



FALL/WINTER 2024

# CHESTER HEIGHTS

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# Letter from the Mayor

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*Hello Residents of Chester Heights!*

I have started and stopped and revised this letter too many times to count. It started out as the hardest one I have written because I was planning on making this a tribute to Fred Wood, who passed away in April.

And then the devastating fire occurred in Darlington Woods on Labor Day. There is no way I can address all of you without touching on both topics.

This letter feels like a tale of two tragedies.

I will begin with Fred, if you'll indulge me. Fred was born and raised here in the Borough. He began his life of servant leadership over 25 years ago when he was appointed to Planning Commission. He remained a Commissioner until 2017. Fred was elected to Borough Council in the early 2000's and was the Chair of the Finance Committee for most of that time. It was his driving force and leadership that started and keeps our taxes the lowest in the county. The fact of Fred's fiscal conservatism is a huge reason why Chester Heights is such a desirable place in which to live to this day. Fred retired from public service in 2017, both as Planning Commissioner and as Councilman and he thought he was done! But no. In 2020, after the untimely passing of Mayor Stacey Smith, Fred fulfilled the role of Mayor until I took my oath of office.

Fred was a lover of land and open space. He dedicated part of his large farm to Natural Lands in a land conservation. It was a meeting between Fred and Natural Lands that began the snowball that is now the ongoing project of acquiring the Powell Property. I invited Fred to an Executive Session where he brought the idea to Council and we ran with it!

On a personal note, I feel the need to share Fred's impact on my life. In 2018, he brought his daughter and cousin to a fundraiser where I was also in attendance. I remembered that cousin from playing in the woods in the early 80's here in Chester Heights. That cousin of Fred's is now my husband. Fred co-officiated our wedding with former Mayor Mark Carroll.

He was my mentor and my friend and then he became family. I miss him greatly. Fred's impact on our Borough will be lasting. Rest in Peace, my friend.

As most of you are aware, the evening of September 2, there was a massive fire on Windsor Court in Darlington Woods. We are all grateful that every single person affected got out of the burning structure safely with no major injuries. The professionals at Concordville Fire Company were first on the scene with our Chester Heights Volunteer Fire Department not far behind. They bravely fought the fire and were able to keep it contained to one building structure; with the help of 6-7 additional fire companies. The State Police Fire Marshall is investigating. This is a devastating situation for our community. Several families are displaced. The DW community is organizing fundraising drives and we will share that info when it is shared with us. Sending prayers and healing thoughts to all affected.

Please keep reading for much lighter and positive information coming from Council!

*Fondly,  
Mayor Gina Ellis*

## Borough Update

In the CHB 2024 Spring Newsletter, we provided a comprehensive overview of Borough projects, including their background and status. We will update you on all the major external projects again in our Spring 2025 Newsletter. However, this fall, we'd like to highlight some of the less visible changes and projects that significantly impact our borough's operations.

**FIRE SAFETY:** We have streamlined the fire inspection process for standalone rental units and commercial properties to ensure compliance with borough codes. Thanks to the dedication of the Fire Marshal, the Fire Bureau, and our fire inspectors, this initiative has not only made our rental and commercial units safer but has also positively impacted our finances. With 20% of the inspection fees staying within the borough, we are now recognizing revenues from fire inspections for the first time. You can read more about some of the key findings under Fire Inspection Updates on page 15.

**EMPLOYEE MANUAL & JOB DESCRIPTIONS:** For the first time in our 77-year history, the borough now has an employee manual and job descriptions. The objective is to provide clear guidelines to our staff and council on employee relations, rights, and responsibilities, as well as define a benefits structure that includes time off, healthcare stipends, and pay parameters compliant with state and federal employment laws. This project began in 2023, initiated by our Tax Collector, who took on the additional assignment. Councilwoman Anne Searl completed the project, generously offering her expertise in human resources and dedicating significant personal time. She ensured our manual complied with all the latest Human Resource Management Best Practices, at no additional cost to the residents.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** We've increased our community engagement through new and ongoing programs such as the Senior SEPTA Pass Registration event on March 7th and September 13th, hosting Delco Vision Zero on April 16th, the Senior Scam presentation on May 2nd, the always popular Easter Egg Hunt on March 23rd, and Recycling Day on September 21st. For upcoming events, including a new

Diwali event and the classic "Pictures with Santa," check out page 9 of this Newsletter.

