

# Charlestown Township Newsletter

Winter 2019 Newsletter

[www.charlestown.pa.us](http://www.charlestown.pa.us)

Published by the Board of Supervisors

4030 Whitehorse Road, Devault, PA 19432 - (610) 240-0326

Township Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday



## Open Space & Development in Charlestown Township – Which is it?

*Kevin R. Kuhn, Supervisor*

I'm often asked why there is new development in the Township if we're so committed to preserving open space. I also occasionally visit the Nextdoor Charlestown website and am often surprised by the comments. This past year a resident expressed their displeasure that the Altemose property on the corner of Whitehorse & Ashenfelter Roads was being developed. Comments like "why couldn't they just sell it to someone who would keep it as a farm" or "why would anyone want houses so close together" although my favorite was from a resident who lived in a development that was only built in the '90's and was so upset that there was another new development. As much as we'd like, we all can't be the last person to move to Charlestown!

The goal of preserving open space was never to stop development, but rather to control it. If you drive through the center of Charlestown you'll find large swaths of land undisturbed, and yes, in the Devault area you'll find new development. These new developments are Traditional Neighborhood Developments or TNDs. They are also called compact developments or walkable communities. The reality is that many buyers today prefer less property, and the Township gave the developers density bonuses in trade for numerous design & construction features that by law municipalities can't mandate outside the confines of a TND zoning district. As to why it was done in Devault, this decision was pretty simple. Development should be where there is access to public water & sewer as well as easy access to our main road network. This approach is much preferred to creating all new infrastructure in the middle of the Township where none presently exists.

We also need to appreciate that while we'd like to see the remaining farms preserved, this approach doesn't always fit with a landowner's family needs and/or circumstances. The development at the corner of Whitehorse & Ashenfelter Roads is a cluster development per our ordinance. Instead of 19 homes on two acre lots they are on roughly one acre lots with the remaining 19+ acres preserved as contiguous open space. The Township attempted to purchase the development rights on this property but the landowner opted instead to develop the land, which is certainly their right. We welcome these new residents who at some point will hopefully become Township old-timers. The reality is that we're all only here for a short time.

BTW, while Nextdoor Charlestown is a great community forum, you should really check out the Township website at [www.charlestown.pa.us](http://www.charlestown.pa.us) if you want the official info on what's going on in the Township. You can also sign up to be notified once a week of any changes and updates.



**Charlestown**  
T O W N S H I P

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Frank A. Piliero, Chairman  
Charles A. Philips, Vice Chair  
Susan T. Bednar, Member  
Kevin R. Kuhn, Member  
Hugh D. Willig, Member

### TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Linda M. Csete

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

#### Supervisors

1<sup>ST</sup> Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

#### Planning Commission

2<sup>ND</sup> Tuesday @ 7:30 p.m.

#### Historical Commission

Semi-monthly 3<sup>RD</sup> Tuesday  
@ 4:00 p.m.

#### Environmental

##### Advisory Committee

2<sup>ND</sup> Wednesday @ 6:00 p.m.  
at the Great Valley High School

#### Parks & Recreation

3<sup>RD</sup> Thursday @ 7:30 p.m.

*Meetings except the EAC are held at the Great Valley Middle School, 255 N. Phoenixville Pike, Malvern. All meetings are open to the public.*

# Volunteer Guides Wanted for Charlestown Mill



The historical commission is seeking volunteers who would help at the Mill in:

