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September 2012: Morris Township News Update

IMPORTANT -- PLEASE NOTE:
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Dear Neighbors,

I am pleased to be sending you the latest in a series of E-newsletters containing commentary on our Township Committee meetings as well as other helpful information about our municipality.

If you missed any of my past newsletters, you can click [HERE](#) to review prior issues.

Please take a moment to sit back, read, and consider. As always, I welcome your comments. When you are finished, please pass this on to your neighbors and friends.

Township Committee Regular Meeting of September 19th

The Township Committee held a regular meeting on September 19th. The agenda can be found here:

http://morristwp.com/agendas/twpcomm_12-09-19.pdf

The meeting opened up with a very special ceremony: the swearing-in of our new Chief of Police, John McGuinness. Many of our officers were present in full dress and the meeting opened up with a bagpipe player and color guard entering the meeting room.



Chief McGuinness has been on our police force for over 30 years. He was raised in the area and went to Morristown High School, so he knows our community well. I have no doubt he will make a fine Chief and we are lucky to have him leading our police force.

Read more details on our new Chief of Police in this NEWSBEE story:

http://newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/news/john-mcguinness-sworn-in-as-new-morris-township-police-chief/article_4b87bbbe-0754-11e2-8e46-001a4bcf887a.html

The meeting continued with the presentation of a recognition reward to Grace Campbell, a Morris Township resident who helped to save the life of a drowning person at the Jersey Shore during this past summer.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of the NJ State "best practices" questionnaire. The

completion of this questionnaire is required by the NJ Department of Local Government Services on an annual basis. Each municipality needs to achieve a certain "passing grade" in order to be eligible to receive their full complement of municipal aid from the state of NJ.

Note from Jeff: Each municipality in the State of NJ receives what is called financial aid, which is money provided to each municipality to support their local budgets. The amount of money received from the state has been dropping for the past several years, which is one of the reasons we have had to cut back on our local municipal budget. For those of you interested, more information on the State Aid formula can be found here:

http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/resources/muni_stateaid.html

Although the **Resolutions** are usually voted on after the Ordinances, at this meeting we voted on the resolutions first. This was because of the need to complete a vote on resolution 187-12 (relating to the "Doctrine of Necessity") prior to the further discussion of the Honeywell ordinance. The Doctrine of Necessity resolution was put forward by our Municipal Attorney, John Mills, and needed to be approved to allow all five members of the Township Committee to participate in the Honeywell ordinance proceedings.

The complete list of resolutions can be found on the agenda by clicking the link provided above.

Next, two **ordinances** were up for introduction and one was up for final adoption. The following ordinances were introduced and will be up for approval and final adoption at the October 17th meeting:

- **14-12:** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 88 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS ENTITLED "VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC," ARTICLE XIV, SECTION 88-14.1 AND SCHEDULE XXV ""BUS STOPS"

Note from Jeff: This ordinance will allow for the installation of a new bus stop on West Hanover Avenue at the intersection with Burnham Road.

- **15-12:** AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS AMENDING CHAPTER 88 SECTION 88-11.1 "SPEED LIMITS"

Note from Jeff: This ordinance would reduce the speed limit on a portion of Western Avenue to 25 miles per hour, down from the current speed limit of 35 mph.

The following one ordinance was up for approval and final adoption, but it was not voted upon and the hearing on it will be continued at the Special Meetings this week:

- **13C-12:** AMENDING CHAPTER 95, ZONING, AND CHAPTER 57, LAND DEVELOPMENT, OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS (NOTE: RECEIVED FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION FOR ADOPTION FROM THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS DATED AUGUST 27, 2012).

Note from Jeff: This ordinance is the zoning ordinance for Honeywell that is discussed in more detail below.

During the "Public Comment" portion of the meeting, there were many residents who came out with questions and comments about the Honeywell ordinance. I usually try to summarize the comments so you can read what other residents are inquiring about and commenting on, but there were far too many questions and comments on the Honeywell issue for me to summarize here as I usually do.

As is typical, at the end of each meeting each member of the Township Committee provides their own personal commentary following the public commentary. As I have been doing all year, my comments are posted to my website so that they are publicly available. Here are my remarks from the 9/19/12 meeting as well as my comments made at prior meetings:

<http://www.jeffgrayzel.com/committee-comments.html>

The Township Committee will be holding TWO Special Meetings this week on October 1st and 3rd related to the zoning ordinance for the Honeywell property (see story below). The first meeting is TONIGHT starting at 7:00pm.