**COMMUNICATION:** The launch of our weekly borough e-newsletter every Sunday has greatly enhanced transparency. Since Councilwoman Jeanne Montgomery took over as Chair of the Community Engagement Committee, newsletter sign-ups have doubled, reflecting heightened community interest and involvement. We are still only at 25% of our target, so please consider signing up to stay informed.

**HISTORICAL PRESERVATION:** Chaired by Councilman Tim Hudak, a subcommittee is revising our Historical Preservation Ordinance to address concerns from both the Planning Commission and residents. More on this initiative can be found in our article titled "5 Key Benefits of Adopting a Historic Preservation Ordinance" on page 12.

**LEGAL CORRECTIONS - BPT REPEAL:** Our legal team at Kilkenny Law has determined that the 2022 Business Privilege Tax, passed by the former council, was illegal. In response, the council passed Ordinance #219 this June, repealing the illegal tax. To learn more about the impact of this repeal, check out the article on Borough revenue sources on page 6.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GRANT APPLICATION:** By the time you read this, the borough will have applied for the Municipal Assistance Program Grant to offset the costs of our Comprehensive Plan Update. We cannot begin the project until the grant is reviewed and hopefully awarded. Ideally we can begin in early winter 2024-2025.

**2025 BUDGET:** This will be the first year that the budget meetings, where the council will deliberate the components for the 2025 budget, will be held in public (9/16, 10/7, and 10/21). Unfortunately, some of these dates may occur before this newsletter reaches you. However, the borough will have a webpage dedicated to the budget timeline, and an opportunity for the public to review the budget is currently scheduled for November 6th – November 16th. During that time, the budget will be available online and in person at the borough office.

Don't wait for our semi-annual printed newsletter to get your updates.

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## Meet the Office Staff



Darlene Kurten

### **Darlene Kurten - Secretary/Assistant Treasurer and Open Records Officer**

Though her formal titles are many: Borough Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Right to Know Officer, Darlene serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for our Borough. She is the main link between the Borough Council, the Planning Commission, our appointed professionals, the residents, and our staff. As the lead administrator, she is responsible for all the inner workings of the Borough. Her responsibilities include everything from managing the budget, personnel, purchasing, and enforcing the Borough code by overseeing the permit application process. In her day-to-day activities, she manages our council agendas and keeps tabs on our open items through communication with our appointed professionals. Darlene maintains direct communication with residents and oversees complaint resolutions. Darlene has been with Chester Heights for over a year, returning to the Borough after exploring new opportunities for several years. She is the wheel that keeps Chester Heights thriving. She enjoys spending time with her family, including six dogs, in her free time.



Sue Timmins

### **Sue Timmins – Treasurer / Assistant Secretary**

July 22, 2024, Sue Timmins was recognized with a PSAB award for her 20 years of service as the Borough Secretary and Treasurer to Chester Heights. In 2024, in coordination with the prior year's position evaluation Sue's role changed both in time and scope and she is now working part-time serving as the Treasurer and Assistant Borough Secretary. Sue is also a proud Borough resident and an advocate for this community. As the treasurer she oversees all borough financial transactions and reporting including payroll, escrow accounts, operation accounts, and reserve funds. Sue does the mandatory state reporting while also maintaining responsibility for the financial audit collaboration. Her extensive knowledge of the Borough's history through various council administrations is greatly valued by the council and borough staff. Sue has been offering historical context and foundational knowledge that enhances learning for staff and new members, ensuring that the information is conveyed accurately and effectively. Sue is a devoted mother of five and grandmother of nine. Sue also has a loveable doggie named Jesse.



Christiana Barbour

### **Christiana Barbour – Administrative Assistant**

Originally from Philadelphia, Christiana Barbour is a graduate of West Chester University of Pennsylvania and serves as the part-time Administrative Assistant for the Borough of Chester Heights.

