



THE

East Brandywine MILEMARKER

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Tax Bundling—Convenient and Efficient

The Board of Supervisors voted in early December to simplify tax collection in the township by sending a single bill that covers three separate municipal charges—the real estate tax, the refuse collection/recycling fee and the new fire hydrant tax (more on this later). Berkheimer Associates will handle billing and the Township tax collector any follow-up. Until now, bills for the real estate tax (2004 rate, 1.5 mills) were mailed in March and the refuse/recycling fee in February (2004 rate, refuse removal \$90 a year, recycling \$35; the 2005 rate is \$125 and \$50 respectively).

The proposed new fire hydrant tax will come into effect in 2005 and be

imposed only on a property within 780 ft. of a fire hydrant. This boundary will include most homes and businesses along Horseshoe Pike and those homes in or near the Locust Knoll, Keats Glen Timberlake, Pinebrook Village, Culbertson Run and Cross Keys developments.

Scott Piersol, the Township Manager, estimates the hydrant tax will be \$15 to \$20 a year. The fee is based on the property's assessed value. But he says most affected residents will actually *save* money with this levy because many, though not all, insurance companies will lower their fire protection premiums because a fire hydrant is readily available. He adds that a \$50 to \$75 a

year reduction in the cost of their home insurance is "realistic."

Also in the tax news, East Brandywine has a new tax collector. Patti Piersol. She succeeds Ann Taylor who held the position for many years but moved last spring to Florida. Because East Brandywine's population is growing so rapidly, the tax collector's job is, too. Mrs. Piersol will deal with any questions, complaints or other matters that need to be followed up—and tax-related questions come in the hundreds. She'll also deal with other tax and fee issues, including contacting residents who fail to pay trash and/or recycling fees.

Finally on the tax front, here's a list of the other taxes Township residents have to pay each year:

Chester County real estate tax.

Bills are mailed to property owners in February and cover the calendar year (2005 rate, 3.558 mills). Tax is payable to the county treasurer.

Downingtown Area School

District real estate tax (current rate, 21.65 mills). Bills are mailed to property owners in mid June and cover the July 1-June 30 fiscal year. Tax is payable to the school district and usually is included in an escrow account.

East Brandywine earned income tax. Billed by Berkheimer Associates or deducted from earnings by your employer (current rate, 1.125%).

Interim real estate tax. Bills can be generated at any time during the year if there is an improvement to a property such as a new dwelling, pool, deck or garage. Separate bills are sent by the township and the school district.

Open Space Process Saves 41 Acres From Sprawl

After months of negotiations, the first payoff from the voter-approved plan to preserve open space in East Brandywine is now a reality. The township, on the recommendation of its Open Space committee, agreed to spend close to \$1 million for the conservation easements to around 41 acres of fields and woods fronting on Dowlin Forge and Rock Raymond Roads.

The property consists of two parcels, one of about 39 acres and the other of two acres. Philip and Nancy Tischler are the owners of the larger lot and were paid \$842,800 for the easements on their land. The cost represents what a Township-hired appraiser judged to be the difference of the value of the property if left undeveloped or if it were fully developed by a home builder. The Township bought outright an adjoining two-acre lot from the Tischler's son for \$147,000.

Much of the expense is being offset by County grants. In early December, the County Commissioners approved two separate grants—of \$440,000 and \$88,200—under Chester County's open space preservation program to help defray the costs of the Tischler transactions (see "Township Hits County Grant Jackpot", next page).

(continued on next page)

Who, When & Where

Board of Supervisors

David A Kirkner, CPA, Chairman
Jay G. Fischer, Esq., Vice Chairman
Hudson L. Voltz, Esq., Member

Township Public Meetings

• Board of Supervisors

First Thursday at 7:30 a.m.
Third Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

• Planning Commission

First Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

• Municipal Authority

Second Tuesday at 7:30 a.m.

• Township Ordinance Force

Fourth Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

All meetings in McCausland
Hall, 1214 Horseshoe Pike.