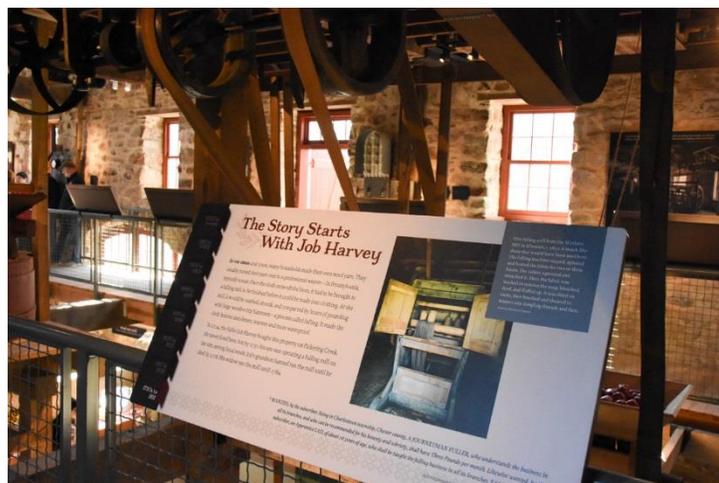
- Hosting tours
- Liaisoning with schools and other groups
- Helping with special events
- Generally representing the Mill to the public

The only skill we need is your enthusiasm!

About 150 visitors came to our grand opening on November 11, 2018. If you enjoy history, culture, and talking to people, you can help.

Volunteers will receive primary training to host tours (which are self-guided), coordinate educational programs and community events, and in general act as ambassadors for the Mill.

We'd like to ask the volunteers to form a committee to develop a program to begin in the spring of 2019 that would include an open house one day per month and to create a plan for hosting school and other groups for the spring-summer-fall season.



The time commitment for volunteers would generally be 5-7 hours per month; a little more during special events.

No previous experience is needed. We are looking for volunteers who have a curiosity for learning about our local history, and who are willing to share what they have learned as they host tours, conduct programs, and help out with special events.

## Interested in serving as a Charlestown Mill Guide?

Contact Linda Csete, Township Manager, at [admin1@charlestown.pa.us](mailto:admin1@charlestown.pa.us) or call her at 610-240-0326.



## Tax Information for 2019

**Real Estate Taxes:** The millage rate for real estate taxes is .75 (3/4) mills, unchanged for 14 years.

Your real estate taxes for 2019 will be collected by the Chester County Treasurer Department.

Tax bills are mailed the week of February 1<sup>st</sup> to the property owner's address of record. For questions, call the County Treasurer's office at 610-344-6370 or email them at [TreasurerDept@chesco.org](mailto:TreasurerDept@chesco.org).

**Earned Income Tax and Local Services Tax:** Both are collected by the Keystone Collections Group.

Charlestown Township's Earned Income Tax is 1% for residents. The rate for non-residents is 1/2%.

The **Local Services Tax** is \$52.00 per year, deducted by your Charlestown Township employer. Persons earning under \$12,000 per year are exempt from this tax.

Employers throughout Chester County are required to withhold all earned income and local services taxes quarterly. Forms and instructions, including e-filing, can be found at [www.keystonecollects.com](http://www.keystonecollects.com)

## Earned Income Tax Return Due April 15

It's that time of year again. The 2018 local earned income tax return filing deadline is approaching.

Keystone Collections Group's [e-file](#) is the easy, fast and secure way to file your 2018 tax return. It lets you file your tax return when it is most convenient for you. You will need your W-2, your Social Security Number and any other income documents that may apply (such as a PA-UE or a Schedule C).

Keystone redesigned [e-file](#) to make it even faster and more user-friendly.

If you have questions regarding local tax filing, visit Keystone's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or call Keystone's **Taxpayer Helpline** at 1-888-539-1100 to speak with a local, knowledgeable Taxpayer Service Agent.

You can also email your questions 24/7 to [Taxpayer Support](#). Taxpayer Service Agents try to respond to all online inquiries within three business days.

## Wildflower Walk on the Pickering, April 28, 1:00

- By Esther Underhill

Each of our Township parks has a personality all its own. Although the Pickering Trail and Creek are loved by fishermen and dog walkers, it is known by many outside our area for its large variety of spring ephemerals, those flowers that bloom in the woods before the leaves are on the trees. It is a natural trail with only a few strategically placed boards and rocks to help us during rainy seasons.

We hope you can join us this year as we search for as many different species as we can find. Many are quite rare and we are lucky to have them in our own back yard. Bring the kids, so they can appreciate the many beauties of our unkempt wooded areas.

