



Established 1725

London Britain Township Newsletter

Chester County, Pennsylvania

Spring 2010

Improvements Coming to Mason Dixon Greenway South for 2010

For the past couple of years the Township has talked about a new passive recreation area -- the Mason Dixon Greenway South. Anchored at the southeastern corner of Strickersville Road and Flint Hill Road, the Greenway would offer trails for walking, horseback riding, and mountain biking on the public lands obtained through a concerted conservation preservation effort.



This view of the creek that runs through Mason Dixon Greenway South will be enjoyed from the overlook on the handicapped accessible trail.

The Master Site Plan, which was done in 2006, includes a reforestation in the meadows, a parking area, trails, and a special handicapped accessible trail. The Greenway also connects to Fair Hill Natural Resource Area.

A \$250,000 Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant and a \$185,000 Chester County Municipal Program Grant were obtained to fund most of the plan.

Now the actual work has begun.

Last year the meadow restoration began the preparation process with the planting of native grasses. In April 2010, LBT's supervisors awarded a tree establishment contract to plant 437 trees and 42 shrubs. This contract also includes an agreement to maintain the trees for a year. Originally scheduled to start this spring, the planting was pushed to the fall because of the warm spring we're currently experiencing.

According to the Master Site Plan, the reforestation project will use native specimens such as White Oak, Red Oak, Black Oak, Shagbark Hickory, October Glory Red Maple, American Beech, American Linden, Sassafras, Persimmon, Shadbush, Ironwood, Eastern Redbud, Pink Flowering Dogwood, and Witch hazel trees, to quickly create a mature forest similar to

the mature woodlands in the area.

The final designs for the parking lot, trails and handicapped-accessible trail are complete and available for viewing at the Township Building.

The parking lot will be located on Flint Hill Road near the temporary gravel lot. It will feature an interpretive garden. Leading from the parking lot south towards the forest is a hard surface trail. Once entering the woods, the handicapped-accessible loop trail, proposed to be made of pavers, will split to the left and feature an overlook of the creek, benches, and two picnic tables. Once entering the woods, the trail will connect to the other existing trails through the area.

Currently the specs are being gathered for bid. Work on the project is expected to be completed before the year ends.

Honoring Warren Davies



Sitting on bench: Aileen Parrish and Warren Davies; (first row standing) Patricia Walters, Mary Ellen Taylor, Joan Fenza, Martin Wells, Sarah Kriebel; (second row standing) Howard Mannheim, Gay Overdeest, Carl Kriebel, and Joe McNelis.

Last fall, the London Britain Township Land Trust invited Warren Davies for a walk along the Mason Dixon Greenway to see some improvements made to the trail. Little did Warren know that the improvements included a stone bench and native plant garden with a plaque dedicating the space in his honor.

Warren was instrumental in establishing the London Britain Township Land Trust and under his leadership some of the first conservation preservation projects in the Township came to fruition, including sections of the Greenway.

Message from the Board

As we welcome the warm Spring temperatures, it has become increasingly apparent that Winter was not kind to our Township roads! In addition, LBT has planned much needed improvements to the public infrastructure, including upgrading our parkland and Township facilities.

Of course, all of these improvements require funding. As Supervisors and elected officials, we try very hard to make needed improvements to our local infrastructure without causing a substantial permanent tax burden for our citizens. As a result, we have had a fluctuating property tax rate, with the rate rising in 2008, lowering in 2009 and moderately rising again in 2010.

A major factor in the fluctuating tax rate is the County's general economy. It has impacted the Township's finances, as well as the finances of our citizens. The property valuation of LBT declined in both 2009 and 2010, resulting in a loss of operating dollars for the Township. This loss was absorbed by the Township in 2009 and was partially offset for 2010 with the tax increase, however our property tax revenue is still significantly less than it was in 2008.

