



CHADDS FORD TODAY



Volume 4, Issue 1

Brought to you by the
Supervisors of
Chadds Ford Township
Delaware County, PA



FRANK G. MURPHY,
Chairman (center)
SAMANTHA REINER,
Vice Chair (left)
NOELLE M. BARBONE,
Supervisor (right)



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**FOR MEETING DATES &
UPDATED NEWS VISIT:**

www.ChaddsFordPA.gov

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The Manager's Corner by Maryann Furlong

In an email I recently received, a resident expressed how fortunate she felt to live in such a beautiful area. I couldn't agree more, especially with Spring being such an amazing time of year. Near the end of April, there were snow flurries outside my office window. One week later, the temperature was expected to reach 85 degrees and that air conditioner "on" switch looked pretty tempting!

Some things we just *can't* control, like almost all of 2020. But we've learned to cope and as a result, have created new ways to move forward. Once public meetings resume, there will most likely always be a "hybrid" component, with Zoom being available as an option. Instead of meeting inside last month, a number of residents met for the first community walk of the Harvey Run Trail. Please consider joining us for the next scheduled walk in late May. It's great to see increased activity at our local restaurants and businesses, with eating outside still an option. The Chadds Ford Historical Society is planning several events this fall, among them The Great Pumpkin Carve. How great will that be, literally?

Other things we *can* make an effort to control and protect, such as the environment. Please see the article below and decide what your "one thing" will be to help improve the environment!



Vice Chair Samantha Reiner and Township Botanist
Janet Ebert on the Harvey Run Trail with local residents

Chadds Ford Township's Local Climate Action Plan

Temple student Nicole Somers just concluded an internship with Chadds Ford Township in the Local Climate Action Plan program sponsored by DEP. The program encourages local governments to create policies to promote environmentally friendly practices for both residents and businesses. These practices result in reduced emissions of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. An important component of the program was community input. Vice Chair Samantha Reiner hosted two Community Workshops to gather residents' concerns. Intern Somers received additional guidance from ICLEI — Local Governments for Sustainability, which is a global organization.

The goal for Chadds Ford Township is to hopefully reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by calendar year 2030. Besides reducing greenhouse gas emissions, another important goal is to draft mitigation and adaptation strategies to deal with future changes.

Please look for the results of this study and check the Township's website for ideas on how you can make a difference right away. By just changing one or two things in your household, such as composting or switching to a "clean or green" electric provider, you can make a difference!



Home Warranty Plans Protect Your Budget and Keep Your Household Running

A home warranty is a year-long, renewable home service plan that helps with the cost to repair or replace parts of a home's systems and appliances. It is designed to provide necessary protection against high maintenance, repair and replacement costs. As a rule, home warranties will cover multiple items including electrical systems, kitchen appliances (including garbage disposals), plumbing, washers, dryers, heating and cooling systems. There are also optional coverages for pools, spas, well pumps, and sewer lines that you can purchase.

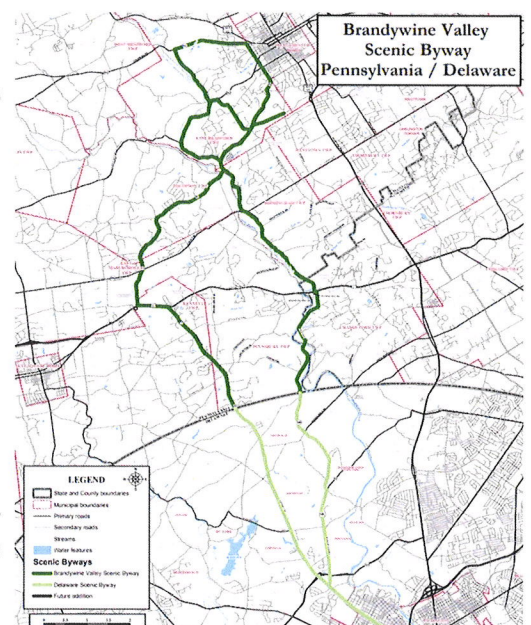
Although by no means a replacement for homeowner's insurance, a home warranty is complimentary to that coverage. Most warranty companies will charge a deductible for each service call, per item. How does a home warranty work? Keep in mind, you **do not** call the contractor to come out and perform the work and then file a claim with the warranty company; that is not how home warranties work. When an item covered under your warranty has an issue during the warranty period, you call the number provided. A representative will connect you with one of their service providers, who will collect the deductible amount at the time of the service call (deductibles range from \$100 to \$200). Then they will service your item. If the contractor determines that the item needs a specific repair or replacement, he will notify the warranty company and will take care of it for you.

As a real estate professional, I offer a home warranty to my seller and buyer clients as a thank you gift, and receive a post card from the warranty company each time they cover a claim on one of my warranties; it truly works! Many of my clients have renewed the warranty year after year to continue their coverage. There are many different warranty companies out there. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to know who I use or if I can answer any question you may have about home warranties.

Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced on March 11, 2021 that the Pennsylvania section of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway has received a **National Scenic Byways (NSB) Designation** from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The National Scenic Byways Program was established by Congress in 1991, to recognize historic, scenic, natural, archeological, cultural, and recreational qualities and to promote economic development and tourism in nearby communities. The Chadds Ford Township Board of Supervisors congratulate Township residents Debbie Reardon and Kathleen Goodier for their work in making the National Designation status achievable.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway in Pennsylvania adjoins a national scenic byway of the same name just south of the border in Delaware. The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway in Delaware starts at Rodney Square in Wilmington and heads north to Pennsylvania along Route 100 (this becomes Creek Road in PA) and Route 52. The Byway then continues on both roads to Lenape. Then the Byway makes a figure-eight loop up to Strasburg Road at the edge of West Chester Borough. The Pennsylvania section covers approximately 25 miles. The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway in Pennsylvania is supported by five participating municipalities including Chadds Ford Township, East Bradford Township, Kennett Township, Pennsbury Township, and Pocopson Township. John Haedrich, Chairman of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission, stated that "The vision for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is that it will continue to be a place with deep and varied history recognizable in the landscape and intertwined with a distinctive natural environment and pastoral scenic vistas—vibrant threads which together make a rich tapestry for the use and enjoyment of residents and visitors alike."



