 - TV's \$20-24 depending on size
 - faxes, keyboards, microwaves, laptops, printers, CPU's, radios, stereos, answering machines, phones, pagers all \$2.50 each
 - copiers, monitors \$6 each
 - batteries \$1/pound

Accepting scrap metals (*please remove all non metal parts, gas and oil from motors*) auto batteries, used motor oil, transmission fluid, cooking oil, pet carriers, cages, and pet supplies, cell phones, ink cartridges, newspapers, bicycles, strings of holiday lights, extension cords.

No paints, chemicals, antifreeze, hazardous waste

*Lehigh County Hazardous household Waste collection • call 610-799-4177, extension 229, for information and dates

*electronics recycling—TV's, computers, microwaves, etc • Fridays 9-3 at Com-Cycle, 1801 Union Blvd, Allentown, 610-433-4011

*Mercury, sodium lamps--- A.E.R.C. 2591 Mitchell Ave, Allentown 18103 • call 610-797-7608 for more information

Questions? call Janice at 610-767-9297 M-F 8:30am -4:00 pm. The RPA-NLC with administrative assistance from the Lehigh County Office of Solid Waste Management is sponsoring Cleansweep 2009. The four Northwestern Lehigh townships are not providing waste disposal facilities or financial help for the event, and while Lowhill Township is allowing the use of its facilities, it is not sponsoring the event. Donations are not tax deductible.

You may recycle throughout the year at these locations:

DM Auto Service, New Tripoli (610-760-5186) accepts used oil, transmission fluid, antifreeze, batteries, used cooking oil.

Shipping Plus, Schnecksville accepts clean used packing peanuts, bubble wrap, etc.

Liberty Recycling accepts all types of clean styrofoam at 526 N 3rd St, Allentown; call 610-433-0129.

To recycle CD's, DVD's, other technotrash go to <http://greendisc.com>

To dispose of slate, bricks, blocks, rock, or concrete call **Crushcrete** at 610-865-1898.

Used bicycles can be recycled through **CAT** (Coalition for Alternative Transportation) in Bethlehem; call 610-954-5744 and leave message.

To recycle antique or old architectural items, clawfoot tubs, radiators, moldings and trim, doors, hardware, light fixtures, etc. contact the **Allentown Preservation League**, 1518 W. Walnut St, Allentown (610-437-1989 and leave message) Open Saturdays 9-12

The Allentown Recycling dropoff center, 1400 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr, Allentown (610-437-8729) will recycle clean glass bottles and jars, aluminum cans, tin and bimetal cans, cardboard, office paper and magazines, newspapers, paperboard, telephone books, good used clothing, hardback and paperback books, #1 and #2 plastics, scrap metals. Open 24 hours a day.

The Bethlehem Recycling Center, on Illick's Mill Road between Schoenersville Rd and Center St, Bethlehem (610-865-7082) will recycle clean glass bottles and jars, tin and bimetal cans, aluminum cans, aerosol cans, cardboard, paperboard, office paper and magazines, telephone books, newspapers, plastics #1 through #7 and styrofoam, scrap metal, clothing and textiles. Open M-F 10AM-5PM, Saturday 9AM-5PM, and Sunday 11AM -4 PM.

Consider composting kitchen and yard wastes on your own property. Call 610-391-9840 to register for a compost class and free compost bin at Cooperative Extension.

The Great Weisenberg Township Spring Cleanup!!!

Attention Weisenberg Residents

Call for Volunteers, Don't Miss this Opportunity!!!!

Join us Saturday, April 25th, for Lehigh County's 3rd annual "Great Lehigh County Cleanup". Weisenberg Township volunteers will meet at 9 am at the township building on Seipstown road. Roads to clean up will be selected based on township needs and input from the volunteers. Penn Dot is providing free clean up supplies and safety vests; beverages, goodie bags and raffle prizes will also be provided.

Contact Carl Zvanut at 610-285-4082 prior to April 10th.

Getting the Lead Out

New Online Resource Helps Reduce Toxic Materials in Landfills

Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Township News magazine

If you want to get rid of an old computer, VCR, or video game system, and don't want to dump it in a landfill, where it can leach lead, mercury, and other toxins, then check out Use It Again, PA!, a new online resource center for electronics reuse and recycling.