A former teacher and homeschooling mom, Christiana is familiar with creating structured environments, managing multiple tasks, and developing processes that foster efficiency and learning. In her role at the Borough, she leverages these skills to manage minutes, oversee the website, and assist the Communication/Community Engagement Committee. Additionally, she supports the permitting process, ensuring all administrative functions are executed smoothly and effectively. Christiana's initiative-taking attitude and ability to organize complex information have made her an invaluable asset to the Borough. In the last few months, she has quickly discovered that no two days are the same. Christiana loves spending time with her family and taking walks on local trails. She has 15 years of administrative experience and enjoys empowering others to reach their full potential. Christiana handles Borough business, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Christiana is excited to serve this community and its leaders and has enjoyed contributing to a remarkable and dedicated staff.

## Borough Solicitor



Alex Baumler

### **Borough Solicitor**

**Alex Baumler** is an accomplished attorney with a dedication to public service. In his practice, Alex handles a wide variety of municipal, zoning, land use, open space, condemnations, subdivision and land development, tax claims and lien matters, and real estate transactions for municipal and private clients in Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. Alex also advises municipal clients on matters before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and Department of Environmental Protection and is experienced in performing a variety of municipal finance transactions, including, but not limited to, State and Federal loan, grant, and bond programs.

Alex earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Kent State University and his juris doctor from the University of Pittsburgh School Of Law.

### **Municipal Law Firm**

**Kilkenny Law** is a full-service law firm equipped to represent clients in an extensive range of complex legal issues with a particular focus on Municipal Law and Zoning & Land Use. Kilkenny Law assists individuals, families, businesses, and organizations in suburban Philadelphia and throughout Pennsylvania.

# Understanding Chester Heights Borough's Revenue Streams

The financial health of Chester Heights Borough is shaped by a variety of revenue sources that fund the essential services and projects benefiting our community. This article aims to provide residents with a clear understanding of where the borough's income comes from and how these funds are managed to maintain the quality of life, we all enjoy.

## Primary Sources of Revenue

The Borough of Chester Heights sources of revenue include: Property Taxes, Transfer Taxes, Local Services Tax (LST), Liquid Fuels Tax, franchise fees from Comcast and Verizon, permit fees, interest earnings, and grants. While grants are an important source of funding, they are typically used for one-time projects and are not considered recurring revenue. Additionally, our financial statements include pass-through revenues such as fire hydrant fees, solicitor fees, engineering fees, and fire relief funds. While these pass-through funds are shown as revenue on our Statement of Activity, which most refer to as the Profit and Loss Statement, they are essentially neutral in the budget, as they are disbursed entirely, ideally within the same fiscal year.