\$\$ Your 2021 Tax Bills \$\$

In February, 2021, Chadds Ford residents received both municipal and county tax bills. If we hadn't been paying attention in 2020 due to distractions from the pandemic, by now we have realized that the tax bill looks different. Many bills might be higher than in years past. Who is to blame? We must unload our frustrations on somebody!! Enough is enough already, don't we pay enough in taxes? Many of you have called your local officials to question this. The following information is provided just to help us all understand how we got here.

In 2020, in response to a court order, Delaware County undertook a county wide reassessment program by hiring a third-party, professional consulting firm (Tyler Technologies, Inc.) specializing in mass appraisals. Tyler reviewed records of previous assessments, permits, photos, conducted a drone flyover, and studied comparable sales to establish new values. Revised assessment values were set as close to 100% of the market value of each property as possible. Last fall, we should all have received a notice of the new assessment and instructions as to how to contact Tyler for an informal review to discuss the assessment figure. There was also an option of requesting a formal appeal hearing to possibly lower the figure. But this still does not answer WHY this happened in the first place.

In Pennsylvania, counties are not required to reassess properties on any specific schedule, however, the State Tax Equalization Board does annually review real estate sales data. Also, the Pennsylvania Constitution requires that all taxes shall be uniform, upon the same class of subjects, within territorial limits of the authority levying the tax, and shall be levied and collected under general laws.

Delaware County last performed a countywide reassessment for the 2000 tax year. Since then, the difference between those assessments and the fair market value being paid by home buyers for new construction was repeatedly brought to the attention of the courts through tax appeals. Buyers of newly constructed homes appealed their tax assessments and argued that older, established homes were valued at a much lower rate! They based their appeals on lack of uniformity in the values. Some of these appeals were funded by the Homebuilders Association of Chester and Delaware Counties! The court ultimately decided that the gaps between the 2000 assessed values, the recent sale prices, and the common level ratio factor were sufficiently high enough to order a county wide reassessment to become effective in tax year 2021.

Chadds Ford property owners still have the right to appeal if they feel the current assessed value of their property is incorrect or not uniform. Appeals must be filed with the Delaware County Board of Assessment by August 1, 2021. The appeal form must be accompanied by a \$50 filing fee and submitted on the form found at

<http://www.delcoa.gov/treasurer/forms/BOAAnnualappealForm.pdf>

Any change in assessed value will be effective the next tax cycle, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

Please remember that Chadds Ford real estate millage has NOT INCREASED for 13 years in a row. Your Township tax bill still represents a small percentage of the total real estate tax obligation when compared to county and school tax bills.

*This article was written by Samantha Reiner, Chadds Ford Township Supervisor,
with guidance and research by Mike Maddren, Esquire, Township Solicitor and Dan Dixon, Esquire.*



CHADDS FORD TOWNSHIP STAFF

TOWNSHIP MANAGER: Maryann D. Furlong
FINANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR: Anita Swayne
ASSISTANT TO THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER: Jonathan Sharp
BUILDING INSPECTOR/ZONING OFFICER: Fran McArdle
FIRE MARSHAL/EMC: Philip Wenrich
ROAD MASTER: Dennis Henry
TAX COLLECTOR: Valerie J. Hoxter

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www.ChaddsFordPA.gov



TOWNSHIP MEETING DATES

Board of Supervisors:

Workshop: 5/26/2021 at 7 PM
Regular Meeting: 6/2/2021 at 7 PM
Workshop: 6/30/2021 at 7 PM
Regular Meeting: 7/7/2021 at 7 PM
Workshop: 7/28/2021 at 7 PM

Planning Commission:

Regular Meeting: 6/9/2021 at 7 PM
Regular Meeting: 7/14/2021 at 7 PM
Regular Meeting: 8/11/2021

Joint Meetings:

Supervisors/Planning Commission/Open Space:
5/26/2021 at 6 PM



BRANDYWINE BATTLEFIELD PROPERTY PURCHASED FOR CONSERVATION

As of March 25, 2021, North American Land Trust (NALT) has acquired a historic Brandywine Battlefield property located on Oakland Road in Chadds Ford Township, with the intent to protect the land forever under conservation easement before ultimately opening its 72 acres to the public as Brinton Run Preserve. Originally considered for development, the property's diverse array of plant and wildlife species and its historic significance will be forever preserved. NALT plans to create opportunities for passive public recreation and education for the community.

NALT was able to raise \$3.85 million to purchase the property with financial support from the American Battlefield Trust, Chadds Ford Township, Delaware County's Open Space and Recreation Grant Program, Mt. Cuba Center, the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

A Conservation Easement held by Chadds Ford Township will soon permanently protect the property and its natural resources, including 92 native plant species, natural habitat for a variety of pollinators, a large pond, and a tributary of the Brandywine Creek that expands on the Brandywine Conservancy's protected area of the Brandywine Creek Greenway Corridor. The Brandywine Conservancy will provide stewardship services with assistance from Township Open Space and HARB members, as well as Township Botanist Janet Ebert. "Not only does Brinton Run Preserve fulfill a need for more open space in Chadds Ford Township, but its permanent protection prevents any future development," said Frank Murphy, Chairman of Chadds Ford Township Board of Supervisors. "I have no doubt it will become a treasured community resource."