We will meet in the parking lot in back of the Charlestown Mill on Charlestown Road.

Questions? Call Esther Underhill 267-615-1577



Spring Beauties

# *14<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EARTH DAY EVENT*



## *Charlestown Township Seeks Resident Volunteers for Spring Roadside Clean-up & Other Earth Day Projects Saturday April 6, 2019 9 am – Noon (Rain Date April 13<sup>th</sup>)*

Once again we seek volunteers to participate in a clean-up of selected township roads, parks and open space on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The Township will provide trash bags, gloves, safety vests and bottled water for volunteers. Youth Groups are encouraged and welcome. We will assign safer off-road areas for these groups and for families with younger children.

Litter patrol not for you? We can work with you or your group on planning a specific earth day project.

The Township Office is used as headquarters. Personnel will be on hand at the office and on the road throughout the event to handle calls, questions, problems, etc.

You may have a particular road or other area you'd like to take care of; otherwise we can suggest assignments and you can select one that appeals to you. You have the option of leaving the filled trash bags at the location for later pick up by the township, or if you have a truck or larger vehicle, the bags can be dropped off at the Township yard opposite our office on Whitehorse Road.

Families and Adult Volunteers meet at the township office for continental breakfast fare, to get their assignments and to pick up supplies.

Youth groups are set up ahead of time through their leaders and a modest reimbursement is provided for refreshments at your assigned location. Homeowners association groups are also set up in advance.

Do you want to participate but can't on April 6<sup>th</sup>? We'll provide supplies for any day of the year you or your group is available!

To Register or to obtain more information, contact: Linda Csete, Township Manager  
email: [admin1@charlestown.pa.us](mailto:admin1@charlestown.pa.us) phone: (610) 240-0326 between 9 am – 3 pm



# SAVE OUR STREAMS FROM ROAD SALT



By testing and monitoring stream water, we can create and protect streamside buffers of native plants.

Just like road salt kills grass where lawns border driveways and sidewalks, it also harms streamside plants as snowmelt and spring rains carry it into creeks. These plants, including duckweed, lily pads, and cattails, play a critical role in shading and cleaning the water, preventing erosion, and sheltering birds, frogs and butterflies.

In a neighboring Township, teams of volunteers have found that many local streams have unhealthy amounts of salt year-round. This confirms US Geological Society reports that chloride levels have doubled over the past 50 years.

High levels of salt impact all of the plants and animals that live in our waterways, including the Great Blue Heron and Belted Kingfisher as well as fish like Blue Gills, Shiners, and Redbreast Sunfish.

## We all have a part to play in keeping our streams healthy. Here are 4 ways you can reduce salt pollution:

- **First:** Shovel before you salt. Shovel right after it snows to reduce the need for salt.
- **Reduce and Reuse:** Use just enough salt to melt ice. After snow melts, sweep up and reuse the salt.
- **Read the Label:** Don't use products containing urea, kitty litter, or ashes. Instead, use a pre-wetted 1:1 sand and road salt mixture.
- **Speak Up:** Educate your neighbors! If you see an uncovered, unprotected salt pile, contact your township.

If you are interested to learn more and join a team of Charlestown Volunteers, please contact Charlestown EAC member, Carol Armstrong at [mnem.np@gmail.com](mailto:mnem.np@gmail.com).

Information provided by:



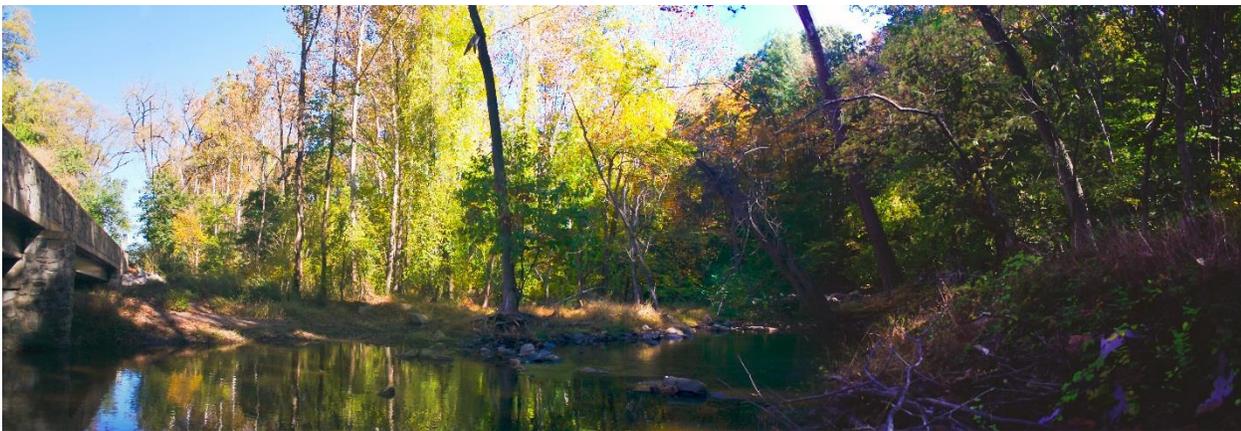
**Tookany/Tacony-Frankford**  
Watershed Partnership, Inc.

## *Open Space Preservation Update*

The Board of Supervisors continues to focus on its initiative to conserve open space throughout the Township, and has now achieved a preservation rate of over 36%, representing over 2,900 acres of the 8,015 total in Charlestown.

What is included in this figure? In addition to active parks including Charlestown Park (44 acres) and Brightside Farm Park (75 acres), Trails including the Pickering Preserve (120 +/- acres), and future park areas (55 acres), private property owners have worked with us to place conservation easements on over 2,100 acres of their land, with the remainder consisting of open space maintained by homeowner associations (450+ acres).

Even the way land is subdivided in Charlestown leads to permanent preservation. In the early 2000's, our ordinances were redesigned to require that 30-50% of all residential tracts to be developed are set aside for a combination of passive and active open space.



*Above: Pano of the Pickering Creek by George Csete*

In the mid 2000's, the Township met with intensive development pressure from the planning and construction of the PA Turnpike slip ramp. With the realization that the new exchange would attract developers to our area, we amended the Zoning Ordinance to provide for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District in Devault.

While it isn't possible, or even legal, to stop all development in our Township, we're able to allow for it in the locations best supported by local infrastructure while minimizing it in our more environmentally sensitive areas.



For all our residents, we hope you continue to enjoy the parks and natural resources that Charlestown has to offer.

*At right: Enjoy a winter's day walk on newest paved trail at Brightside Farm, with parking next to the Rapp House at 3108 Yellow Springs Road.*

## **2019 Tentative Dates for Chester County Household Hazardous Waste Events**

Charlestown Township is a 2019 Participant in the Chester County Hazardous Household Waste Event Program. Bring unwanted hazardous household, automotive products, home maintenance, lawn and pest control products to the next Collection event. There are six events as listed below, all from 9 am – 3 pm. For a list of items Accepted and Not Accepted, go to: [www.chestercountyswa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1803](http://www.chestercountyswa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1803)

Saturday, April 6, 2019  
**Technical College High School  
 (formerly CAT Pickering)**  
 1580 Charlestown Road  
 Phoenixville, PA 19460

Saturday, April 27, 2019  
**Octorara High School**  
 226 Highland Road  
 Atglen, PA 19310  
*(Proof of County Residency May be Required)*

Saturday, May 18, 2019  
**Owen J. Roberts Middle School**  
 881 Ridge Road  
 Pottstown, PA 19465

**Friday**, June 21, 2019  
**Coatesville Learning Center**  
 1425 East Lincoln Highway  
 Coatesville, PA 19320  
*(Stone Wall Entrance – Veterans’ Drive - same entrance as CAT Brandywine- Rt. 30 across from Dairy Queen)*

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019  
**Oxford School District Admin. Building**  
 125 Bell Tower Lane  
 Oxford, PA 19363  
*(Proof of County Residency May be Required)*

Saturday, October 12, 2019  
**Government Services Center**  
 601 Westtown Rd, West Chester, PA 19380



### **Snow Reminders**

The first objective is to have the roadways open for emergency vehicles. This is basically one lane with anti-skid and road salt applied only to areas that require extra traction such as hills and major intersections. The other roads are then opened.