Use It Again, PA!, located at www.useitagainpa.org, is a searchable guide to businesses that rent, repair, or sell used electronics statewide.

The billions of pounds of electronic waste, or "e-waste," that will end up in landfills and incinerators over the next few years poses a serious threat to the environment and public health, says the Clean Air Council, a statewide environmental organization.

"Electronic equipment nearly always includes a toxic component, such as cadmium, lead, mercury, and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PDBEs), or a combination of them," council program director Emily Linn says. "When electronics are buried in a landfill or burned in an incinerator, toxics are released into the air, land, and water. Exposure to them can lead to serious brain and nervous system damage, developmental delays and birth defects in newborn children, and cancer."

Use It Again, PA! will help you find local electronic recyclers, national donation-based charities, and industry take-back programs, and provides general information on electronics recycling and reuse, current legislation, and the harmful effects of e-waste on the environment and public health.

Consider the following facts provided by the state Department of Environmental Protection:

- By 2007, there will be from 315 million to 600 million obsolete computers in the United States, about 75 percent of which will be stored in households, offices, and warehouses.
- Computers destined to become obsolete within the next few years contain more than 1 billion pounds of lead, 1.9 billion pounds of cadmium, 1.2 million pounds of chromium, and nearly 400,000 pounds of mercury.
- Consumer electronics, including video game systems, digital cameras, computers, VCRs and DVD players, televisions, and cell phones, account for 40 percent of the lead found in landfills.

WEISENBERGTOWNSHIP

Weisenberg Township Municipal Building
2175 Seipstown Road Fogelville, PA 18051



Utilizing grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and The Wildlands Conservancy, the new "Gateway Garden" was finally completed and is ready to bloom for this spring.

610-285-6660 • weisenbergtownship.org

U.S. Postage
PAID
Bulk Rate
Fogelsville, PA
18051
Permit #47

UPDATE ON INDUSTRIAL PARKS

We have one Industrial Park located near the New Smithville exit of I-78. Soon we'll have one more on the opposite side of Route 863. The one we have is Arcadia and the next one will be West Hills Park. It will be built by Hillwood Corporation. They purchased the land several years ago and it is anticipated that they will be able to start construction this spring. They will have to build it in two stages as they anticipate building it to have about 2,500,000 square feet of warehouse and business space. This will eventually be about the size of Arcadia. They can only construct 1,500,000 square feet of buildings before they need to invest in many upgrades to the roadway. There will be three traffic lights to be installed, the bridge over I-78 must be widened and because the bridge over I-78 is too low for current standards, they will have to put in a new one that has more clearance. This will mean raising the bridge and proportionately the on ramps and off ramps. This part will be done with phase two of the project and will probably not be done for several years.

In reviewing the property where the new park will be located, we were informed by Mary Redline (a Historical Society member), there is a building of Historical significance on the site. This is the Helfrich House. The Reverend Helfrich kept a daily log during the early years of the 1800's concerning the baptisms, weddings etc. that were ministered at the house in which he lived. This is very unique to have a daily record to go with the structure. We spoke to the developer about the significance of this property and they voluntarily subdivided a one acre parcel containing the house and are donating it to the Township. They are also going to pave the road to the house lot and put in three paved parking spaces at their expense. The Township will then turn over the house, after doing some repairs, to our local Weisenberg/Lowhill Historical Society. This restoration will take time to complete but we have been able to save this portion of the Township's past.

We really appreciate the generosity of Gary Frederick and Hillwood Corp.

Hillwood will be donating a strip of land 20 feet wide and more than a half mile in length to the Township to be used as part of a bicycling-walking trail. It will extend from Route 863 along the South side of Seipstown Road to Valley Road. The Township will be connecting it to other sections to be completed this spring.

This issue features an article concerning the Weisenberg Volunteer Fire Department. The Volunteer Fire Department has purchased the first fire truck and will start construction of the fire house this spring. We are one of only two municipalities in Lehigh County without a fire department within their borders and have depended on fire coverage from fire departments outside the Township.

Our next newsletter will cover the topics of our trails system with accompanying maps.