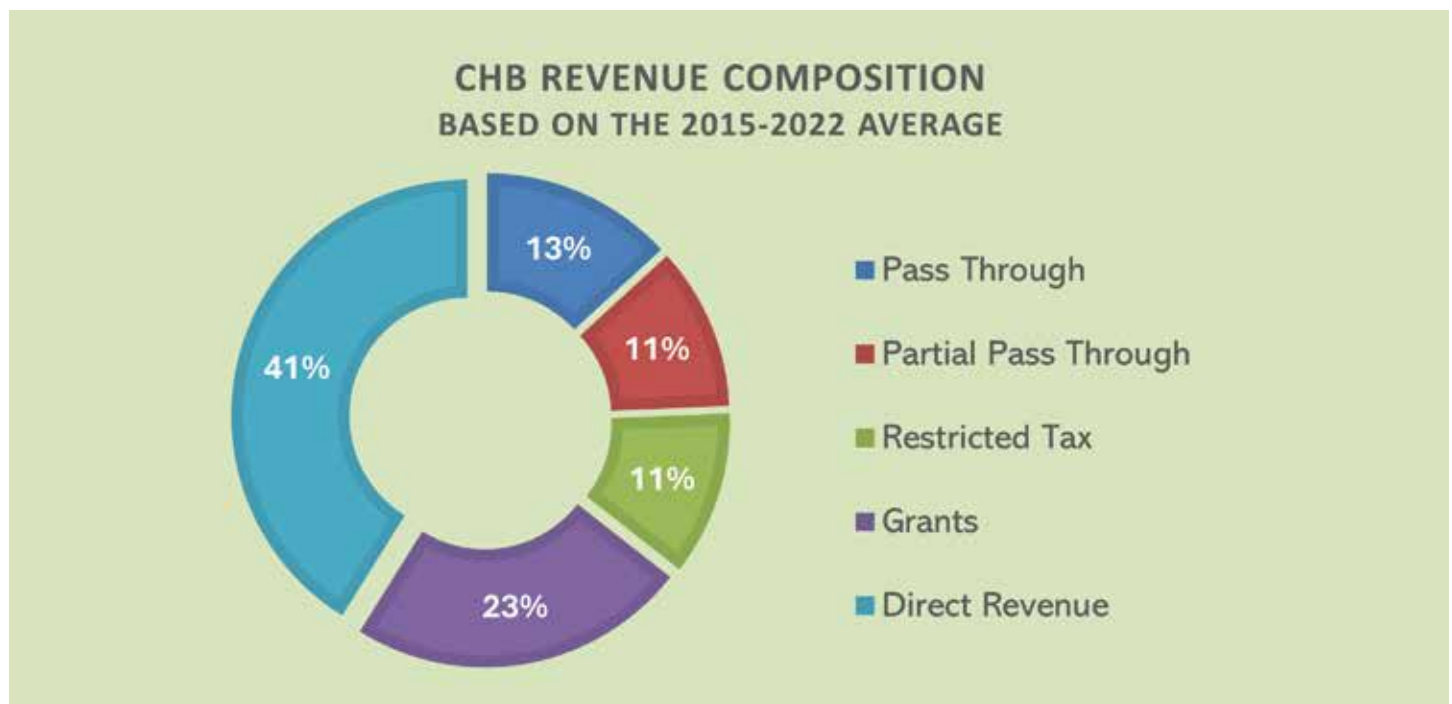
## Tax Revenues: A Closer Look

**Real Estate Transfer Tax** is one of the most variable revenue streams for the borough. Over the years from 2015 to 2022, this tax has fluctuated significantly, ranging from \$89K to \$430K annually, with an average of \$222K per year. Historically, Chester Heights' revenues have been bolstered by transfer taxes, particularly during periods of expanding development. Large-scale developments like Rose Hill and Brookfield, and significant property sales, such as the sale of the Madison Apartments, can cause substantial spikes in revenue during the year the transactions take place.

However, resident sentiment toward development has shifted in recent years. Many residents are increasingly concerned about the strain that new developments place on our inconsistent sewer infrastructure and the traffic impacts that come with increased population density. As a result, many residents now oppose additional development projects. Additionally, the borough has fewer properties that can be subdivided, meaning that the era of significant revenue boosts from large-scale developments is likely coming to an end. This shift underscores the need for a more structured approach to revenue planning, as the borough can no longer rely on transfer taxes and permit fees from new developments as consistent revenue sources.

**Local Services Tax (LST)** is another critical revenue source, collected from individuals who work within the borough but reside elsewhere. Administered by Berkheimer, this tax is set at \$52 per year per person, with a significant portion contributed by employees of Wawa, the borough's largest employer. Per state law, LST revenue must be allocated to specific areas: emergency services, road construction and maintenance, and property tax relief. Chester Heights has traditionally allocated a large portion of LST to support our fire company, although as revenue from LST has grown, the percentage allocated to emergency services has decreased.

**Property Tax** is divided into two components: the **General Fund** and the **Fire Tax**. The Fire Tax, introduced in 2016, is specifically allocated to the fire company, ensuring that this critical service has a dedicated funding source. Property taxes are based on the assessed value of homes and commercial properties, with the borough's elected Tax Collector responsible for collection and compensated through a percentage of the taxes collected. From 2015-2022,



property taxes have averaged \$112K for the General Fund and \$88K for the Fire Tax. This revenue stream is one of the most stable for the borough, not only because property values have remained steady, but also because it is fully within the control of the borough council, that manages the millage rate to ensure a consistent income.

**Non-Tax Revenues and Other Income**

Beyond taxes, the borough also relies on franchise fees from Comcast and Verizon, which have historically contributed an average of \$75K per year, representing about 8% of total revenue. However, these agreements are currently under renegotiation, and a reduction in fees is anticipated, which could impact future budgets.

**Permit fees** provide another source of revenue, with the borough retaining a percentage to cover administrative costs. Specifically, the borough retains 20% of rental inspection fees and 50% of building permit fees. Since the rental inspection program was initiated by the new administration, the income from rental inspections was not included in the 2024 budget, and its full impact will be assessed in the 2025 financial review.