The next regular meeting of the Township Committee will be on Wednesday October 17th at 7:00pm in our municipal building.

Honeywell Redevelopment Project

The zoning ordinance for the 147-acre Honeywell property was first introduced by the Township Committee on August 1st and then was required to be reintroduced on August 15th. Thus far there have been four meetings devoted to this ordinance with much of that time taken up by testimony from several experts (fiscal/financial, land use planning, traffic, and environmental) and the questioning of these experts by both the Township Committee members as well as the public.

**Click here for a
list of Jeff's
meeting
remarks in 2012**



Honeywell's redevelopment plan seeks to take their current campus having 1,156,182 square feet of office space and turn it into a "Planned Use Development" zone that will have approximately 900,000 square feet of office space plus 235 two-bedroom townhouses. The value of the land will increase from approximately \$65 million today to an estimate \$335 million after the development is complete. Of course there will also be significant expenditures on new construction that Honeywell and the developers it sells the land to will incur.

TONIGHT (Monday October 1st) the hearings continue with the fifth meeting – a Special Meeting called for further discussion of this one topic. The following two articles provide a good summary of how the meetings have progressed and where things stand as of this moment. The PATCH article contains several links to prior stories written on various portions of the meeting, so click-through to read those as well if you have an interest.

<http://morris.patch.com/articles/honeywell-hearings-continue-vote-may-come-soon>

http://newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/news/opponents-of-honeywell-ordinance-offer-their-own-planner-as-hearings/article_2764f94a-0425-11e2-928a-0019bb2963f4.html

In a related story, just a few weeks ago the State of New Jersey, under the "Grow New Jersey" program, approved a \$40 million award of tax credits to Honeywell as an incentive to keep its headquarters in NJ. More details can be found in this story:

<http://morris.patch.com/articles/honeywell-awarded-40-million-grant-to-stay-in-nj>

Below you will find many of the documents that have been distributed over the course of the Township Committee meetings:

Honeywell Property Redevelopment Proposal Documents

**Projected Fiscal Impacts
Public School Generation
Zoning Ordinance**

Honeywell Property Master Plan Amendment
Technical Coordinating Committee Responses to Public Comments
Township Financial Analysis
Honeywell Fiscal Impact Analysis Revised 8-29-2012
Township Financial Analysis Addendum
Township Financial Analysis Addendum #2

I have been working diligently to be thorough in my analysis of all the expert testimony and have asked many questions of each of the experts (with more questions to come tonight). In fact, I would estimate that I have asked approximately 70% of all the questions coming from all five of the Township Committee members. Some may deride me for all the questions that I have asked, but this has not been the first time I have been derided in fulfilling my elected responsibility to properly represent those residents who voted me into office. I believe that the result of my questions, along with the many good questions from the public, is that we have been able to gain much more additional knowledge beyond what is contained in the written reports that were submitted to us. This has resulted in a better understanding for both the Township Committee and the public of the implications of this development project. My questions have also had the unintended consequence of raising topics and concepts that give rise to more questions from both me and the public.

On top of the meeting tonight, yet another Special Meeting of the Township Committee has been called for this week on Wednesday October 3rd. (Yes, my fellow members on the Township Committee want to expedite these hearings and bring it to a quick conclusion, and expect residents to come out to two long meetings, potentially 8 hours or more in total time, in one week to attend these proceedings).

It is projected that a final vote on this ordinance could come as early as this Wednesday October 3rd so we are getting very close to the end of the process. Closing commentary by the public will start tonight and likely conclude on Wednesday. At that point the Township Committee will start its public deliberations amongst themselves, and when that is concluded a vote will be taken on the ordinance.

Both the October 1st and October 3rd meetings begin at 7:00pm at the Township Municipal Building located at 50 Woodland Avenue.

If you have an interest in having your voice heard, or just hearing what your fellow residents have to say about this project, then I urge you to attend both of these meetings this week!! I understand this is a hardship for many but this is the expedited schedule that the other Township Committee members have laid out, and it must be adhered to if you want your voice to be heard.

Route 287 Construction / Road Rehabilitation

You may have already noticed the shifting lanes on route 287 just north of exit 37. The NJ Department of Transportation announced that a seven-mile section of I-287 in Morris County will be getting a makeover. This is a \$27.4 million project, funded by our federal government. The entire project will span from just south of the South Street underpass in Morristown to the Littleton Road overpass in Parsippany. It will also involve the resurfacing of seven bridge decks and the replacement of bridge decks over the Whippany River/Eden Lane in Hanover, according to a press release from the NJDOT. The entire project is expected to last about two years. To be safe, I recommend you pay close attention to the driving conditions and remain alert for altered road patterns and merges as this construction project evolves.