Important Numbers

Fire and Ambulance 911
Police (emergency) 911
Police (non-emergency) ... 383-7000
Poison Control (215) 386-2100
Police Administration 269-4300
Police FAX 873-4550
Township Administration 269-8230
Township FAX 269-4157
email www.ebrandywine.org

**Township Offices open M–F
9 a.m.–noon and 1–5 p.m.**

Telephone Directory

The Township Directory is available from any touch-tone phone 24 hours a day. Just call **269-8230** and press one of the extensions shown.

Township Staff Directory

- 4 Patti Piersol, Taxes (Voice mail)
- 5 Mary Beth Smedley, Secretary/Treasurer
- 1104 Norann King, Building Dept.
- 6 Scott Piersol, Manager, EMC and Fire Marshal
- 7 Matthew Vanlew, Roadmaster
- 8 Police Administration Office

Township Information Directory

- 1130 Curbside Trash
- 1131 Curbside Recycling
- 1132 Bulk Trash
- 1134 Leaf Collection and Xmas Trees
- 1135 Cardboard/Corrugated Drop-off
- 1136 Motor Oil and Other Waste Recycling Drop-off
- 1140 East Brandywine Youth Athletics

Township Hits County Grant Jackpot

Chester County Commissioners approved \$855,200 in open space grants to East Brandywine for four different projects. In all, the commissioners approved 26 projects with a total value of just over \$6 million. Only two other townships, West Caln and North Coventry, received multiple grants (two each). The largest single grant, \$1,125,000, went to Willistown Township.

The biggest East Brandywine grant, for \$440,000, was to help defray the cost of buying development rights to the Tischler property on Dowlin Forge and Rock Raymond Roads (see Open Space story, page 1). Related to that was an \$88,200 grant to build a trailhead on the two-acre tract on Dowlin Forge Road, a part of the Tischler acquisition.

The other two local grants go for Park and Recreation Board projects. The county earmarked \$237,000 for the Phase III development of the Community Park on Dilworth Road, which includes construction of a walking trail that will link Wildbrier Road in the Cross Keys development to the existing park trail system. It also will include new sports fields. The second Park and Rec grant, for \$90,000, will help defray the cost of buying additional land.

Open Space

(continued from page 1)

The Open Space committee first discussed the property with the Tischlers in 2003 but serious negotiations did not start until early last year. Kate Okie, chair of the Open Space Committee, and two Township officials who sit on the committee, Township Supervisor Jay Fischer and Planning Commission member Stephen Cushman, were leaders in the negotiations. To help them, they brought in Jack Stefferud of the non-profit Natural Lands Trust, an organization with much experience in the acquiring and administration of preserved farmland.

Under the terms of the easements, the 39 Tischler acres will be maintained in perpetuity by the Natural Lands Trust, in partnership with the Township and Chester County. The two-acre lot will be developed as a picnic area with access to the Township's walking trail network. It will be managed by the Township in cooperation with the East Brandywine Township Park and Recreation Board.

The open space process is funded by a one quarter of one percent tax as part of the township's earned income tax.

Residents agreed to this tax by a more than two-to-one margin in a referendum voted on in November 2002.

As one of its first tasks, the committee identified close to 50 township properties of 20 acres or more that it felt it should try to preserve. The Tischler property was close to the top of the list, both because of its size and its location. In addition to being a large tract, it also borders on other major properties along Rock Raymond and Hopewell Roads, which owners have agreed to preserve as open space. The Tischler property will also provide an important link in the township walking trail system, one arm of which eventually will stretch from the Community Park on Dilworth Road to a connection with the Struble Trail near the junction of Dowlin Forge and Creek Roads.

Tag That Dog

As of Jan. 1, dogs three months or older need new licenses and current rabies vaccinations. Failure to comply can result in a fine of up to \$300. Information is available from the Chester County Treasurer's office at www.chesco.org or (610) 344-6370 or from authorized agents.

Urgent Need for More Recycling

The Township population is going up and up as more and more new homes are built but at the same time the volume of recyclable material being put at curbside each week is going down and down. No one knows why—but the contradiction is costing big dollars. This in turn could force an unwelcome increase in trash collection fees.

