

CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & NOTABLE EVENTS

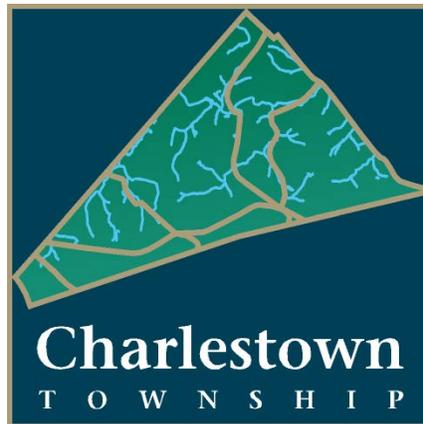
Published by the Board of Supervisors:

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Established 1737

INTRODUCTION

The information contained in the following pages is a summary of the municipal activity occurring in Charlestown Township in 2018. The purpose of this report is to highlight Township accomplishments and noteworthy events during the past year. The details of the monthly business of the Board of Supervisors, its appointed boards, commissions and committees, and the daily activities of the Township staff, can be examined through the meeting minutes, annual budget, financial statements, codes and permit reports, subdivision & land development files, monthly financial reports and numerous other records available on our website at www.charlestown.pa.us.

I. ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION

Contact Information

Office Hours:
Monday thru Friday
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

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Website: www.charlestown.pa.us

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 507
Devault, PA 19432

Physical Location:
4030 Whitehorse Rd.
Malvern, PA 19355

Charlestown Township Statistics

Total Area: 12.515 square miles (8,015 acres)

Charlestown is served by several post offices: Devault (19432), Chester Springs (19425), Malvern (19355) and Phoenixville (19460)

Land by Percentage & Acres:

Residential	16.7%	1,339 acres
Non-Residential	10.8%	866 acres
Agricultural	31.6%	2,452 acres
Wooded	38.3%	3,150 acres
Vacant/Water	2.6%	208 acres

Demographics (2010 Census):

Population: 5,671 per 2010 census
6,200 estimate for 2018

Pop. Density: 563 estimate per square mile
Households: 2,050 estimate for 2018

School District: 1,010 students from Charlestown were enrolled in the Great Valley School District's schools, out of their total enrollment of approximately 4,271. 177 Charlestown students attended schools outside the GVSD.

Roads:

27.47 miles of Township roads
29.95 miles of state roads

Administration in 2018



After publicly interviewing two candidates for an open seat on the five-member board, the supervisors on May 7th voted unanimously to appoint Susan Bednar to the unexpired term ending 12/31/2019.

Susan was with Vanguard for 21 years and is a resident of the Spring Oak community. She held a number of leadership roles at Vanguard and has an MBA in finance from the Wharton School while her undergraduate degree is in urban planning.

The vacancy was created when Board member Michael J. Rodgers passed away on April 7th. Mike was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 1999 and was in his 19th year of service. He was a great asset and is sadly missed.

During his tenure and with Mike's support, the Board of Supervisors increased the total acreage of preserved open space in the Township to over 36%. Mike also represented the Township as a member of the Valley Forge Sewer Authority Board for the last 19 years and currently served as President. He was very involved in the Charlestown Historical Society, serving on their board for many years.



The Board of Supervisors accepted Chester County's proposal to continue property tax billing and collection services for 2018 following a successful transition to their services in January 2013.

The Township office staff, consisting of 2 individuals, handled approximately 1,670 phone calls and received 1,100 visitors in 2018. An estimated 21,400 emails (not including spam) were received and 7,650 were sent. 951 letters and other correspondence materials were received. 44 right to know requests were filed and the requested documents were all provided within the required deadlines. Notary services were provided for 55 documents. 659 PA One Call tickets were processed.

The following individuals comprised the Township Staff for 2018:

Linda M. Csete, Township Manager, Secretary/Treasurer
Jan C. Bird, Assistant Township Secretary
Lisa Gardner, Recording Secretary

Tim Hubbard, Public Property & Safety Coordinator, including the positions of Fire Marshal, Assistant Zoning Officer and Emergency Management Coordinator

Jim Thompson, Project Manager/Roadmaster

Mark Cabot, Public Works Assistant and Animal Control Officer

Paul Jorgensen, Parks Assistant

The following consultants were appointed or re-appointed for 2018:

Lamb, McErlane, P.C., Legal Counsel-Firm
Mark Thompson, Esq., Legal Counsel-Lead Counselor
Gary Bender, Esq., Special Counsel
Thomas J. Comitta, Land Planner
Advanced Geo Services, Engineering Firm
Daniel T. Wright, P.E., Engineer & Zoning Officer
Anthony Merklinger, Building Code Official (BCO)
Robert Dettore, Construction Consultant

Ed Theurkauf, Open Space Monitoring
Barbacane, Thornton & Co., LLP, Auditor
Dale Frens, Frens & Frens LLC, Historical Architectural Consultant
Allen Underkofler, A.P. Underkofler Associates, Webmaster
Chester County Treasurer, Collector of Real Estate Taxes
Keystone Collections, Collector of Earned Income and Local Services Taxes

II. ADVISORY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Charlestown Township is extremely fortunate to have so many knowledgeable, talented and enthusiastic residents willing to donate a great many hours of their time to serving the community.

The following volunteers were appointed or re-appointed during 2018:

Alix Coleman, Brightside Farm Park Manager
Charles Buck, Brightside Community Garden Coordinator
Richard Findlay, Phoenixville Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Committee
Charlie Philips, Phoenixville Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Committee
Cindy Thompson, Historical Commission/HARB as Licensed Realtor
Michael Richter, Historical Commission/HARB as Planning Commission member
Bill Longua, Parks & Recreation Board
Brian Schlorff, Parks & Recreation Board
Hugh Willig, Phoenixville Regional Planning Commission
Bill Westhafer, Phoenixville Regional Planning Commission
Bill Westhafer, Planning Commission
Andre von Hoyer, Planning Commission
Tim Hubbard, Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals
David Greer – 6 member Valley Forge Sewer Authority Board
Sam Cupp – 6 member Valley Forge Sewer Authority Board
Karen Schlichter, Vacancy Board
Jean Bomm, Zoning Hearing Board

The Board of Supervisors re-commissioned the following committees:

Agricultural Security Area Advisory Committee
Design Review Committee
Transportation Advisory Committee
Parks and Recreation Board Trails Sub-Committee

Historical Commission/H.A.R.B.

The Historical Commission/HARB reviews subdivision and land development plans in the Historic District comprising parts of Church Road, Pickering Dam Road, and Charlestown Road as well as serving as a resource to homeowners seeking advice regarding additions/alterations for historic homes and properties outside of the District with professional support from consultant Dale Frens, Frens & Frens LLC.

Projects addressed in 2018 included:

- In April, the Supervisors accepted a proposal by Historian Jane Dorchester to conduct the research needed to update the Township's data for Chester County's Historic Resource Atlas Project, which catalogs historic sites, districts and structures. In December, the team performed field surveys to update existing Chester County reports and records of notable historic resources

beyond 50 years old. These sites were matched with addresses and tax parcel numbers, while including the historical resource identification number, and any pertinent information, such as date of construction. A wall map will be provided along with a spiral bound atlas.

- Met with Richard and Laurie Salita, 4128 Howell Road to review the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of a portion of the farmhouse that was not deemed significant and was in poor condition. The HARB recommended the request be approved, and the Supervisors voted to do so on February 5th.
- Recommended two updates to the Historic Resources Map to reflect the subdivisions of the Spring Oak and Volpi properties. The new map was adopted on February 5th.
- The installation of the historical interpretive display at Charlestown Mill was completed in August. The signage project was managed by general contractor F.W. Houder along with ISigns, which manufactured and installed the exhibits.
- The interior and exterior lighting and exterior signage project at Charlestown Mill, awarded to Cook's Services and F.W. Houder, Inc., was completed in the summer.
- An interior access ramp with railing was constructed by Rick Frunzi for the main entrance on the upper level of the mill for the convenience of visitors using walkers and strollers.
- On May 16th, Associate Professor Dr. Laura Sherrod of Kutztown University presented the results of her students' ground penetrating radar study at the Charlestown Cemetery. The study itself was undertaken in Fall 2017 to determine if there are bodies buried outside the walls, locate the footprint of the old church, and validate the late 1800's map that shows where the graves are, including an area in the center of the cemetery that indicates a mass grave with 50+ bodies.