After the snow has ended, the cleanup begins, that is, trying to get the roadways opened "curb-to-curb" and clearing snow and ice from the intersections, fire hydrants, storm water drains and inlets. We ask for your continued patience and understanding during these snow events.

When a plow operator is pushing back the snow and slush from a roadway, the plow must be run at a speed that throws the snow and slush off the road and over what has previously been plowed. This precludes the plow operator from stopping at each driveway and mailbox. If a plow is lifted at a driveway or mailbox, all of the snow and ice in the plow would be dropped on the road causing additional problems.

### **Which Roads in Charlestown are State Roads?**

For Snow Removal and other Maintenance Issues on State Roads listed below, call PennDOT at 484-340-3200.

Bodine Road between Foster & Seven Oaks Charlestown Road Church Road Coldstream Road Conestoga Rd (Rt. 401)	Foster Road Hollow Road Merlin Road Morehall Rd (Rt. 29) Newcomen Road Phoenixville Pike	Pickering Dam Road Pikeland Road Seven Oaks Road State Road (Rt. 29) Valley Hill Rd (East of Rt. 401)	Whitehorse Road Yellow Springs Road (north of Hollow Rd) Yellow Springs Rd (east of Morehall/Rt. 29)
---	---	---	--

# Charlestown Township Directory 2019

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each Month, 7:00 P.M., at the Great Valley Middle School

Frank A. Piliero, Chairman	<a href="mailto:fpiliero@charlestown.pa.us">fpiliero@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 458-4180
Charles A. Philips, Vice Chairman	<a href="mailto:cphilips@charlestown.pa.us">cphilips@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 933-4154
Susan T. Bednar, Member	<a href="mailto:sbednar@charlestown.pa.us">sbednar@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(484) 678-2492
Kevin R. Kuhn, Member	<a href="mailto:kkuhn@charlestown.pa.us">kkuhn@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 917-9960
Hugh D. Willig, Member	<a href="mailto:hwillig@charlestown.pa.us">hwillig@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 935-3539

**ADMINISTRATION:** Office Hours are Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Linda M. Csete, Manager/Secretary-Treasurer	<a href="mailto:manager@charlestown.pa.us">manager@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 240-0326
Jan C. Bird, Assistant Township Secretary	<a href="mailto:admin2@charlestown.pa.us">admin2@charlestown.pa.us</a>	(610) 240-0326

**BUILDING INSPECTOR/CODES:** Anthony Merklinger – [amerklinger@charlestown.pa.us](mailto:amerklinger@charlestown.pa.us) (610) 451-5200

**PROPERTY & PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATOR:** Timothy J. Hubbard – [thubbard@charlestown.pa.us](mailto:thubbard@charlestown.pa.us) (610) 614-6119

**ROADS AND PUBLIC WORKS:** Roadmaster/Project Manager: Jim Thompson (610) 656-9315

**TOWNSHIP ENGINEER/ZONING OFFICER:** Daniel T. Wright, P.E. – [dwright@advancedgeoservices.com](mailto:dwright@advancedgeoservices.com) (610) 840-9100

**OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS:**

*Pennsylvania State Police (610) 486-6280*

*For Great Valley School District Real Estate Taxes:  
Keystone Collections (866) 539-1100*

*PennDOT Maintenance for State Roads (484) 340-3200*

*For Earned Income & Local Services Taxes: Keystone  
Collections (866) 539-1100*

*For Township & County Real Estate Taxes: Chester  
County Treasurer (610) 344-6370*

