

Grayzel Commentary
Township Committee Meeting
Meeting of August 21, 2013

Thank you to the resident of Trent Court who came out tonight to ask for a sidewalk on James Street. As I said last month, I know many people in that neighborhood and they have been asking for a sidewalk for a long time, probably 6-7 years. I have taken several preliminary steps in trying to create a dialogue about this project and I wanted to inform the Township Committee and members of the public about this. In the past few weeks I have spoken to representatives of the following organizations:

- Morristown Councilwoman Allison Deeb, Councilwoman Rebecca Feldman, and Councilman Stefan Armington. Mr. Armington is an avid bicyclist. All three of them are interested in this project.

- Paul Miller of the Morristown Office of Sustainability: Many of you know Paul from his former role with the Morristown Partnership. He now heads a new office created by Mayor Dougherty focused on sustainability.

- Sustainable Morristown: This is a citizens group focused on actions that promote sustainability. Getting people out of their cars and onto their bikes or walking on their feet is part of their mission. I was informed that this group has just expanded to now include a couple of residents of Morris Township. They told me that their focus would now be expanding to include Morris Township. This last point was news to me, but I am glad to see our some local citizens getting involved in this effort.

- The Bike & Walk Morristown group: This is another citizen group focused on getting people to bike and walk around town.

- Morris Township Trails & Pathways Committee: We have a member on our committee who is part of the Morris Area Freewheelers, a biking organization, and another from the FreeWalkers, a hiking organization. I will be working with Bill Foelsch to get our next meeting set up so we can discuss this project in addition to progressing other elements of the Township's Trails & Pathways plan.

I think the next step is to apply for some grant money to examine the feasibility of this project as well as a possible routing. Paul Miller in Morristown said he would take the lead on this.

On Sunday September, 8th Fosterfields historic farm in Morris Township will be hosting a 1920's Country Fair. One of the events is a free traveling interactive exhibit all contained within a hi-tech 18-wheel truck that was created with the intention of inspiring the next generation of veterinarians. It uses different technologies to explore topics about animals in the home, on the farm, in the wild, at the zoo and in the veterinary clinic! The truck is staffed with friendly and informative staff to guide folks through the exhibit and answer any questions. This is a free exhibit brought to you by The Smithsonian, American Veterinarian Medical Association and Zoetis.

I spoke with a member of the Environmental Committee today who told me of an action taken by the planning board this past Monday night regarding a proposed tree ordinance. The Environmental Committee had wanted to insert some forestry language and some good forest stewardship language into the ordinance. However, I was told that the planning board removed much of this language, including that of a "tree protection area". The result sounds like it may be a very weak tree ordinance. I look forward to hearing more on this topic as I expect it to come before the Township Committee for a vote. But I do hope there are some discussions prior to that point.

I note on the consent calendar an appointment to the Board Of Adjustment. This is an appointment by the Township Committee, yet I have never heard of this person and nobody has provided me any information about him. I cannot vote on something I have no knowledge of.

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