Above: A Panoramic view of the Charlestown Cemetery, photo by G. Csete

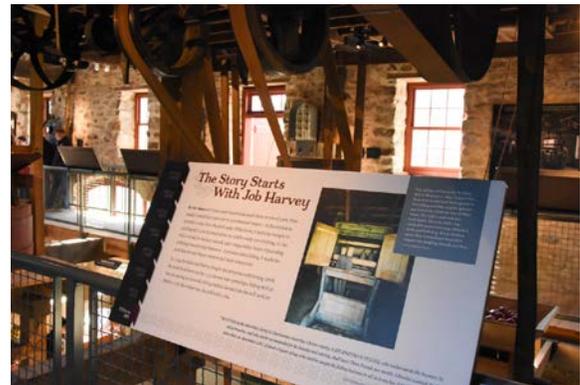
Results showed mass areas of disturbance and a possible midden field along with the location of the early church. Archeological studies are needed to confirm the findings.

- The Grand Opening of the Charlestown Mill was held on November 11th from noon to 4:00 p.m. and was attended by 100+ visitors enjoying a cool but sunny day. Township officials partnered with the Charlestown Methodist Church and Charlestown Historical Society to provide a variety of activities for the occasion. Visitors enjoyed the displays in the Mill building as well as those along the newly landscaped grounds. Light refreshments were served. There was a demonstration of the original equipment switched on at intervals throughout the afternoon, to the delight of all visitors.

Due to limited parking at the Mill, parking was made available at the Charlestown Methodist Church at 650 Church Road. A continuous shuttle bus took visitors to the Mill and also, for those interested, to visit the Revolutionary War Cemetery located just north of the Mill, a fitting tribute on this Veterans Day holiday.



A walking tour was conducted of the historic Charlestown Village concurrent with the Mill event, and there were displays at the Church along with bluegrass music performed.



Visitors were complimentary of the museum quality interpretive panels and everyone, particularly children, enjoyed seeing the pulleys in motion.

Photos by Allen Underkofler

Planning Commission

- The Commission elected Bill Westhafer as Chairman and Andre von Hoyer as Vice Chairman.
- The Planning Commission worked with the Phoenixville Regional Planning Commission on their update of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, which was reviewed chapter by chapter throughout the year. Township residents provided feedback on the plan at its formal display at the Kimberton Fire Company on August 29th. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors held a joint session on October 9th for a presentation of the Plan by Ed Theurkauf and solicited additional feedback. The Township will rely on the regional plan rather than updating its own separate plan, a process accepted under the Municipalities Planning Code. The Final Plan is expected to be adopted in Sept. 2019.
- The Planning Commission provided feedback to the Chester County Planning Commission on Landscapes 3, particularly in regard to mapping.

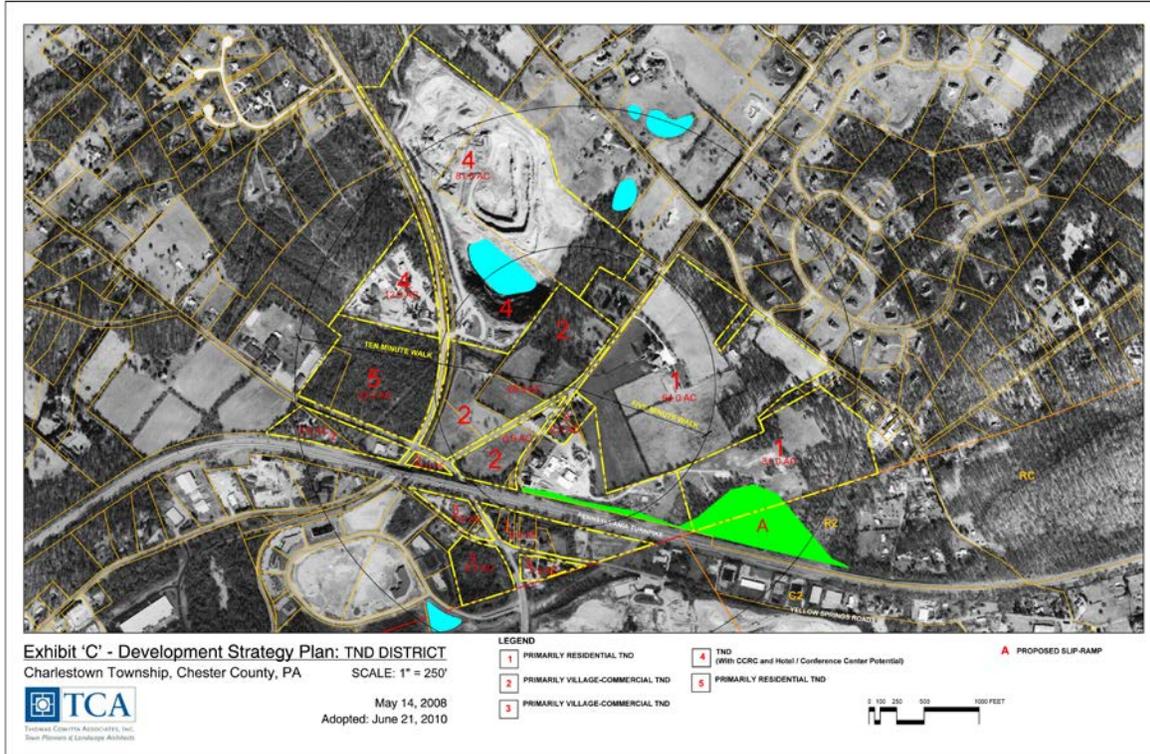
- The Planning Commission worked on amendments to Section 1809 of the Zoning Ordinance, which lists Conditional Uses and the general and specific standards for their approval. More specific standards were defined in order to make the ordinance more enforceable. Ordinances were drafted for consideration by the Supervisors slated for adoption in early 2019 following the completion of the Commission's work in December.
- The Planning Commission provided input to the Manager for the Long Term Financial Plan Committee on projects for 2019 – 2022 and specifically estimated a figure for traffic consulting in order to move forward with recommended road and intersection improvements.
- Planning Commission member Wendy Leland, along with the Township Manager, attended quarterly meetings at the Great Valley School District office along with the other municipalities in the district to provide data on future development in order to gauge the impact on the schools.
- Per their recommendation, an adjustment to the fee-in-lieu ordinance's fee schedule was adopted by Resolution in January. The ordinance requires developers to contribute toward recreation in the Township if it is not provided for in their land development plan.
- The Planning Commission provided input on the formation of the Environmental Advisory Committee, locations for a possible new municipal office, and on developing an RFP for a traffic consultant to be appointed in 2019.
- In November, the Board of Supervisors reluctantly accepted the resignation of Michael Allen from the Planning Commission, who was moving from the Township. Mr. Allen had served on the Commission for 23 years, and was also a member of the Design Review Committee for the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning district. The vacancy on this important Commission was advertised on the website and a letter was sent to all residents seeking interested candidates for appointment in 2019.
- See Section III, Planning, for details on Planning Commission reviews of applications and plans.

Design Review Committee

The Design Review Committee oversees the detailed design process of the Traditional Neighborhood Development District (TND), which is a compact, neighborhood driven multi-use district located in the area of Charlestown Township known as Devault. Currently Pickering Crossing (Charlestown Road and Route 29) and Spring Oak (Whitehorse Road) are 60-75% along in the construction process and expects to complete in mid-2019. The TND District was created in 2004 as a proactive means of mitigating the impact of market forces that would lead to more intensive commercial and industrial uses following the construction of the Turnpike Slip Ramp in East Whiteland Township. The Design Review Committee includes one member of the Planning Commission, one member of the Board of Supervisors, and the Township Planning Consultant. The DRC reviews applications for land development in the TND District, focusing on the developer's specific Graphic Design Guidelines, which must comply with the key design elements specified by the Township. The Committee also reviews requests for material and product substitutions that arise as development is underway, and is actively involved in the aesthetics of public improvements in the district.

This year, the DRC concluded its extensive work with the applicants for the Devault Village at Spring Oak subdivision. The final plan and Design Manual was approved in December, and consists of 78 single homes, twin homes, and townhouses along Rees Road adjacent to Spring Oak.

Below: The Development Strategy Plan for the TND Zoning District



Transportation Advisory Committee

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) relies on the 2014 Transportation Capital Improvements Plan, which is required by Act 209, to enable a municipality to provide for transportation capital improvements through the imposition of impact fees upon new development. Fees were calculated for recently approved projects in the amount of \$137,000.

Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee

Members include the Townships of Charlestown, Schuylkill, East Pikeland, and West Vincent along with the Borough of Phoenixville. The Committee performs reviews of proposed zoning amendments and selected subdivision and land development plans for its members. The Regional Planning Commission has an advisory status similar to that of the Chester County Planning Commission, and the review period runs concurrently with the CCPC's review.