Here's the math. Curbside paper collection has dropped by about 80 tons a year and at \$30 a ton that's \$2,400 in lost income. The lower recycling total also means that the state grant (to encourage local recycling) shrank by \$6,000 to \$38,000. Material that should be—but is not—recycled ends up going to the landfill and every extra load there costs money, a fee of more than \$57 a ton at present.

The shrinkage in recyclables is separate from the issue of residents who skip paying trash and recycling fees. Late in the fall the township sent out letters to the 250-plus delinquents who've failed to pay these bills with the goal of collecting the \$77,000 or so they owe. The letters drew some quick responses, but it's too early to say how much cash will come in. Residents who have no legitimate reason for not paying and fail to pay up will have municipal claims

filed against their properties—a cost that will have to be met if they ever want to sell their homes.

Given the present situation on recyclables, Township Manager Scott Piersol is urging all residents to recycle all discarded paper and cardboard and, of course, other material such as glass, aluminum, steel and tin, and #1 and #2 plastics. Cardboard that's flattened and tied can be placed at curbside; large items can be placed in the container at the back of the municipal building—but, please, if you're depositing a cardboard box, collapse it first.

What's acceptable? Just what constitutes bulk trash is a recurring issue. The township receives fairly regular calls from residents who say that the collectors did not collect everything they put out. The reason usually is simple: they put out too much. Complete guidelines are on the community website (ebrandywine.org) but here are some highlights:

- Bulk trash pickup falls on the **last pickup day each month**.
- One large item is permitted each month or two 35-gallon containers or bags in addition to the weekly limit.
- Weight is limited to what two men can lift easily.

- Acceptable bulk trash items include: furniture, small appliances, water heater or similar items.
- Any air conditioner, refrigerator or freezer must display a sticker—from an authorized dealer or repair facility—certifying the removal of the refrigerant (Freon).

On the Move

The following real estate transactions took place between mid July and early December.

100 Aspen Drive	\$490,000
20 Blakely Road	\$300,000
102 Brookhaven Lane. Lot 22..	\$384,000
451 Brookside Drive	\$230,000
461 Brookside Drive	\$229,900
109 Clearview Drive	\$240,000
49 Corner Ketch Road	\$345,000
750 Creek Road	\$110,100
1071 Creek Road	\$495,000
Lot 41 Cumberland Ridge	\$781,989
17 Delancey Place	\$170,000
Lot 4 Delaney Drive	\$849,900
124 Governors Circle	\$285,900
24 Grovehill Court, Lot 15	\$434,230
29 Hastings Court	\$170,000
Lot 2 Hawks Nest Meadows	\$624,900
Lot 3 Hawks Nest Meadows	\$641,000
1 Highland Court	\$190,000
116 Hilltop Drive	\$290,000
1378 Horseshoe Pike	\$265,000
50 Lakeview Court	\$233,000
250 Lenora Lane	\$375,000
121 Locust Knoll Road	\$265,000
43 Margil Farm Dr. Lot 37	\$743,502
50 Margil Farm Dr.	\$761,315
330 Marshall Road.....	\$411,000
2 Township Rd (Mt. Idy MHP) \$	23,000
564 Reeds Road	\$550,000
11 Rolling Green Lane	\$642,000
112 School Lane	\$267,900
11 Spring Meadow Drive	\$459,900
125 Waring Drive	\$385,000
22 Wellesley Lane	\$354,000
26 Wellesley Lane	\$367,000
103 Wildbrier Road	\$339,000
10 Wyndham Court.....	\$165,000
101 Woodcrest Drive	\$265,000
66 Yellowwood Drive	\$251,000

Source: Weichert Realtors, West Chester

Police Web Site Redesigned

The Brandywine Regional Police Website has been completely redesigned, thanks to the efforts of Michelle Koch of Reading, a Web-design student at Allentown Business School. As her semester project, reports Chief Mark Kocsi, "Michelle asked permission to re-design the BRP's Web site. She spent four months on the project and the site is now on line. Check it out at www.brandywine.org. You'll find information, photos, township forms and links to different organizations.