Our infrastructure improvements fixed for this year include the access road which will service both the West Grove Fire Company's substation and the addition to Nichol Park; the reforestation project and meadow development on the passive recreation land at the south end of the Township along Flint Hill Road, with a trail for people with disabilities, parking facilities and an interpretive garden; stormwater controls to be developed on Township-owned open land; heavy maintenance to roads (including sealing, ditching and patching); and improved deicing salt storage facilities at the Township yard.

It is the Board's desire to keep our citizens informed about the ongoing progress of improvements in the Township. As always, we invite you to attend our meetings and to get involved with your local government. We welcome your input.

Sincerely,
*LBT Supervisors David Owens,
Aileen Parrish and Glenn Frederick*

Restoring buffers, restoring water quality through CREP



Saplings planted in 2005 as part of the CREP program in LBT are maturing into larger trees on over 10 acres of Township land creating a riparian buffer for the creek that flows through it.

Since 2000, Pennsylvania has been participating in the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which pays landowners to create riparian buffers, wetlands, wildlife habitats, grass filter strips, native grass stands and more.

One of the most popular CREP projects is planting streamside buffers. In fact, CREP partners have planted more than 14,000 miles of streamside buffers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

These buffers act as natural filters for runoff and are highly effective in removing excess nitrogen, the main pollutant of concern in the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's renewed focus on water in the Chesapeake Bay region. In addition to filtering pollutants, these buffers control stormwater runoff and help to prevent streambank erosion and flood damage.

"CREP offers an arsenal of specific conservation and environmental objectives to farmers and other landowners to restore and protect important natural resources on their properties," Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director Carl Roe says. "In the process, this grassroots approach improves Pennsylvania's ecological character, improves the environmental quality of the Chesapeake Bay and Ohio River Basin, and ultimately makes the United States a better place to live for Americans and wildlife."

Today, more than 5,000 farmers and landowners in the Commonwealth have installed forested buffers. Bradford County currently leads the state in CREP enrollment with more than 11,000 acres. Other counties with substantial acreage include: Columbia, with more than 9,700 acres; Northumberland, 9,600 acres; Somerset, 7,700; and Tioga, 7,500.

"The important thing to remember about the Pennsylvania effort is we're not done yet," says Scott Klinger, director of the Game Commission's Bureau of Land Management. "Our wildlife habitat biologists and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff have completed eligibility determinations for an additional 3,000 applicants.

"When fully implemented," he adds, "we anticipate more than 10,000 farmers and rural landowners will be enrolled in the program."

What you need to know about CREP

CREP typically provides enrolled landowners with a 120-percent reimbursement for installation and 100-percent reimbursement for post-planting maintenance. CREP also makes annual payments to landowners, who generally receive between \$2,000 and \$5,000 per acre in profits over a 15-year contract.

While the program is administered by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, you do not need to be in agriculture production to be eligible. Other partners include the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the state Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Protection, and Conservation and Natural Resources.

CREP participants receive free help in planning, designing, and implementing buffer projects. Biologists will also help you determine the best native plants to enhance wildlife habitat on your property.

It's important to note, however, that your responsibilities do not end with the installation of the buffer. You must continue conservation practices throughout the entire CREP contract. Along the way, federal, state, and local partners will help you with CREP's technical details. You also will receive full reimbursement for post-planting care done by professionals.

To enroll in the program, call toll-free 800-941-CREP (2737) for the phone number of your county's Farm Service Agency. When calling your FSA, be sure to ask to enroll in "CP22 (Conservation Practice No. 22—CREP's forested buffer program), a step that gets things started, but is nonbinding.

You can also find out more information about CREP by logging onto www.creppa.org.

*Printed with permission from **Townships Today**, Volume IV, No. 4.*

Q & A: How to Maintain Your Drainfield

The drainfield is one of the most important parts of your septic system. Maintaining it not only keeps the system functioning properly—which aids in public health—it prevents an expensive repair from damaging your wallet. The average cost of replacing a drainfield can run from \$6,000 to more than \$12,000. And no one wants a smelly drainfield to ruin outdoor activity. The following Q&A offers advice about preserving your drainfield to provide you with years of uninterrupted service.

What is a drainfield? There are two main parts to a basic septic system: the septic tank and the drainfield.