Along with the other members, Charlestown Township provided input for the update of the 2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan and continues to work together under the implementation agreement that outlines the strategy for the members to plan their future by directing growth into designated growth areas and into older communities for revitalization while maximizing the efficient use of the public infrastructure. Focus is also placed on preserving the Region's historic sites, rural areas and natural resources.

In updating the regional comprehensive plan, Township staff provided data for growth analysis and for future water and sewer service demands.

Phoenixville Region Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Committee

Resident Richard Findlay and Supervisor Charlie Philips acted as Charlestown's representatives on the Phoenixville Region Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Committee.

The Chester County Planning Commission initiated the project to evaluate existing conditions, develop goals and recommendations and prepare implementation strategies to enhance alternate means of transportation for commuters other than single occupancy vehicles. They evaluated current conditions for walking, biking and mass transit in order to propose improvements in their final report. The region included Phoenixville Borough and Upper Providence, West Vincent, East Pikeland, Schuylkill and Charlestown Townships.

In February, the projects identified in 2017 were reviewed and ranked on the basis of impact under the categories of sidewalks, trails, bike paths, and public transport. A public open house was held on February 15th at the Technical High School to seek comments.

Three projects located in Charlestown were identified, including:

The Devault Trail

This is ranked the #1 priority and opportunity in the trails category, and is seen to be a key connector in the regions trail network. The Township and its consultants are continuing to press forward on this project.

At right: Norfolk Southern trestle bridge over Route 29 (State Road), which would be part of the proposed trail system.

- Photo by G. Csete



PA29 Narrow Bridge

The current configuration of the road at this point causes traffic to slow/back up at peak times thus motivating motorists to favor other roads traversing the Township. If the bridge is determined to be structurally deficient, then federal funds may be available for replacement and widening.

Charlestown Rd and Hollow Rd

Although the committee didn't identify this intersection as a high priority, PennDOT agreed there could be improved signage both north and south warning of the hazardous crossing ahead.

The final report was issued in June and is available on the Township website.

Parks & Recreation Board

The Parks and Recreation Board advises the Board of Supervisors on matters of recreational policy and the development and maintenance of parks and trails in the Township, including the 44 acre Charlestown Park on Township Line Road, Brightside Farm Park, the future Jenkins Park on Valley Hill Road, the Pickering Trail between Charlestown Road and Route 29, and other recreational and open space throughout the Township. The Parks and Recreation Board's activities in 2018 included:

- Overseeing park, field use and road event permits for various individuals and groups, including numerous special events, including training for Chester County Seeing Eye Puppies, various scout events, and church, company, and school picnics.



At right: PMYC soccer game

- Updating Facebook postings to highlight special events and keep the public informed of both existing facilities and improvements planned or underway.
- Focusing on various maintenance items at Charlestown Park.
- Arranging for residents to sign up for Penn State Extension's Tree Tender program.
- Working with the Healthy Kids Running Group for their third season at the Park. The Group hosted their spring and fall 6-week Sunday sessions for over 100 children.
- Working with the Great Valley Mountain Bike Club for their third season, which educates its members on proper trail use. Area was provided for about 25 riders at the Brightside Farm.
- Parks and Rec was very much involved in working with Eagle Scout candidates on projects they developed for the Township, including:
 1. Scout J.D. Heisey - replaced two benches in the wetlands area and repaired and replaced floorboards on the wooden decking in that area in May.



2. Scout David Nemeth developed an information kiosk at Brightside Farm that will include native wildflower plantings around it. The kiosk is located between the parking lot and the trail and includes information on nearby flowers, trees, and buildings along with a trail book to collect email addresses.

At left: newly constructed Kiosk at Brightside Farm, project and photo by David Nemeth

3. Scout A.J. Stacy of Willistown Troop 78 and his fellow scouts installed a path adjacent to the multi-use trail along Township Line Road that follows the small creek into the wetlands. With the help of local contractor Daniel Aquilante, who excavated the pathway, the group installed a gravel based finished surface bordered with Belgian block leading to an area that overlooks the wetland. A bench and descriptive signs were also installed. With logistical assistance from Bob Dettore, a plan developed by Ed Theurkauf and the support of the Supervisors, AJ has given park users a place where they can relax, meditate, read or simply enjoy the natural world.
- Coordinating with the Phoenixville Marian Youth Club (PMYC) and Phoenixville Area Soccer Club (PASC). These groups hold franchise agreements with the Township for the use of the playing fields at Charlestown Park in exchange for maintaining those fields and providing hundreds of area children the opportunity to participate in soccer, football, field hockey and lacrosse.
 - Pavilion reservations were made by over 162 individuals, businesses, schools and non-profits in 2018 for 10,500 people.

At left: Playground and restroom building at Charlestown Park

Photo by George Csete





In the Spring, the PASC top dressed and overseeded their fields for the 2018 season, at the club's expense. The drainage area adjacent to the fields was repaired. They also proposed and received approval to construct a 9 foot vertical rebound wall near their facilities at the Park.

At left: opening practice day for the Soccer Club on April 14th

Photo by George Csete

- Working with the Charlestown Day Committee for their event on September 15th.
- Initiating a Tree Tender program through the Penn State Extension, which, along with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, teaches those interested in the biology, trimming techniques, and mulching techniques that are best for trees. The participants receive certifications and a group of Tree Tenders can be formed if there are 5 or more.
- Investigating Lantern Fly extermination and mitigation.

Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals

The UCC Board of Appeals conducts hearings and makes decisions on appeals based on a building permit applicant's claim that, in the Zoning Officer's review and approval/denial of the application, the true intent of the UCC has been incorrectly interpreted, that the provisions of the Code do not fully apply in their situation, or that an equivalent form of construction is to be used.

Members of the Board of Appeals are qualified by training and experience on matters pertaining to building construction. This includes licensure as an architect or engineer, experience in the construction industry, or a combination of training/experience as an inspector or plan reviewer.

No appeals were filed in 2018.

Valley Forge Sewer Authority

The Valley Forge Sewer Authority was incorporated by Charlestown, East Pikeland and Schuylkill Townships in 1968 and is a utility owned by its customers. Its business is to recycle wastewater into clean water for stream discharge and to produce a specialized fertilizer product utilized by area farmers.

The Valley Forge Sewer Authority was created on February 2, 1969, with a term of existence of fifty years that was set to expire on February 2, 2019. On September 4th, the Supervisors adopted a resolution amending the Articles of Incorporation to extend the existence of the Authority to a date not exceeding 50 years from the date of approval of the Articles of Amendment.

On December 3rd, the Supervisors, as a member of the VFSA, adopted a resolution approving the Valley

Creek Trunk Line Purchase Agreement. This allowed for the purchase of a sewage line currently owned by Tredyffrin Township to be sold to Aqua PA.

Charlestown Day Committee

The Committee organized the fourth annual Charlestown Day event held on September 15th. Proceeds went to Friends of Charlestown, which provides funding for local non-profit groups.



Festivities began with Troop Leader Pete Motel's Willistown Troop 78's Flag raising ceremony. Students from the Sports Management studies at the University of Valley Forge ran a basketball tournament and are already planning for next year. 15 non-profit groups and 13 for profit groups were represented.



Live music was performed by The Thin Line Band. For kids' entertainment, there was the ever popular Stubby the Helicopter, a Face Painter, Bubbletopia, the Balloon Guy, the Science Tellers, and bounce houses by Bouncy Roo. The Mobile Mess Hall was selected as the food vendor.

- photos by Allen Underkofler

Trails Committee

Longtime resident Sue Staas passed the baton to Parks & Rec Board member Frank Beyer as head of the trails committee. Frank met with various representatives from the Horse-Shoe Trail and the Township to make plans for the future.

Two fall cleanup days were held on Friday October 26th and Saturday October 27th. All the trails needed attention due to this year's heavy rains, erosion, fallen trees, and mile-a-minute vine. Volunteers met at the Township building parking lot and were divided into teams to tackle their assigned trails. Volunteers were enlisted to become future trail stewards to keep the trails up to par going forward.



Above: Trout Lily

Trail Walks were scheduled and conducted in the Spring and Fall.

Notice of the hikes were published in the newsletters and on the website. These included a wildflower walk on April 29th along the Pickering Trail that began with a tour of the Charlestown Mill, and a walk on the new Brightside Farm Trail on June 2nd.

Maps of each of the 6 Township trails are available on the Township website along with a MyZyp app for both

Android and Apple phones that locates the trails on google maps and provides a map of each trail and its description.