Read more in this posting from the Morris County Freeholders:

<http://morriscountypr.blogspot.com/2012/09/njdot-begins-major-rehabilitation-of-rt.html>

Other items of interest...

- **Yard-waste pick-up this week:** As has been the schedule for the past 18 months, the Township will pick up yard-waste during the first week of the month. There is NO recycling pick-up during the first week of the month because the manpower is being utilized for the yard-waste pick-up, so please do not put your recyclables out at the curb on your usual garbage day.
- **Morris Twp Flu Clinic:** The Township health department is holding its annual influenza (9flu) clinic on Friday October 12 from 1-3pm. For more information, read the press release here: <http://www.morristwp.com/pdfs/12flu.pdf>
- **Kids Night at the Firehouse:** The Township fire department is hosting two kids events on October 9th and October 11th. For more information, read the flier here: <http://www.morristwp.com/pdfs/KidsNight12.pdf>
- **Stink bugs moving back indoors for the winter:** Stink bugs invaded my neighborhood a couple of years ago and they have become a real pest in my home. I have found that the two best ways to get rid of them is to (1) keep a bottle (with large opening and cap) filled with soapy water and to scoop the stink bug into the bottle. Close the lid, shake it once (and empty it every couple of days into the toilet to get rid of the accumulation, and start over again), and (2) keep a pile of 3-inch x 3-inch squares of tin foil that you hold in your fingertips, fold around the stink bug gently (so as not to make him stink), fold up the edges quickly and then just throw the tin foil in the garbage. This article provides more information on the ongoing research to stop the proliferation of the stink bug: http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2012/09/stink_bugs_moving_back_indoors.html
- **New at the Morris Township/ Morristown library -- Take Home a Kindle:** Looking to try something new? The Morristown & Morris Township Library now has Kindles for the public to borrow! If you have been interested in using an e-Reader, you can borrow a Kindle and try it at home for two weeks. Each Kindle will come loaded with a wide variety of over 20 pre-selected best-selling books for you to read. There is something for everyone. The Kindles are free to borrow by any Morristown & Morris Township Library resident cardholder 18 and over. There is no charge for this service but there is an overdue fee of \$2.00 per day. Patrons can place a hold in our online catalog. Search for the title "Kindle Electronic Book Reader." Ask for more information and borrow the Kindles at the Reference Desk or call us at 973-538-2592.
- **Market St. Mission Thrift Store needs your donations:** The George Street facility in Morristown has started taking coats and jackets for its winter coat drive. If you have old coats that are no longer used, please consider donating them.
- **Reminder: Milk/Juice Cartons are Now Recyclable!** This is yet another reminder that Morris Township has started recycling milk and juice cartons as well as other types of paperboard cartons used for beverages. These should be included with your recycled cans and bottles (NOT with recycled paper or cardboard). Read the Details and FAQ here:



<http://www.morristwp.com/11cartons.pdf>

Note from Jeff: As a reminder to those of you out there who could be doing a better job recycling, remember that recycling actually helps reduce your taxes!! Not only do we pay less to dispose of the trash (and the landfill costs just went up this year), but we also get paid from a recycling company based on the tonnage of recyclable materials we bring to them. It's a win-win for taxpayers.

Upcoming Committee Meeting...

The Township Committee will be holding TWO special meetings this week on October 1st and 3rd related to the zoning ordinance for the Honeywell property (see story above)

The next regular monthly Township Committee meeting will be on Wednesday October 17th at 7:00pm at our municipal building. Please note the earlier start time for the committee meetings this year. At this time, the agenda for this meeting has not yet been publicly posted.

Looking ahead, next month's meeting will take place on November 20th (Tuesday, due to the Thanksgiving holiday).

**The Next
Meetings:
Oct. 1st
& Oct. 3rd**

Contact Jeff...

I will continue to communicate with the public by e-newsletter on a periodic basis. However, if you ever have a question or an issue you would like to discuss, feel free to contact me by e-mail. I will continue to respond to e-mails sent to Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com

You can now also reach me at my official Township email address: Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com

Please feel free to forward this e-mail news on to others. If you know someone who would like to subscribe to future issues, please have them contact me at Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com

I am pleased to again be serving the residents of Morris Township on the Township Committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions, ideas, or concerns.

Your neighbor,
Jeff

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