A conventional drainfield is an arrangement of perforated pipes or chambers buried underground that channel pretreated wastewater (effluent) from the septic tank out over a large area of the soil for final treatment.

A reserve drainfield, required by many states, is an area on the property that is suitable for a new drainfield system should the current drainfield fail.

How does a drainfield work? The drainfield is where the real treatment of the wastewater occurs. As the effluent slowly moves through the soil, the drainfield acts as a natural filter by absorbing the organic materials, reducing or removing bacteria and viruses, and removing some nutrients. The naturally purified water is then moved to the groundwater or evaporates from the soil.

What is a drainfield's life expectancy? Drainfields should last at least 25 to 30 years or more if they are designed, installed and maintained correctly, according to Zane Satterfield, engineering scientist with the National Environmental Services Center.

What causes a drainfield to fail? The two most common causes of drainfield failure are hydraulic and biological overloading. Hydraulic overloading occurs when too much water is sent to an under-designed system while too much organic matter in the effluent causes biological overloading.

However, there are many and varied causes for drainfield failure, including,

- not maintaining your septic tank;
- solids from the septic system clogging the small holes in the drainfield pipes;
- additives because they can damage the system by breaking up the sludge and scum layers, causing them to flush

out of the tank and clog the drainfield;

- flushing fats, oils, greases, chemicals, solvents, paint and other improper substances down the drain;
- improper drainfield siting, design, construction;
- overuse of water-generating appliances;
- garbage disposals because the extra solids introduced into the tank can increase the accumulation of sludge by more than 50 percent;
- excessive rainfall;
- downspouts, gutters, basement sump pump drains and other rainwater or surface water drainage systems that divert water over the drainfield;
- tree roots that interfere with the drainlines;
- vehicles driving over the drainfield and cracking the pipes, and
- age of the system.

How can I tell if my drainfield is failing? The most obvious sign of drainfield failure is surfacing effluent. If the soil can no longer absorb the effluent, it will either rise to the ground surface and pool or, if the drainfield isn't flat, it will 'blow out' the end of the last trench. You might also notice muddy soil around your septic system or in your basement, toilet or sink back-ups when you flush or do laundry, or strips of bright green grass growing over the drainfield.

Can I drive on, pave over, or build a structure on my drainfield? No. These activities can cause the soil to compact, exposing system components and possibly untreated sewage to the ground surface. Paving over all or a portion of a drainfield may prevent air from getting into the soil, impairing the treatment process, as well as limiting access for repairs, maintenance, or inspection.

What can be planted over or near a drainfield? The best covering for your drainfield is grass because it

helps to remove water and nutrients from the soil and helps to prevent soil erosion.

Some people may choose to landscape their drainfield because of limited space or because they think it is an eyesore. The challenge is to find plants that will meet your landscaping needs but not clog the drain pipes.

How can I maintain my drainfield? Maintenance begins with water use and waste disposal habits. The drainfield does not have an unlimited capacity, so the more water you use, the greater the likelihood of problems with the drainfield. Water conservation practices can help reduce the amount of wastewater generated in the home.

What happens during a drainfield inspection? "Inspecting a drainfield is not as straight forward as inspecting a septic tank," explains Craig Mains, engineering scientist at National Services Environmental Center. "Because the drainfield is buried, it is difficult to visually determine its condition. If there are no visible problems, the drainfield inspection consists mostly of locating the drainfield area and checking the soils to make sure the system is designed and installed correctly."

The soil is checked with a soil probe, Mains further explains, which comes in different shapes, sizes, and materials. "The probe helps determine the length of the drainfield and the length and width of its trenches. Checking each of these parameters ensures the proper amount of drainfield area is present." The probe is pushed into the ground until it touches the top of the drainfield pipe. Once the pipe is located, the inspector inserts a flag or marker, takes a few steps back, and repeats the procedures.

Reprinted with permission from the National Services Environmental Center's Small Flows Magazine, Fall/Winter 2009, Volume 9, No. 3 (www.nsec.wvu.edu/smallflows).