Trail signs were added or replaced as needed.

Professional tree removal services were needed for fallen trees on the various trails. Mowing service was provided for the Pickering and Pickering Dam Trails.

III. PLANNING

Subdivisions & Land Developments

The following subdivision/land development applications were reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2018. Review comments, when requested, were prepared by the Township Planner, Engineer and Solicitor.

SD #408 Devault Village at Spring Oak – Final subdivision plan for 78 new lots on 26.1 acres located at Rees Road and Howell Road was originally recommended for approval Sept. 13, 2016 with updates discussed during 2018. Review of the Design Manual continued throughout 2018, and the Supervisors gave final approval on December 3, 2018.

SD #414 Allan Myers – The land development for replacement of the scale house and office trailer was recommended for approval in January. The Supervisors approved the application on February 5th.

SD #415 Apostolic Christian Church – Preliminary/Final Land Development plan for a building addition and parking lot improvements. The Supervisors approved the application on May 7th.

SD #416 Commons G.V. Lot 1 – A land development plan was proposed for expansion of parking at General Warren Village. Review will continue in 2019.

SK #01-2017 George Meyer – 7 lot subdivision of 23.8 acre property on Bodine Road, later revised to a 6 lot subdivision. Review will continue in 2019 with a revised preliminary plan.

SK #03-2017 Donald Andersen – 2 lot subdivision of 23 Eastwick Drive property.

SK #01-2018 Thompson Family – revised lot lines for final plan that includes 23 lots on 200 acres. The new sketch would allow continued use of the golf course and may be incorporated into the Final Plan for the subdivision.

SK #02-2018 P.J. Whelihans – expansion of existing parking.

SK #03-2018 Apostolic Christian Church – revisions to previously approved land development plan for a building addition and parking lot improvements.

SK#04-2018 McCue – proposed lot line change to conserved property.

Conditional Uses

The following conditional use applications were reviewed in 2018:

CU-2018-1 Eric Davison - Application to permit an accessory structure and driveway apron in an existing non-conforming area. A waiver to permit an accessory structure in a side yard abutting a street was also reviewed. The Supervisors approved the conditional use and the waiver request on June 4th.

CU-2018-2 Lee – Application to construct a swimming pool and portions of a stormwater management facility in a steep slope area at 5 Whisper Lane. The Supervisors approved the application on Sept. 4th.

CU-2018-3 Andersen –Application for a conventional lot development and stormwater management facilities in steep slopes for a 2-lot subdivision of 13.37 acres. The Applicant is considering revisions and resubmission in 2019.

Ordinances

A recommendation to adopt an amendment to the Historic Resources Map was made in January and adopted by the Supervisors on Feb. 5th.

The Planning Commission reviewed changes to the Standards for Conditional Use throughout 2018 and recommended adoption of a zoning ordinance amendment to the Supervisors on Dec. 11th.

Planning Modules & Act 537 Plans

Petrondi Residence – Township approved a planning module application for a residence along Hollow Road.

Devault Village at Spring Oak – Township approved the planning module application for Phase II.

IV. ZONING

The following Zoning Hearing Board applications were considered in 2018:

2018-01 Charlestown Outdoor LLC: The applicant sought a curative amendment of the Township's billboard ordinance to permit billboards in the B-1 District. The applicant presented its case on 2/12/18. The decision to deny the plan was executed by the Zoning Hearing Board on April 24th.

2018-02 Eric Davison: The applicant sought a variance to allow construction of a storage building within a side yard setback. After receiving a review from the Zoning Officer, Mr. Davison was able to amend his plans so that no variance would be needed. He withdrew the application in March.

2018-03 Laurie Ann Lee: The applicant requested relief to allow the construction of a swimming pool in very steep slopes. The Supervisors recommended revising the plans to move decking from the setback and keeping the construction in steep slopes only, so that approval could be sought via conditional use. The zoning hearing board application was withdrawn and conditional use was obtained.

2018-04 Andersen: The applicant requested the application be suspended while they investigate other options.

2018-05 William Dungee: The applicant requested that the restaurant use at the Stables Bar at Charlestown and Coldstream Roads be identified as a non-conforming use that had operated continuously, thereby allowing Mr. Dungee to sell to a group wishing to operate an Italian restaurant following purchase of the property. The hearing opened on Dec. 18th and was continued to Jan. 15, 2019.

V. LEGISLATION

Ordinances

The following ordinances were adopted in 2018:

208-2018 Ordinance Amending Zoning Ordinance – Updates to Historical Resources Map

Resolutions

The following resolutions were adopted in 2018:

899-18 Resolution to appoint Barbacane Thornton as auditors for 2017

900-18 Resolution appointing Jean Bomm to Zoning Hearing Board

901-18 Resolution appointing Tim Hubbard to UCC Board

902-18 Resolution listing Township depositories for 2018

903-18 Resolution adopting credit card policy for 2018

904-18 Resolution naming fire protection and rescue service providers for 2018

905-18 Resolution Approving Charlestown Township as a beneficiary and holder of a conservation easement on certain lands

906-18 Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Lands within the Township

907-18 Resolution to Update Fee-in-lieu Fee Schedule

908-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records in Accordance with Records Retention Schedule #2

909-18 Resolution – Planning Module for Petrondi Residence

910-18 Resolution to Amend Permit Fee Schedule

911-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records in Accordance with Records Retention Schedule #3

912-18 Resolution – Planning Module for Devault Village at Spring Oak Phase II

913-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records #4

914-18 Resolution to Purchase Loan from Phoenixville Federal Savings Bank for Great Valley Nature Center

915-18 Resolution to Amend 2018 budget

916-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records #5

917-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records #6

918-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records #7

919-18 Resolution to Dispose of Records #8

920-18 Resolution Adopting an Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of the Valley Forge Sewer Authority

921-18 Resolution to Expend Funds for Epstein Conservation Easement

922-18 Resolution to Disposes of Records #9

923-18 Resolution Re-adopting Emergency Operations Plan

924-18 Resolution Approving the Sale of the Valley Creek Trunk Sewer

925-18 Tax Levy Resolution

926-18 Resolution creating a Capital Reserve Fund

927-18 Resolution Adopting 2019 Budget

VI. ENGINEERING



The following projects/tasks undertaken by the Township Engineer are in addition to review of Subdivision & Land Development Plans as outlined in Section III, Planning and in addition to zoning and SLDO Ordinance reviews, conditional use application reviews, and construction and E & S permit inspection.

Act 167 – Stormwater Management

The Township Engineer, Daniel Wright, P.E. continues the Township program to monitor outfalls as previously mapped. PA Act 167 mandates that municipalities adopt the stormwater management standards prescribed by it, also entitled the Stormwater Management Planning Act.

The annual report was filed by the September 30, 2018 deadline.

The Township will need to consider funding compliance measures for the next MS-4 period in 2019. Valley Creek in the southern portion of Charlestown Township has tested high in silt content and the DEP is requiring a 10% reduction effort and will require the delineation of the drainage area to each storm sewer system controlled by the Township within the urbanized area that is located within a watershed impaired for siltation or nutrient impairment.

At the Engineer's annual presentation to the Supervisors on September 4th, Mr. Wright proposed the following compliance actions, for inclusion in the 2019 budget.

- The Pollution Reduction Plan was uploaded to the Township's website in September.
- The Plan was publically advertised to solicit review and comments for a 30 day period before it was sent to the DEP by the November 1, 2018 deadline.
- Detailed maps will be created to quantify the amount of pollution.
- A summary table was created for Pollutions of Concern for Charlestown and the MS4 requirements to address them.
- Methodology was developed to show the DEP that the required 1,100 pounds of silt will be captured.
- Detail was provided on how to achieve the required reductions by implementing street sweeping of the four roads in the watershed, tree planting, and inlet filter installations.
- For 2019, the Township will draft new protocols into its ordinance to require developers, not

covered by a grandfather clause, to be compliant.

The majority of the Township is in the Pickering Creek watershed, and at this time, no additional requirements must be met, although this may change in the future.

Quarry Activities

The Engineer monitored Independence Construction Materials blasting reports.

Road Improvement Project

The Engineer provided the cost estimate for improvement of the lengthy driveway at Brightside Farm that is used not only by the farmhouse tenants but by the community gardeners and other visitors. Improvements to selected Township roads was postponed to 2019 due to the tremendous impact of the Route 29 sinkhole project, which sent commuters onto the adjacent roads. It was determined that closing any of these roads even temporarily would have had a detrimental effect on traffic.