*SPCA (610) 692-6113*

## Charlestown Township Meeting Schedule 2019

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Board of Supervisors Middle School, Room 154, 7:00 p.m.</b>	7	4	4	1	6	3	1	5	3 *	7	4	2
<b>Planning Commission Middle School, Room 154, 7:30 p.m.</b>	8	12	12	9	14	11	9	13	10	8	12	10
<b>Historical Commission Middle School, Guidance Office, 4:00 p.m.</b>	15	None	19	None	21	None	16	None	17	None	19	None
<b>Environmental Advisory Committee High School Library 6:00 p.m.</b>	9	13	13	10	8	12	10	14	11	9	13	11
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation Middle School, Room 154, 7:30 p.m.</b>	17	21	21	18	16	20	18	15	19	17	13	19

# Organic Community Gardening at Brightside Farm Park

The Brightside Farm Community Gardens are made available each year to interested local gardeners who are able and willing to make a full season commitment to managing a plot.



These 20' x 20' plots (400 sq. ft.) go quickly, and there is already a short waiting list for the 2019 season. However, the Garden operates on a rolling enrollment basis should plots become available.

If you are a returning gardener or a new one, complete the form below and return it to the Township Office by March 15<sup>th</sup> to reserve a plot.

----- cut here -----

## BRIGHTSIDE FARM PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN REGISTRATION FORM

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Please Check One:

- I am a returning gardener and would like to keep my plot # \_\_\_\_.
- I am a returning gardener and would like to be assigned a new plot #.
- I am a new gardener and would like to be assigned a plot.
- I gardened in the past but won't be renewing my plot this season.

### Instructions:

Please return this form with your annual \$25.00 garden fee to the Township Office with checks made payable to Charlestown Township by March 15<sup>th</sup> to reserve your garden plot for the upcoming season. Mail to: Charlestown Township, P.O. Box 507, Devault, PA 19432.

### Please Note:

1. Returning Gardeners are given priority but must return this form with their payment by March 15<sup>th</sup> to keep their plot from the previous year.
2. After March 15<sup>th</sup>, plots will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Charlestown residents will be given priority.
3. Only one plot per gardener will be assigned, in order to provide them to more people.
4. If there are vacant plots after April 15<sup>th</sup>, we will then allow gardeners to have more than one plot. We'll notify you if there are any available.
5. Garden Plot Registration is handled by the Township office (610) 240-0326 or [admin1@charlestown.pa.us](mailto:admin1@charlestown.pa.us)
6. The Garden Coordinator is Charles Buck, who can be contacted at [buck.charles.a@gmail.com](mailto:buck.charles.a@gmail.com)

**Acknowledgement:** I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledge that I will maintain my plot as an organic space, with no synthetic fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides.

# Join us to Preserve our Charlestown Lifestyle

By Richard Findlay

January saw the Board of Supervisors pass an ordinance formalizing the role of the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) in the Township. This after an energetic and successful nine month probationary period in 2018. In that short time the EAC has made significant progress in protecting and improving the lifestyle of our residents. A potential danger from the Adelphia pipeline has been averted, work has been undertaken to contain invasive plants on the trails, reduce the threat of noise pollution from the Turnpike widening, reduce the use of single use plastics in outlets in the township and monitor the use of herbicides by PennDOT on our roads.



Above from left: Richard Findlay, Carol Armstrong, Veda Maany and EAC Chairman Pete Goodman

In 2019, the EAC has a plan to ramp up those projects and extend its activities to improve the quality of headwaters through the creation of riparian buffers around our streams, move to name streams currently unnamed, support the Parks administration with tree minding and most importantly, initiate environmental educational and awareness programs for our residents.

That all takes effort, so the seven person Committee is seeking volunteers to join in the work either out in the field or in creating and planning the programs. If you have an interest in continuing to make Charlestown lifestyle that which we have all come to enjoy and which others aspire to, please come join your team by contacting EAC Chairman Pete Goodman at [peteg@bee.net](mailto:peteg@bee.net) or his cell 610-655-5020.

**Charlestown Township**  
**P.O. Box 507**  
**Devault, PA 19432**