Anyone who wishes to contact the BRP by e-mail may do so at brpd@comcast.net."

In making this announcement, the police chief also paid tribute to Officers Denise Knoke and Joseph Glasgow. They successfully completed their field training programs and were appointed to full-time probationary status on Sept. 27, 2004. And he had praise, too, for the newly-formed Youth Aid Panel, a volunteer group that gives input and advice in juvenile cases referred to it by the Brandywine Regional Police. The panel members are Karen Elrod, Shelley Francies, Kristopher Givens, Jill Givler, Mitchell Goldfarb, Katherine Horner, Robert Jones, William Moore, Paul Norton, Sally Riddle and Evelyn Samuels. Each completed a 12-hour training course and volunteers one night a month to hear cases. Says Chief Kocsi: "The feedback from parents, youths, residents and the police has been nothing but positive. The BRP appreciates all of their time and effort in making the youth aid panel a success."

What Happened to...?

Proposed expansion of Croppers' Guthriesville store

Parent company AWI, Inc. won a Zoning Hearing Board okay for a variance allowing expansion to the west. The Watters family, which owns the property to the west, challenged the decision in county court and won. AWI is now challenging that ruling in state court.

Moving the former Mama Lena's building

The plan, reported in the summer 2004 newsletter, is going nowhere, says Chris Kettlety, whose family owns the Watters farm, proposed new site for the building, next to the Brandywine shopping center. "We've heard nothing from Wawa," she says. The building is now on the site at Horseshoe Pike and Bondsville Road that Wawa wants to develop as a gas station. Still to be resolved: how to deal with the building's "historic" designation. At its early February meeting, the Board of Supervisors heard a presentation by Robert J. Wise, Jr. of Wise Preservation Planning of Paoli, on the benefits of nominating the Village of Guthriesville—including the "Mama Lena's" building—for a place on the National Register of Historic Places. The Board will arrange discussion of the issue with property owners in the affected area.

New municipal complex

Plans for the combined administration/police building ran into a roadblock when construction bids came in far above budgeted figures. "We're now meeting with an architect to find ways to reduce costs." Township Manager Scott Piersol reports. A tentative plan would add two "wings" to the rear of the existing McCausland Hall, one for the Brandywine Regional Police to the east, and for the Township Administration to the west. The plan also includes new facilities for the Township Public Works Department.

Expansion of Sunoco gas station at Horseshoe Pike and Hopewell Road

Project has full approval but is on hold. Sunoco has an okay for a 3,200 sq. ft. convenience store along with more

pumps, but is considering a smaller store. An attorney approached the Township to ask about putting a bank branch on the site. This is not an approved use.

Proposed K. Hovnanian age-55-plus gated community

This community would be on the Weaver farm, just west of the township building. Issue of sewage disposal is holding up plans. Construction probably is a couple of years off.

Development of Devereux farm by Wilkinson Builders

The 150-unit Hide-A-Way Farms project along Little Washington Road is waiting for final approval of waste water management from state environmental authorities. Construction is likely to start this spring. Complicating factor? Wilkinson, which guided the project through the entire approval process, is seeking to sell the approved plan to a new developer. As of early December,

no potential buyer had come up with the asking price. If no one does, then Wilkinson will go ahead itself, a company official said.

New Brandywine-Wallace Elementary School

After construction of a new \$20 million facility, the existing school would be demolished (a similar schedule is planned for the Pickering Valley school in Eagle). After an absence of several months, Downingtown School District officials attended the February Planning Commission meeting. They confirmed plans to proceed with the project, but said discussions with the PA Department of Environmental Protection over sewage issues have delayed progress. The delays mean that the projected opening date for the new school of September, 2006 will not be met. The meeting was well attended by residents who urged the School District and Township to move quickly to replace the existing school.



The East Brandywine Milemarker
East Brandywine Township
1214 Horseshoe Pike
Downingtown, PA 19335

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