

Charlestown Township Newsletter

Summer 2023 Edition

www.charlestown.pa.us

Published by the Board of Supervisors

11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1, Malvern, PA 19355 (610) 240-0326

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



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

Christopher W. Heleniak

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Supervisors

1ST Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Environmental

Advisory Committee

2nd Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

2nd Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission

3rd Wednesday @ 1 pm
Jan-Mar-May-Jul-Sep-Nov

Parks & Recreation Board

3rd Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Hearing Board

Scheduled on as-needed basis

Meetings are held at the Township
office, 11 General Warren Blvd.
Suite 1, Malvern



Above: July 1976 Photo by J.C. Raulston

Township to Acquire Swiss Pines

As most of our long time residents know, the properties owned by the Bartschi Foundation, including Swiss Pines, have had a storied background since Arnold Bartschi purchased the property in 1957 and began development of the Japanese garden along with English gardens. He formed the Bartschi Foundation in

1960 and opened the gardens to the public in the 1960's, where they were a major regional attraction for decades. In the years leading up to his passing in 1996, the properties began to decline until the gardens were eventually closed to the public. Upon the death of trustee Henriette Bumeder in 2018, the Township began working with the current directors of the Foundation to obtain ownership of Swiss Pines, its surrounding properties, and their assets. In July 2022, the PA Attorney General filed a petition to transfer the Bartschi Foundation assets to the Township.

We are pleased to announce that on July 27, 2023, the Chester County Court of Common Pleas, Orphan's Court Division approved a settlement agreement providing for the transfer of the 220-acre Swiss Pines property from its current owners, the Bartschi Foundation and Estate of Henriette Bumeder, to Charlestown Township. The formal acquisition will take place within 6-12 weeks.

Over the coming months we will begin the planning to meet our eventual goal, which is to stabilize & rehabilitate the structures on the property where financially feasible and renovate the gardens so that once again, this unique place may be opened for the public's enjoyment. Grant funding, along with the cash assets of the Bartschi Foundation, will be used to the extent possible for this project. We ask for both your patience and **your input** in this major undertaking that will further enhance your life here in Charlestown.

SAVE THE DATE – CHARLESTOWN DAY SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 AT CHARLESTOWN PARK



Follow the Charlestown Township Parks and Recreation Facebook page for event details and announcements.

Please contact Makinlee Fox at info@gofoxonline.com for event sponsorship and vending opportunities.

Photos by Allen Underkofler



Visit www.facebook.com/charlestownparksandrecreation

Charlestown EAC Adopts a Highway

- by Dan Walker, EAC member

The Charlestown EAC has adopted Charlestown Road as part of the Pennsylvania Adopt-a-Highway program. The program requires roadside trash pickup twice a year. The first cleanup will be on the morning of Saturday, September 16th and we would love to have volunteers join us!

Flagger Force has been engaged to keep us safe while working along the roadway.

Save the date, and more information will be provided through township emails and the Charlestown EAC web page.



How to Fix your FOMO

Missed a concert? Didn't know your road was closed?

Do you have a **Fear of Missing Out** on Township related news? Send an email to admin1@charlestown.pa.us to be added to our weekly email update list. You will receive last minute updates on road closures, event cancellations due to weather, and a summary of all new website postings for the week including agendas for upcoming meetings, approved minutes, special events, and other topical information.

At left: Don't be late for the party – sign up for our Friday Township updates today!





SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

**ONE MAN DOG: JAMES
TAYLOR TRIBUTE BAND**

7-9 PM

**CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PARK
100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA**

Hosted by Charlestown Parks
and Recreation

**JULY
6th**

**WEST PHILADELPHIA
ORCHESTRA**

7-9 PM

**CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PARK
100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA**

Hosted by Charlestown Parks
and Recreation

**JULY
20th**

**BORDERLINE
BLUEGRASS BAND**

6:30-8:30 PM

**THE WISNER-RAPP HOUSE
3032 YELLOW SPRINGS RD - MALVERN, PA**

Hosted by The Charlestown
Historical society

**JULY
27th**

**THE MIGHTY
MANATEES BAND**

7-9 PM

**CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PARK
100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA**

Hosted by Charlestown Parks
and Recreation

**AUGUST
3rd**

**BRIAN
FITZY**

7-9 PM

**CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PARK
100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA**

Hosted by Charlestown Parks
and Recreation

**AUGUST
10th**

**CHRISTINE HAVRILLA
& GYPSY FUZZ**

6:30-8:30 PM

**CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PARK
100 ACADEMIC WAY - PHOENIXVILLE, PA**

Hosted by Charlestown Parks
and Recreation

**AUGUST
17th**

Additional event details can be found on the corresponding event host's Facebook page.
Follow charlestown parks and rec on Facebook for event details, concert updates, rain dates, and cancellations.