London Britain's News and Notes

NORTH CREEK BRIDGE UPDATE

Work on replacing the North Creek Bridge is progressing on schedule. The bridge is expected to open around mid-July.

HISTORY OF BUILDING PERMITS

Below is a history of building permits issued for new construction in LBT:

2000- 27	2005- 29
2001- 19	2006- 10
2002- 19	2007- 10
2003- 13	2008- 10
2004- 20	2009- 6

TOWNSHIP WEBSITE STATS

People are using LBT's website more and more to find all sorts of useful information. The site was launched in 2003. On April 6, 2006 the total hit count was 10,229. On February 10, 2008 it had risen to 18,091. On January 13, 2010 total hits were 30,863.

Bookmark the site :

www.londonbritaintownship-pa.gov for up-to-date information on your township.

AVON GROVE LIBRARY

Avon Grove Library's satellite branch at the London Britain Township Meeting Hall is open on Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Satellite Branch holds a small collection of books for children and adults and DVDs. Check it out.

For information about all the services available at the Avon Grove Library go online to www.avongrovelibrary.org.

Primary Elections: Tuesday, May 18

Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. for registered Republican and Democrats. LBT's polling place is the Township Hall on Good Hope Road.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

PETS AND THE LAW

All dogs, three months of age and older, must be licensed in the State of Pennsylvania. The County Treasurer's office is responsible for collecting the applications and fee and issuing the dog license in the county. Yearly fees are \$6 for spayed and neutered dogs and \$8 if not. Persons with disabilities and senior citizens receive a \$2 discount. Licenses are based on a calendar year and must be renewed annually.

Dog licenses can be obtained at the Chester County Treasurer's Office (by mail or in person). An application can be downloaded at www.chesco.org/treasurer (click on PA Dog License link). West Grove and Oxford Borough offices also sell licenses as outside agents.

The Chester County Treasurer's Office reminds everyone:

- Dogs (and cats) three months and older are required to have a current rabies vaccination.
- Owners can be fined for not licensing their dogs.
- All dogs must be under control and must not be allowed to run at large.
- Dogs are personal property, and owners are responsible for damages caused by their dog.
- It is illegal to mistreat or abuse any animals.

TOWNSHIP OFFICE HOURS

London Britain Township's office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to noon.

London Britain Township's Zoning Officer, Dave Gargula, has additional office hours by appointment. Please call him at 302-218-7173 to arrange a convenient time to meet.

Township Directory

Board of Supervisors

David Owens - *Chairman*
Aileen Parrish - *Vice Chairman*
Glenn Frederick - *Member*

Staff

Carolyn Matalon -
Secretary and Parks Manager
Dave Gargula - *Zoning Officer*
Joe Ferguson - *Roadmaster*
Dan Tracey, Steven Henry, & Steve
Dudkewitz- *Road Crew*
Pat Walsh, Walsh Eng.- *Township
Engineer*
Janie Schnelle- *Tax Collector*
Annette Stejskal - *Treasurer*

Contact Info

Office/Meeting Hall/Garage:

81 Good Hope Rd.
Landenberg PA 19350

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 215,
Kemblesville PA 19347

Phone: 610-255-0388

Fax: 610-255-3542

Website:

www.londonbritaintownship-pa.gov

Email:

carolyn.londonbritaintwp@comcast.net

Township Meetings

All meetings are held at the LBT Meeting Hall on Good Hope Road, 7 p.m.