VII. BUILDING & CODE ENFORCEMENT



A summary of building permit activity in 2018 is provided below:

	NO. OF PERMITS	CONSTRUCTION COST
CELL TOWERS & ANTENNAS	4	84,000
COMMERCIAL: ADDITION	1	875,000
COMMERCIAL: ALTERATIONS/FIT-OUT	7	497,820
COMMERCIAL: DEMOLITION	3	30,000
COMMERCIAL: PRE-FAB STRUCTURE	2	611,198
COMMERCIAL: ELECTRICAL	1	1,444,000
COMMERCIAL: FIRE SUPPRESSION	1	1,700
COMMERCIAL: ROOF	1	12,500
COMMERCIAL: SIGN	3	6,500
COMMERCIAL: TRAILER	1	183,422
RESIDENTIAL: ADDITIONS	5	603,000
RESIDENTIAL: ALTERATIONS	9	526,043
RESIDENTIAL: BARN	1	1,064,195
RESIDENTIAL: BASEMENTS/BASEMENT EGRESS	12	226,290
RESIDENTIAL: BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	1	50,000
RESIDENTIAL: DECKS	18	258,390

RESIDENTIAL: DEMOLITION	1	8,500
RESIDENTIAL: NEW DUPLEX HOME	14	3,253,480
RESIDENTIAL: ELECTRICAL	1	1,200
RESIDENTIAL: GARAGE	2	71,400
RESIDENTIAL: GENERATORS	1	3,650
RESIDENTIAL: OUTDOOR KITCHEN	1	164,500
RESIDENTIAL: PATIOS	4	36,615
RESIDENTIAL: PERGOLA	1	15,000
RESIDENTIAL: PLUMBING	1	45,420
RESIDENTIAL: POOLS	7	549,950
RESIDENTIAL: POOL HOUSE/CABANA	1	90,000
RESIDENTIAL: RETAINING WALL	1	20,480
RESIDENTIAL: ROOFS	22	354,555
RESIDENTIAL: SINGLE FAMILY HOME	14	7,099,613
RESIDENTIAL: SOLAR HEATING SYSTEM	3	183,436
RESIDENTIAL: STUCCO	6	515,972
RESIDENTIAL: TOWNHOUSE	25	5,745,088
TOTALS:	175 permits	\$24,632,917

In December, the Supervisors met with the BCO to consider changes for 2019. This resulted in a review and amendment of various permit-related documents and instructions to applicants to be used going forward.

The new procedures and forms will result in a more convenient, streamlined process for applicants.

VIII. PARKS, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

Agricultural Security Area – The Manager initiated the 7-year ASA review, which includes confirming that all parcels currently included remain suitable for agriculture, inviting new property owners to list their properties, and updating the data for the ASA Map. The Supervisors re-formed and appointed members to the ASA Committee, which, along with the Planning Commission, reviewed all materials and made a recommendation in December. The Agricultural Security Area Map will be re-certified in early 2019.

Auchincloss Property – In June 2015 the Township purchased the 58.4 acre Auchincloss property along Hollow Road, which represented one of the last prime areas to be preserved in the Township. The house on this property is listed on the Township’s Historic Resources map and is described as a Pennsylvania accumulated house representing additions made by successive owners. The two parcels comprising this property were placed under conservation easement with the French & Pickering Creeks Trust in June 2017. Only one additional home will be permitted. In October, the Board extended the real estate contract with Cynthia Ilaqua Thompson to 4/30/19 and offered the two parcels for sale to recoup a significant portion of the original purchase cost. Bids were opened on November 30th. At the December 3, 2018 meeting, a bid for the homestead parcel was accepted in the amount of \$800,555. The vacant parcel remains available.

The Solicitor filed an appeal for re-assessment in order to reduce the tax burden on the Township until the properties are sold; however, the County made no change following the hearing.

Brightside Farm Park –The farmhouse lease with the current renters was renewed for an additional year. All sixty garden plots were leased at the community gardens, which continue to be very popular with our residents. The Gardeners’ group has a closed Facebook page for those interested in sharing garden related information and held a season-end event on September 23rd.

The driveway leading to the leased farmhouse and used by the gardeners was re-paved and improved for stormwater runoff. The Garden Coordinator began research on the best way to repair the aging fence posts and chicken wire, which will go out to bid in 2019.

An improved 1 mile walking trail was designed by Theurkauf Design & Planning and engineered by Advanced GeoServices. Supervisor Kevin Kuhn and the Township Engineer met with the Chester County Conservation District to address the issue of permanent stormwater management materials (biologs and silt socks) that were unsightly and interfered with the farmer’s work in the fields. A compromise was reached allowing the materials to be placed closer to the hedgerows so as to have less visual impact from the trail. The project was completed in May and rapidly became very popular with residents.



Benches were positioned along the trail, and other amenities such as a trash receptacle, bike rack, and dog stations were installed adjacent to the parking lot.

At Left: The newly completed Walking Trail at Brightside Farm Park.

- photo by George Csete

New signage was designed and installed at both the driveway and new trail parking lot at Brightside to prominently display the address for emergency services and for visitors.



The Township promoted two Free Concerts on June 21 and July 19 at the Wisner-Rapp House, adjacent to Brightside Farm Park. The Charlestown Historical Society sponsored the concerts featuring the Raven Hill Bluegrass group in June and Irish music in July. People were invited to park in the new lot for the Brightside Trail adjacent to the Rapp House.

Over 60 people attended each concert and enjoyed the music and views of one of the most picturesque spots in the Township.

At left: The Wisner Rapp House

Charlestown Park

Improvements were made to the South Parking Lot, located adjacent to the basketball courts and PMYC clubhouse. Melchiorre Construction Co. was awarded the contract and Cook's Services performed the lighting installation.

This existing lot has been designed with the same features that were included in the North Lot, which was completed last year. This includes lighting and landscaping upgrades along with resurfacing and striping for 137 spaces.

The improved lot is interconnected to the Play and Pavilion Area with a series of new sidewalks.

As an adjunct to this project, speed tables were installed along Academic Way in the Park to reduce issues with excessive speed. The project was completed in April 2018.

Address signage was installed to better identify the Park for emergency services and for visitors.

Investigation was made into the possible re-establishment of Southwest Avenue to Coldstream Road. A cleanup of the right of way was performed, and the debris that had been dumped and accumulated was removed. A Preliminary layout and stakeout of improved sight lines along Coldstream Road were performed, demonstrating that easements would be needed from two Jamie Lane properties to clear sight lines along Coldstream Road. A reconnection would improve the accessibility of the Township Park, and park visitors would be less likely to drive through the University grounds. The Engineer met with PennDOT regarding an Occupancy Permit. Consideration of this project will continue in 2019.

The reservation system for renting the pavilions worked smoothly for the second year. Reservations at the pavilions were made by 162 families and groups for an estimated 10,500 visitors, representing an increase of over 20% from 2017. Children's birthday parties were the main reason for reservation, followed by family reunions.

French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust – On May 7th, the Board approved a grant agreement with the Trust to provide funding of \$300,000 for open space projects within Charlestown Township.

Jenkins Property – This 16 acre property consists of 4 approved lots on Valley Hill Road that will be adjacent to an 8 acre “pocket park”. An auction sale in 2016 failed in negotiations. A sale will be reconsidered in the future based on market conditions.

Longwood School – At the corner of Valley Hill and Bodine Roads sits the restored foundation of what was originally a one-room school house built in 1857 for the children of African American farmers.



At right: The site of the Longwood School at the corner of Valley Hill and Bodine Roads.

- Photo by G. Csete

Monitoring and Enforcement Program for Open Space - The Township continued its program with consultant Ed Theurkauf to perform stormwater management inspections semi-annually for Homeowners Association and Township owned open space and stormwater facilities, assessing the criteria of invasive species, erosion, and functionality. This monitoring also helps fulfill our requirements under Act 167. More attention was placed on enforcement of violations in 2018.

Open Space Maintenance – New contracts were awarded to Davey Tree Service and Charlestown Landscaping. Both firms held the previous contracts and had performed in a highly satisfactory manner. The new contracts are for a one year period ending 3/31/2019 with an option to extend for an additional year for up to three years total.

Open Space Acquisitions – The Township acquired 118.8 additional acres of open space through a conservation easement purchased from the Epstein family and placed with the French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust.



Hailand Farm has been home to the Epstein family for over forty years. Thanks to Charles Epstein and his sister Barbara Epstein Sivan, the farm has been permanently preserved.

Instead of potentially 50 new homes, the farm will have only one additional residence.