GoFox

Event Management and Logistics Specialist

CONTACT INFO@GOFONLINE.COM FOR EVENT SPONSORSHIP AND VENDING OPPORTUNITIES.

Native Plant Offer

- By Meg Solomon, member of the Environmental Advisory Committee

The Charlestown EAC has an opportunity for you to improve your landscape and help the environment at the same time. Here is the proposal. The EAC is offering to provide you with a beautiful native plant free of charge if you are willing to dig up an invasive on your property and replace it with the provided native.

The rules include:

- Sending a picture of the removed invasive(s) to EAC@charlestown.pa.us prior to September 30th, or bringing the invasive with you to the EAC table on Charlestown Day, Saturday, September 30th. Also send a picture of the area from which it was removed and the conditions of that area (wet, dry, sunny, shady etc.)
- If you are removing plants, it must be a patch of plants, not a single small plant.

If you want to learn more about invasives taking over in this area please see the April issue of the Charlestown Township EAC Nature News, https://www.charlestown.pa.us/news_eac/newsletter_eac_202304.pdf.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee has added several species to its list of banned for sale horticulture effective in 2023. These include:

- ✿ Japanese barberry - Berberis
- ✿ Burning Bush - Euonymus
- ✿ Privet Ligustrum (Chinese, European, Japanese and Border)
- ✿ Callery Pear - Pyrus calleryana
- ✿ Autumn Olive - Elaeagnus umbellata
- ✿ English ivy - Hedera Helix

Thank you to Sam Brown's Wholesale Nursery for providing the native plants!



Birds and insects need native plants! For many, native plants provide essential food they can't get from other types of plants. Have a positive impact on your local landscape by adding one or more to your garden this year. **The birds will thank you!**

Flowering Plants		
Scarlet Beebalm (Monarda didyma)	Blazing Star (Liatris spicata)	Great Blue Lobelia (Lobelia siphilitica)
Dwarf-crested Iris (Iris cristata)	Green and Gold (Chrysogonum virginianum)	Dwarf Joe Pye Weed (Eupatorium dubium)
Shrubs		
Cranberry Viburnum (Viburnum trilobum)	Virginia Sweetspire (Itea virginica)	Pussy Willow (Salix discolor)
Trees		
Wild Black Cherry (Prunus serotina)	Eastern Redbud (Cercis canadensis)	River Birch (Betula nigra)

Learn more about Audubon's Bird-Friendly Communities, the annual Birdy Dozen and discover how to register your property in our Bird-Friendly Habitat recognition program at pa.audubon.org/bfbc

Invasive trees & plants

Trees
Norway maple
Bradford Pear
Tree of Heaven



Grasses
Chinese silver grass
Golden bamboo



Shrubs
Japanese Barberry
Butterfly bush
Burning bush



Vines
Oriental bittersweet
English Ivy
Japanese Honeysuckle

Herbaceous
Crown vetch
Purple loosestrife

Master Gardeners



Vs.

The Dirty Dozen

With your help we can keep these 12 non-native invaders out of our environment! We encourage you to remove the Dirty Dozen on your property and pledge not purchase or plant them in the future. For native alternatives, see the Birdy Dozen.

SAY NO TO THESE INVASIVE PLANTS

ALWAYS ENSURE YOUR PLANTS ARE NEONICOTINOID FREE!

The Pennsylvania Native Plant Society advocates conservation of native plants and their habitats and promotes the increased use of native plants in the landscape.

Update on Grants – over \$3.6 Million in Recent Awards

- by Linda Csete, Township Treasurer

To make your tax dollars go further, we make efforts to apply for local, county, state, and federal grants whenever possible. Grant applications are prepared by Township staff or our consultants, depending on the scope and complexity of the project. Competition for grant money can be challenging, and not all applications result in successful awards. The time it can take from the grant application date to completion can be frustratingly slow, depending on the project and the granting agency. For most grants, there's an extensive reporting and auditing process to follow.

Here are the proposed and ongoing projects for which we have been awarded grant funding.

Repair of the Pickering Trail Footbridge

Description of Project: Repair damage to the footbridge caused by Hurricane Ida in Sept. 2021.

Funding Source: Federal Emergency Management (FEMA)

Grant Award: \$24,951. No match required, but the project cost will likely exceed the grant award.

Grant Award Date: 9/2022

Status: The project will go out to bid this fall and is expected to be completed by 12/31/23.