Agendas are posted on the Township website by noon on the day of the meeting

Board of Supervisors

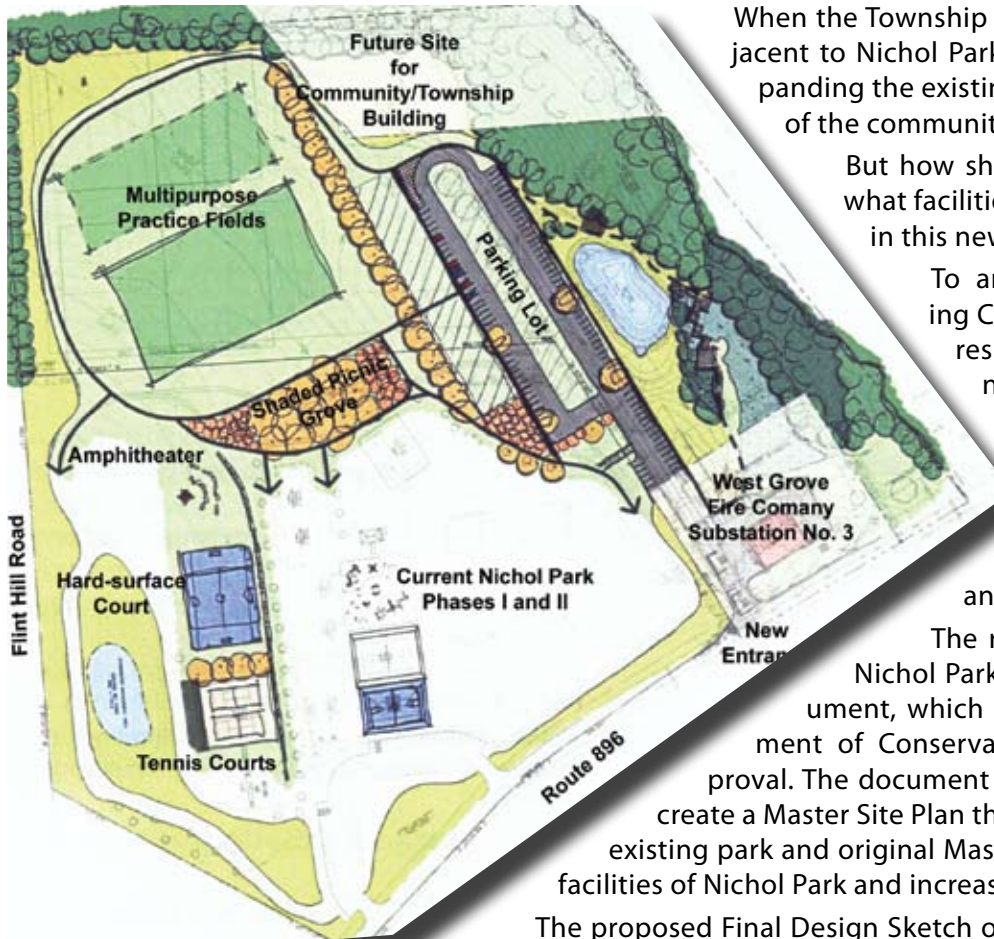
Second and fourth Mondays of the month (except December, plus call or check website for other dates and/or cancelled meetings)

Planning Commission

Each Tuesday following a Board of Supervisors' meeting

This newsletter is published by the London Britain Township Board of Supervisors, and produced by Secretary Carolyn Matalon and Lucas Communications and Publications.

Nichol Park Expansion Master Site Plan Unveiled



When the Township acquired the 19 acres of land adjacent to Nichol Park it was with the intention of expanding the existing park to further meet the needs of the community.

But how should the land be developed and what facilities did the community want to see in this new addition?

To answer these questions, a Steering Committee comprised of township residents worked with land planners from Johnson, Mirmiran, and Thompson to draft a Master Site Plan. Committee members included Judy Emory, Glenn Frederick, Bill Hutchings, Dave Jaroz, Dave Kujala, Bill Maslanka, and Carolyn Matalon.

The result of these meetings was the Nichol Park Expansion Master Site Plan document, which is awaiting Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources approval. The document states that its "primary goal is to create a Master Site Plan that completely integrates with the existing park and original Master Site Plan while expanding the facilities of Nichol Park and increasing the park's utilization."

The proposed Final Design Sketch of the Nichol Park Expansion Master Site Plan, above/left, reserves 2 acres for the West Grove Fire Company's new substation (see related story) and an additional 2 acres for a future Community Building/new Township Building.