This brings the total land preserved in Charlestown Township to 2,878 acres, or 36% of the Township.

In late 2017, Henriette Bumeder donated easements on five parcels accessed from Charlestown Road and Pickering Dam Road totaling approximately 80 acres.

Appraisals were approved for the 10 acre Beam property on Buckwalter Road, 17.1 acre Davis property and 23 acre Thompson property, both on Union Hill Road, for consideration of future acquisition.

Trails - Township trails include the Horse-Shoe Trail, Pickering Trail, Pickering Dam Trail, Thompson Trail, McDevitt Trail, Brightside Farm Park and a paved trail at Charlestown Park.

IX. ROADS & PUBLIC WORKS

Contact: Roadmaster/Public Works Project Manager Jim Thompson, (610) 656-9315
publicworks@charlestown.pa.us

The Five-Year Road Improvement Plan was reviewed and updated. Improvements for 2018 were postponed to 2019 so as not to interfere with the Route 29 sinkhole project.

The Annual Road Maintenance contract was awarded to Melchiorre Construction Co. Additional Improvements in 2018 performed included:

- Guiderail repair and replacement on Bodine Road
- Erosion correction measures on Buckwalter Road
- Correction of washout area at Chautauqua Drive
- Repair bituminous curb on Crestview Road & Pine Drive
- Replace inlet box on Pine Drive
- Perform inlet repairs on Howells Road
- Washout repair on Green Lane Road
- Replace inlet box on Maryhill Road
- Repair curb on Raven Hill Road
- Washout repair on Wells Road
- Repair/install curbing on Union Hill Road
- Repair inlet box at Charlestown Hunt
- Snow & Ice Removal throughout winter season
- Repaired heave area on Yellow Springs Road

In addition to general traffic signal maintenance, Armour & Sons repaired the damaged pedestrian light at Morehall and Whitehorse Roads, the cost of which was covered by insurance.

Now that Eastern Salt Company (formerly Oceanport Industries) is listed on the State Contract, the Township purchased road salt from Co-Stars rather than solicit bids. The contract with West Goshen Township to provide brine was renewed at the same price since 2014.

Spring clean-up and repairs included road sweeping, culvert and inlet clean outs, and pothole patching. Tree removal was performed along many of the Township roads and the open space properties, including downed trees and limbs on Aldham Road, Benburb Road, Bodine Road, Blackberry Lane, Charlestown Hunt Drive, Hilltop Road, Lincoln Road, Mine Road, Rosewood Lane, Rees Road, Tinkerhill Lane, Tinkerhill Road, Union Hill Road, and along the Horse-Shoe Trail, McDevitt Trail, Pickering Dam Trail, Thompson Trail, and in Charlestown Park.

The Roadmaster was in contact with PennDOT for tree trimming and sight distance clearing along state roads, and communicated numerous problems with trees and limbs on wires to PECO.

The Township Office continued to utilize PennDOT's on line system for reporting road concerns where prompt attention was given in all situations reported. The system provides a tracking number and email notification when the reported problem has been resolved.

The Engineer and Township Manager participated in additional meetings with PennDOT and Traffic Planning & Design regarding the SR 29 sinkhole remediation project. While the project was entirely located within East Whiteland Township between Yellow Springs Road and the PA Turnpike Slip ramp, it created a challenge for Charlestown residents and commuters in general, but was completed slightly ahead of schedule.

The 3-year Contract with Armour & Sons for signal service maintenance is in place until February 1, 2020. The initial rate increase of \$5.00 per hour will remain the same for the length of the new contract.

The Roadmaster continued to replace and install signage as outlined in the Township Sign Management Program, which was put into effect in March 2014 as mandated by the State, and includes the assessment and maintenance of retro-reflectivity for regulatory and warning signs at or above the standards spelled out in the federal *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

X. MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Communications

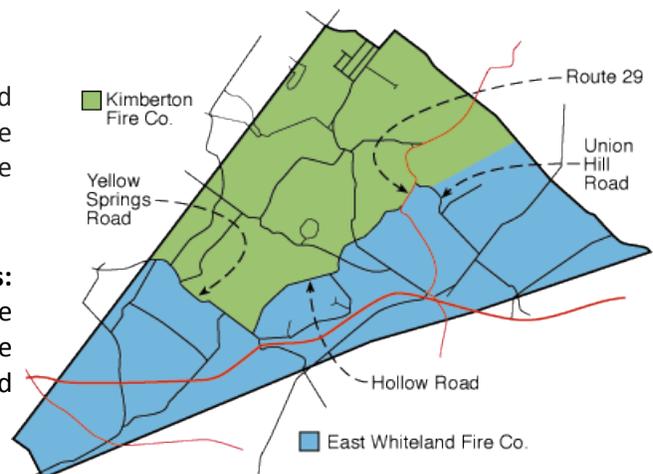
- **Annual Report:** First developed for 2014, the Board intends to continue publishing an annual report to inform its residents and businesses of notable events and accomplishments in the prior year.
- **Facebook:** The Parks & Recreation Board continued its presence on Facebook to organize and promote recreational activities available in the Township and to feature its annual Charlestown Community Day event. A Social Media policy was adopted by the Board in 2016 and remains in effect.
- **Instagram:** Parks and Rec initiated an Instagram account with the help of volunteer Ashlee Smith in 2018. It was linked to the Facebook page and the Townships website. The Township made hundreds of photos available for this new feature.
- **Newsletters:** The Board of Supervisors published four newsletters mailed to all households and businesses in the Township.
- **Website:** Improvements and updates continued weekly to the www.charlestown.pa.us site. Subscribers received a weekly update of new posts. Special notices and items of interest were emailed to subscribers as needed. Upgrades were completed in 2017 to make the website more easily accessed by a wider variety of devices. The web designer focused on improving the already extensive photo gallery. PDF-fillable building permit applications and a variety of associated forms were updated. The contract with web designer Allen Underkofler was renewed in November for an additional year.

Public Safety

- **Police Services:** Charlestown Township is served by the Pennsylvania State Police, from the Embreeville Barracks. Lt. William J. Donahue became the new station commander in April.
- **Fire Companies and Ambulance Services:** Charlestown Township is served by two fire departments, the East Whiteland Volunteer Fire Association, the Kimberton Fire Company (fire) and West End Fire Company (ambulance).

Kimberton/West End Fire Companies cover the northern portion of the Township while East Whiteland Volunteer Fire Association covers the southern area.

They performed a swift water rescue in August following severe flooding that was featured on the national news.



Charlestown holds a seat on the East Whiteland Volunteer Fire Association board, held in 2018 by Supervisor Kevin Kuhn. This fire department has operated as a joint venture with Charlestown since its inception in 1952.

- Residents were encouraged to sign up for Ready Chesco, the county's emergency notification system as well as Smart 911.
- Charlestown provides funding to the Fire Companies and Ambulance Services through annual contributions and by passing through the Firemen's Relief funds apportioned to the Township from the Commonwealth.
- In April 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved an additional \$200,000 donation to the East Whiteland Volunteer Fire Association to be used toward the purchase of a new combination tanker/pumper. East Whiteland Township approved a matching contribution. Charlestown's funds were available due to a beginning year carryover in excess of what had been budgeted, and because of the 1 year delay in the road improvement project caused by the sinkhole remediation project on Route 29 in East Whiteland Township.
- **Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** Charlestown re-adopted its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in November 2018. This plan is designed to provide prompt and effective emergency response procedures to be followed in the event of a major emergency or disaster to protect the health, safety and welfare of Charlestown residents. The Emergency Operations Center, located at the Township office, consists of computers, communications and other equipment to be used in the event of an emergency that might affect the residents of the Township. The Fire Marshal/EOC Director attended quarterly training sessions for Emergency Management personnel provided through the County Department of Emergency Services, including hazard mitigation training, and participates in county DES Emergency Management Radio and Limerick Siren Tests. He completed paperwork for the County EOC related to flooding from the heavy rains throughout the year.

Animal Control: Charlestown Township renewed its annual contract with the Brandywine SPCA to enforce the Dog Ordinance (dogs running at large) and Noise Ordinance (barking) for a five year period from 2019-2023. The Township joined the Chester County Manager's Consortium's efforts to revise the proposed contract, which had contained provisions the majority of municipalities objected to, particularly insurance coverage requirements. The Township also has an Animal Control Officer to assist residents with animal trapping and removal. A summer newsletter article reviewed the Dog Law for residents.



- **Burning Regulations, Smoke Detectors and Fireplace Safety:** The Fire Marshal continued to provide information to the residents on the burning ordinance and advise on general safety practices. A controlled burn was approved in October for one property.