Photo by Dan Mount

American Rescue Plan (Covid) Funding

Description: Covid Relief Funding

Funding Source: Federal Government

Grant Award: \$658,771 with no match required.

Status: In 2020 & 2021, the Township received the funds from the U.S. Government, which must be spent or obligated by Dec. 31, 2024.

In 2022, \$311,598 was used for contributions to the fire companies that serve our township. In 2023, \$100,000 was donated to the Great Valley Community Organization. More info on this Organization can be found at www.gvco.org/.

\$255,921 remains to be spent, including interest accrued.

Signal Upgrade at Route 401 & Valley Hill Rd

Description of Project: Adding left turn lanes to Rt. 401

Funding Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Grant Award: \$2,110,000. No match required.

Grant Award Date: 2019

Status: The Design phase with Larson Design Group began in mid-2022 and is ongoing due to the many complications of utility coordination/relocation, Right-of-Way acquisition, and impact on historic structures. Completion remains on target for mid 2024.

Sidewalk Improvements at Route 29 & Yellow Springs Rd

Description of Project: Sidewalk Installation and Associated Traffic Improvements.

Funding Source: PA Dept. of Community & Economic Development (DCED)

Grant Application Date: March 2022

Grant Award: \$177,417 with no required match

Grant Award Date: March 2023

Status: Project to go out to bid in early 2024 with construction in mid 2024.

Please note: Concept Plans of the signal projects are available upon request to the Township Office. Email: admin1@charlestown.pa.us for this info.

Signal Upgrade at Phoenixville Pike & Yellow Springs Rd

Description of Project: Adding left turn lanes onto Sidley Rd and Yellow Springs Rd from Phoenixville Pk.

Funding Source: Automated Red Light Enforcement Grant (ARLE) jointly with East Whiteland Township

Grant Award: \$699,000. A match of \$100,000 is required from each municipality.

Grant Award Date: Nov. 2021

Status: The two townships are sharing tasks performed by their traffic engineering firms. Charlestown's consultant, Traffic Planning & Design, is developing the design proposal. East Whiteland's consultant, McMahon & Associates, conducted the land survey.

Each traffic engineering firm will review the others' work before submitting to Penndot. TPD will prepare the bid package, targeting Feb 2024, with construction to start later that Spring.

Awaiting Word on a Grant Application for Jenkins Park on Valley Hill Rd

Description of Project: A small "pocket" park and nature preserve on 16 acres at 2127 Valley Hill Rd, consisting of a paved trail, small natural-style playground and modest parking lot.

An application for funding was made to the Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) in April 2023.

Status: We're awaiting word on whether the grant application has been approved. We anticipate bidding the project out in 2024.

FEMA GUIDE ON HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A THUNDERSTORM THREATENS



Know your area's risk of thunderstorms. They can occur year-round and at any hour.

Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

Identify sturdy buildings close to where you live, work, study, and play.

Cut down or trim trees that may be in danger of falling on your home.

Consider buying surge protectors, lightning rods, or a lightning protection system to protect your home, appliances, and electronic devices.

Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to **Ready.gov** and search for **thunderstorm, lightning, or hail**. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for **thunderstorm, lightning, or hail**.

Secure outside furniture.

When thunder roars, go indoors. A sturdy building is the safest place to be during a thunderstorm.

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of thunderstorms. Be ready to change plans, if necessary, to be near shelter.

When you receive a thunderstorm warning or hear thunder, go inside immediately.

If indoors, avoid running water or using landline phones. Electricity can travel through plumbing and phone lines.

Protect your property. Unplug appliances and other electric devices.

If boating or swimming, get to land and find a sturdy, grounded shelter or vehicle immediately.

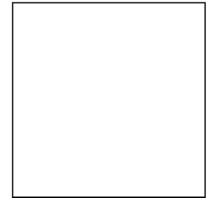
If necessary, take shelter in a car with a metal top and sides. Do not touch anything metal.

Avoid flooded roadways. Turn Around Don't Drown®. Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

Listen to authorities and weather forecasts for information on whether it is safe to go outside and instructions regarding potential flash flooding.

Watch for fallen power lines and trees. Report them immediately.

Charlestown Township
11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1
Malvern, PA 19355



Recycle Your Batteries!

The Charlestown EAC is collecting single-use alkaline batteries for RECYCLING.



Recycling keeps the batteries out of landfills and incinerators, and out of our water, air, and soils.

COLLECTION BOX SITES:

Charlestown Township
Office Lobby
11 General Warren Blvd. Ste. 1
Malvern, PA 19355

Devault Post Office
Entry Foyer
4030 Whitehorse Rd.
Devault, PA 19432