It includes a larger parking area, one-and-a-half multipurpose/practice fields, an amphitheater, tennis courts, a multipurpose hard-surface court, a shaded picnic grove with an additional pavilion, and additional hard-surface and soft surface trails throughout the park.

A Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant financed the development of the Nichol Park Expansion Master Site Plan. The Plan, which is in the final stages of approval by the DCNR, is the first step in applying for grants to develop the land for its stated uses.

Implementation of the Master Site Plan will occur some time in the future as grants and funds become available.

Update on West Grove Fire Station No. 3



Supervisors Glenn Frederick, Aileen Parrish and David Owen await the start of the construction equipment already on site to complete the new entrance and grading for the WGFC's substation.

Excavation started on the entrance shown above in the Nichol Park expansion site map during the final week of April.

A bid was awarded for construction of the stormwater pond at the site, too.

Following the entrance construction, the West Grove Fire Company will begin site preparation for the substation.

The WGFC is in the process of finalizing the firehouse structure design.

BREAKING NEWS (May 8): At the West Grove Fire Company's May meeting, the membership voted to purchase a new fire truck and build a two-bay fire station with office space for WGFC Station No. 3. Details can be found at www.wgfc.org.

Putting the “Green” Back in Lawn Care

Did you know that American homeowners apply 10 times more fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides to their grass than farmers do to their crops? This results in chemically dependent lawns that negatively affect the health of people, pets, plants, and wildlife beyond the sidewalk’s edge. But by adopting a common sense, environmentally savvy approach to caring for our backyards, it’s easy to create a beautiful lawn that’s healthier for everyone—and save money in the process!

1. Get to Know Your Soil: Stop dumping fertilizer and other chemicals on your lawn without first understanding what your soil really needs. For about \$10 you can purchase a soil test kit from

the county’s Cooperative Extension Office. (For more information, visit www.aasl.psu.edu or call 814-863-0841.)

2. Timing is Everything: If you do apply fertilizer, apply it between the last lawn mowing and Thanksgiving when it will feed the grass’s roots and not the leaves. Spring fertilizing encourages leaf growth and feeds weed species.

3. Cut it Out: Sharp mower blades slice through grass rather than pulling it by the roots, so be sure to sharpen them annually. While you are at it, set the blades for a mowing height that will remove only the top one-third of the grass (about 3 inches). This higher setting will allow the grass to compete with lower growing weeds.

4. Clip and Save: Grass clippings decompose rapidly and are best left on the lawn where they can contribute nitrogen and other nutrients to the soil, thus reducing fertilizer requirements.

5. Develop a Wilder Aesthetic: Weeds can offer unexpected benefits to your lawn’s ecosystem. For example, white clover and dandelion attract aphid-hungry ladybugs and beneficial pollinators such as native bees. Someone once said “wildflowers are weeds with press agents” so consider accepting a little lawn imperfection for Nature’s sake.

Reprinted with permission from Nature Notes, a publication of Natural Lands Trust’s Center for Conservation Landowners.

The Snow Report: LBT’s Winter of 2009-2010

Still fresh in our memories is the 2009-2010 winter season as its record snowfall wrecked havoc throughout the region.

In London Britain Township, a state of emergency was declared on February 5 and it wasn’t lifted until February 15.

First, a special “Thank You!” to our Road Crew for the tremendous job they did in clearing the snow from

the roads. The Township’s Road Crew, supplemented with a few seasonal employees and contractors, racked up a total of 545 man-hours clearing the snow over that 10-day period. The Township plowed with three dump trucks and a pick-up truck. Other equipment included a snow blower, a payload, and a tractor with a front-end loader.

Drifting snow and downed trees

made clearing the snow difficult in some areas. The Township is researching the possibility of putting up snow fencing for next winter in the areas that caused so much trouble this year.

The total cost to the Township for the February storms was \$61,500, which included labor, materials (salt bill was \$12,500), and renting the supplemental snow removal equipment.

Check out LBT’s website: www.londonbritaintownship-pa.gov



London Britain Township
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