- **False Alarms:** The Township continued to enforce its ordinance warning first time offenders of false fire alarms and assessing a fine for repeat false alarms. 152 warnings and fines were issued.
- **Fireworks and Bonfires:** The Fire Marshal approved 3 fireworks displays for two residents and 1 for the Diwali Festival, and several bonfires for the University of Valley Forge.
- **Hazardous Materials:** The Fire Marshal consulted with businesses as needed regarding HazMat issues and registration requirements.
- **Trespassing and Vandalism:** The Fire Marshal continued as ongoing liaison to the State Police to report and address trespassing and vandalism issues that occurred along trails and in areas adjacent to the PA Turnpike owned by various homeowners' associations.
- **PA One Call:** The Township continued its support and education outreach to remind residents and contractors to call 8-1-1 before they dig.
- **School Safety:** The Fire Marshal participated in the Great Valley School District's tabletop exercise for Charlestown Elementary School and reviewed their lock down plan.
- **Townwatch:** The Fire Marshal continued to support the efforts of the Spring Oak and Whitehorse at Charlestown developments' Townwatch programs.



Waste Hauler Private Subscription: Charlestown Township vetted several area haulers who are licensed to collect trash and recyclables for residents and businesses in 2018. Property owners contract privately with the hauler of their choice for waste hauler services.



- **Advertisement** of the Lanchester Landfill's acceptance of electronic devices at no charge through December 2018.
- **Advertisement** of Rep. Duane Milne's recycling event on April 14th. This received prominent placement on the website since it was the only free event accepting tires and electronics.
- **Annual Recycling Meeting:** The Manager attended County's annual recycling meeting on September 13th along with Carol Armstrong of the EAC.
- **Participation in Chester County Household Hazardous Waste Program:** Charlestown Township once again joined this program that allowed Township residents to bring unwanted hazardous household, automotive products, home maintenance, lawn and pest control products to any of six collection events held throughout 2018.
- **Prescription Pill Drop Off:** The locations throughout Chester County where prescription pills can be disposed of was added to the website.

- **Yard Waste Disposal Drop-Off:** Charlestown continued its arrangement with the Borough of Phoenixville to have access to their yard waste drop off site at 18 South 2nd Avenue in Phoenixville.

Utilities

- **Public Water:** For those areas served by public water, Charlestown Township is served by Aqua PA.
- **Public Sewer:** For those areas served by public sewer, Charlestown Township belongs to the Valley Forge Sewer Authority.

XI. 2018 BUDGET & AUDITING

Auditing

The Board of Supervisors appointed Barbacane, Thornton & Company, LLP to perform the Annual Audit each year for 2013-2015 with options for 2016 and 2017. This firm performs a comprehensive audit of all Township accounts and prepares the Department of Community & Economic Development Municipal Annual Audit and Financial Report to be filed with the state by April 15th each year.

In addition to this full audit, audits are performed by the State Auditor General's Office on the Liquid Fuels Fund (bi-ennially), Pension Fund (tri-ennially), and Workers' Compensation (annually).

The previous year's financial report was posted with Dun & Bradstreet, Moody's and the EMMA database as required for the bond program.



Budgeting

The Charlestown Township Board of Supervisors approved the 2018 budget at its December 2017 meeting. The 2018 budget consisted of three separate funds: General, Liquid Fuels, and Open Space. All tax rates remained the same as in 2018.

The **General Fund** represents the principal operating fund for the Township, including fire protection, road maintenance and improvements, planning, zoning, code enforcement, permit inspections, engineering, legal, and administration. The 2018 General Fund Budget was balanced as required under the Second Class Township Code without the need for a property tax increase.

Receipts for the **State Liquid Fuels Fund** are provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from gasoline taxes disbursed annually to all municipalities in the state. The receipts are based upon Township road miles and population. Use of the fund is limited to road maintenance/reconstruction and related equipment purchases.

The **Open Space Fund** is funded from the open space tax (1/2 of 1% on earned income) pursuant to PA Act 153 (Open Space Preservation Act) and from the general earned income tax (1/2 of 1% on earned income). The open space tax revenue may only be expended on the acquisition of interests in real property and costs associated with those acquisitions. For the 2018 budget, the Supervisors restricted the receipts from the general earned income tax to open space, historic preservation and property maintenance and improvements.

Budget amendments were adopted by Resolution at the May 7th Supervisors' meeting.

The Long Term Financial Plan first developed in 2016 was revised for 2018-2022. Supervisors Frank Piliero and Charlie Philips, and Planning Commissioner Bill Westhafer served on the Committee along with the Manager. The committee met on July 23rd and updated the five year plan as a guide for

internal use. It was used to prepare the 2019 budget, which includes the formation of a new Capital Improvement Fund.

Taxes

Real Estate Taxes

Charlestown continued its contract with the County Treasurer's office to collect its municipal real estate tax. The Township's .75 mil real estate tax has been unchanged since 2003.

Earned Income Tax & Local Services Tax

The Township is a member of the Chester County Tax Collection Committee. This countywide committee has the jurisdiction to oversee the collections of earned income and local services taxes for all taxing authorities within the county. Keystone Collections Group continues to be the contracted tax collection service for these taxes.

Transfer Taxes

The Township receives ½% from real property transfers.

Review of Potential Impact on Future Taxes

The Manager reviewed data relative to East Whiteland Township's intention to enact an Earned Income Tax starting 2019. This would cause Charlestown to lose EIT collected from any East Whiteland Township residents working in Charlestown, and was estimated to be \$100,000 or less on the total collection of \$3M+, or 1-3% of total collections.

Finance

The Township has now achieved a Standard & Poors Rating of AA, which is the highest ranking possible for a municipality of its size.

In April 2018, a large portion of Open Space Registry Service (CDARS) funds were redeemed for use in the acquisition of the easement on the Epstein property. In July and October 2018 the Township re-invested 24 month certificates in the CDARS program with First Resources Bank to safely maximize interest income by spreading funds among various banks to stay below FDIC insurance limits.

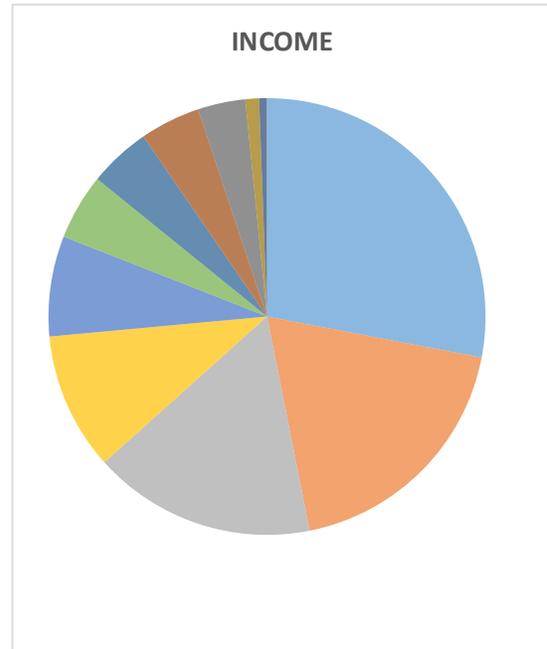
In November, the Bond Series 2015 schedule was reviewed by Supervisor Frank Piliero and the Township Manager, determining that no advance payments need to be considered for the time being, and periodic reviews will be undertaken going forward.

2018 Income & Expenditures – Operating Funds

(This data does not include revenues and expenses relating to capital improvements.)

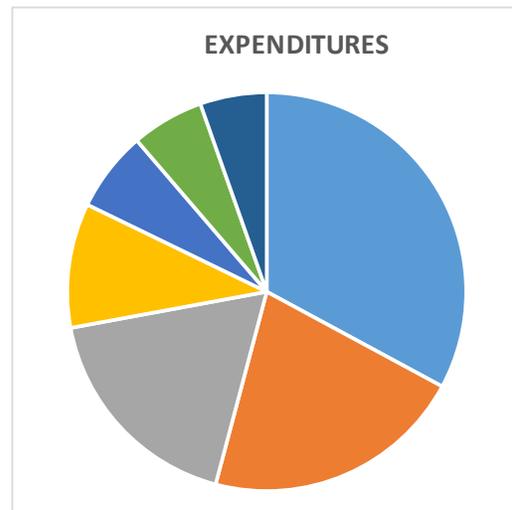
All Funds Income 2018

Real Estate Transfer Tax	741,142	28.0%
Real Estate Tax	499,283	18.9%
Permit Fees	436,443	16.5%
State Revenues & Grants	269,427	10.2%
Earned Income Tax	196,343	7.4%
Cable Franchises	129,242	4.9%
Local Services Tax	121,363	4.6%
Dividends	118,334	4.5%
Application & Review Fees	92,968	3.5%
Fines & Forfeits	26,768	1.0%
Park Rents & Fees	14,395	0.5%
Other	875	0.03%
Total:	2,646,583	100%



All Funds Expenditures 2018

Public Safety	704,704	27.0%
Road Maintenance	455,278	17.4%
Permit Review & Inspection	385,000	14.7%
Administration	216,612	8.3%
Parks & Recreation	139,606	5.3%
Legal	126,098	4.8%
Zoning	115,743	4.4%
Charge to Applicants	99,772	3.8%
Open Space Program	96,239	3.7%
Engineering	92,475	3.5%
Insurance	75,360	2.9%
Planning	47,464	1.8%
Internet & Website	21,577	0.8%
Municipal Office	17,943	0.7%
Historical Resources	17,176	0.7%
Total:	2,611,047	100%



MISCELLANEOUS

Building Permit Fees

The permit fee schedule was reviewed and updated in 2018. Three fees were identified as no longer covering the cost of inspections. These included fees for Level II residential accessory structures, residential alterations, and roofing. One fee, for stucco remediation, was reduced. The state mandated Labor & Industry Fee was increased per the state's new requirement.

Census 2020

Charlestown's role in the 2020 Census concluded in April. The Township joined the program working with the Census Bureau to compare and update addresses. This ensures that our population is accurately counted and that all new homes and neighborhoods are included.

Cell Tower Location Agreement

The Township entered into a Right-of-Way Use Agreement with Crown Castle to install a wireless communications tower on Spring Mill Drive for a fee of \$500.00 annually plus 5% of adjusted gross revenues.

Earth Day

On April 14th, 90+ volunteers covered about 10 miles of roadways, plus large areas of the Pickering Preserve, Charlestown Park, Brightside Farm Park and woods adjacent to the Nature Center.



Volunteers walked along many of our roadways to pick up litter. An estimated 115 bags were collected, along with discarded furniture, appliances, tires and construction materials.

Some groups and individuals who weren't available on April 14th worked independently toward these efforts on other days.

At left: Members of Girl Scout Troop 440, who have performed a cleanup at Brightside Farm for the past 6 years.

Below: Members of Trout Unlimited at the Pickering Creek.



Above: Great Valley Middle School science teacher Chad Sindaco arranged for students from the Great Valley Mountain Bike Group, who practice at Brightside Farm, to perform clean up on Earth Day.

Memorial Day Ceremony

The Township approved the Charlestown Historical Society's request to hold a ceremony on May 28th to honor over 250 soldiers buried there and all the men and women who have served our country in the military.

Risk Management Program

The Township continued its association with Simkiss & Block to procure cost effective insurance coverage for workers' compensation, auto, commercial, terrorism, public officials coverage, treasurer's and manager's bonding, umbrella and employee practices. Umbrella insurance was increased to \$10M.

Continuing Training and Education

Members of the Board of Supervisors and the Township Manager attended seminars including the annual Pennsylvania State Association of the Township Officials conference in Harrisburg and the Chester County Association of Township Officials conference in Malvern.

Codification of Ordinances

Codification services continued with General Code and the annual updates took place in the summer. Tools are available for the planning commission, supervisors, consultants and Township personnel to make and track various notes that aid in the ordinance review process.

Environmental Advisory Council

Spearheaded by resident Carol Armstrong, the Board investigated the possibility of creating an Environmental Advisory Committee for Charlestown. Eight residents had expressed an interest in

joining the committee. The Supervisors endorsed the proposal at the March 5, 2018 meeting, suggesting the group work as an informal citizens' advisory group for 6 – 12 months until clear objectives were developed. At the December meeting, the Board decided to formalize the committee via ordinance in early 2019.

In 2018, the committee was helpful in providing pipeline information to concerned residents. Adelphia plans to repurpose its existing pipeline, into high pressure natural gas pipelines. In a change from the original plan, there are now no valves to be changed out on any Township properties, so the committee will simply monitor Adelphia's plans moving forward. Members are attending meetings sponsored by the Pipeline Safety Coalition and remain interested in the integrity of the pipes and design life.

Other committee work included:

- Setting up a booth at Charlestown Day, Sept. 15th, to educate residents about the EAC mission
 - Informing the residents about the Spotted Lantern Fly infestation and what can be done
 - Working with P.J. Whelihan's and The Office Restaurant to find a substitute for single use plastics bags
 - Following up with haulers who aren't properly reporting septage results to the County Health Department
- Pipeline comment compilation
 - Evaluating noise impacts of the turnpike expansion and advising the Supervisors on any actions, such as requesting sound walls, that should be taken.
 - Working with members from other local EACs to name streams.
 - Seeking volunteers for trail work, invasive clean-outs, and other activities.
 - Reviewing PennDOT's response regarding the herbicides used along Charlestown Township roads. They reported that they use a selective mixture, and the report mentions line of sight for traffic and stormwater.
 - Wrote a letter to senators and representatives to keep the Land and Water Conservation Fund going by supporting passage of a new Bill.
 - Researching the process for a 2019 project to create a forested riparian buffer along a tributary of the Pigeon Run Creek on Brightside Farm, with potential grant funding.
 - Forming plans for an Environmental Education Series for residents.



Above: Members of the EAC on Charlestown Day: From left: Richard Findlay, Carol Armstrong, Veda Maany and Pete Goodman

Great Valley Nature Center

In February of 2017, the non-profit organization at 4251 State Road announced it would be closing due to funding challenges. Residents were extremely disappointed in this news, so the Township became involved with potential solutions for the Center, with efforts continuing in 2018 and 2019.

The Township proposed purchasing the outstanding bank loan from the Phoenixville Federal Savings Bank after the property reverts to the French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust and amends the deed to remove the requirement that the property to be used for education. This would then allow the Township to purchase the property from them and in turn provide them with a long term lease to use the barn for their new headquarters. The Trust would make all necessary repairs and alterations.

Details continue to be addressed going into 2019, with the hope of a successful resolution for the future of this unique local landmark.

Office Facility

A proposal with architectural firm Kimmel Bogrette was approved in November 2017 to undertake a feasibility study for constructing a Township Building. Discussions continued through 2018 to select the best location out of the four possible sites, and whether to go to the next step of developing an RFP for an architect.

Signage was included in the building lobby to notify visitors that the Township will follow the County schedule for snow related closings and late openings.

Office Security

Since 2016, cameras are operational in the stairwells and for the parking lot at the Township Office. A keyless entry system is used for those with authorized access. Cyber security was reviewed and various improvements were made to safeguard data.

Pipeline Issues

The Township Solicitor filed for and received acknowledgement of Township intervention in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission proceeding on the expansion of the Adelpia Pipeline. This pipeline traverses the Brightside Farm property. Adelpia removed the Pickering Creek Gate Blowdown Assembly work that had been originally proposed in the northern portion of Charlestown from its scope of work. While there is no proposed construction on the pipeline portion in Charlestown, it was deemed prudent to take action since circumstances could change based on the FERC review process.

Pete Goodman, a new member of the citizen based Environmental Advisory Committee followed up aggressively on an exposed Sunoco pipeline at Rt. 401, which was subsequently remediated.

Records Retention

The Township Manager and Assistant Township Secretary continued the process of reviewing files in offsite storage to determine those of no further administrative value. This will not only save in storage costs, but serves to identify those records to be preserved that predated today's electronic filing procedures. It will make older, but still relevant, information more accessible to both the Township staff and consultants but also to its residents.

Septage Management

The Township continued to access Chester County Health Department's database to track the required pumping and inspection of all septic systems every three years.

Utilities

The Township renewed its electrical provider agreement with Direct Energy for 3 years at the rate of 6.431 kWh, a reduction of 13.6 percent over the previous rate.

Government and Professional Affiliations

Charlestown Township is a member of the following organizations:

- Chester County Association of Township Supervisors (CCATO)
- Chester County Consortium of Managers
- Chester County Historical Preservation Network
- Chester County Intermediate Group (for purchasing)
- Chester County Secretaries in Government Association (CCSIGA)
- Chester County Tax Collection Committee
- Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association
- Co-Stars (for purchasing)
- National Alliance of Preservation Commission
- Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society
- Phoenixville Regional Planning Commission
- Phoenixville Region Multi-Modal Transportation Committee
- Transportation Management Association of Chester County



CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP

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