**The Liquid Fuels Tax** is another key source of revenue for Chester Heights. While it is not a direct tax on residents, the borough receives funds from the state based on state road mileage within the borough and population. These funds are earmarked specifically for the maintenance and repair of public roads and bridges within the borough, supporting vital services such as road paving, snow removal, and traffic signal maintenance.

Over the last few years, the borough has also secured several grants for specific projects, which have strict spending and reporting guidelines. These grants include \$50K from

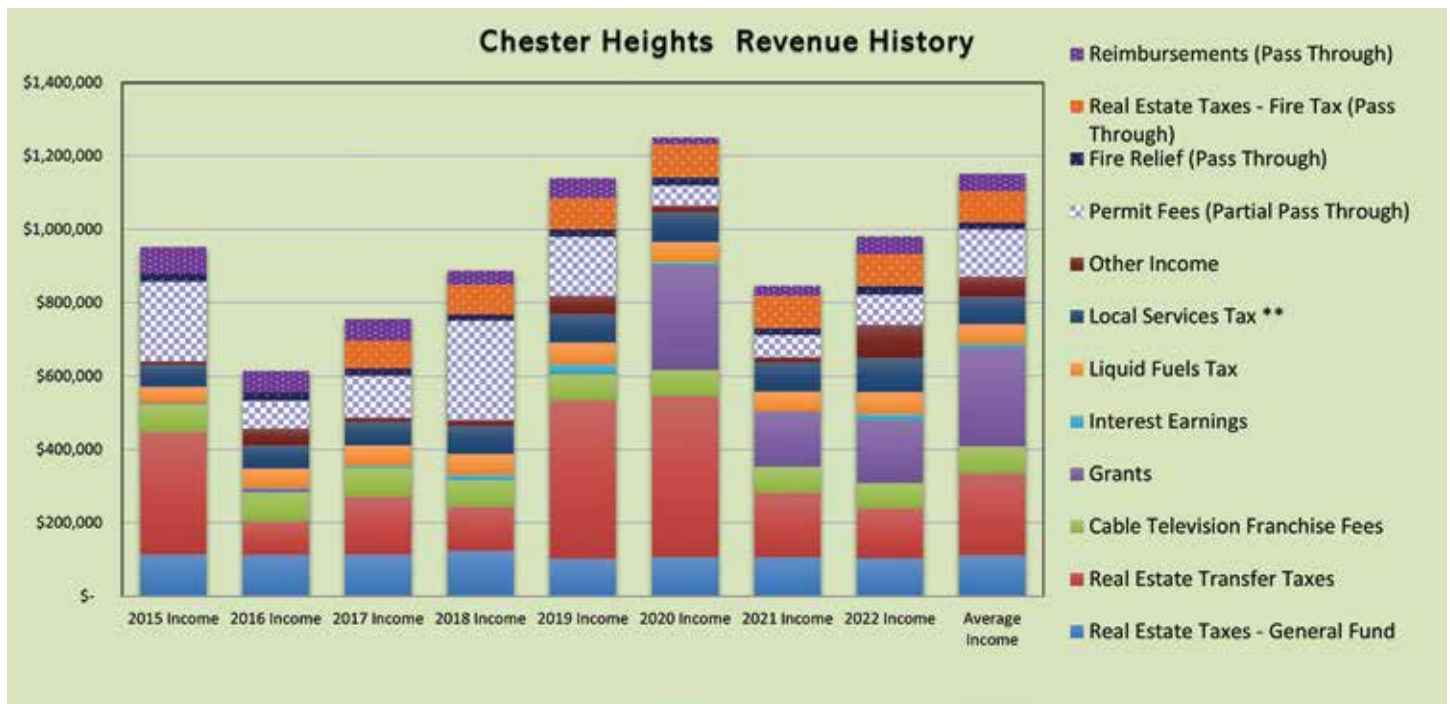
Delaware County for a park plan and \$500K for the purchase of the Powell Property, \$272K from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocated for sewer, water, and broadband projects, and an ARPA PA Small Sewer grant of \$407K to expand sewer along Smithbridge Road, expiring in 2026. These grants are crucial for funding capital projects without placing additional strain on the borough's regular budget.

**The Impact of Repealing the Business Privilege Tax**

In 2022, Chester Heights introduced a Business Privilege Tax (BPT), a flat \$200 tax on all businesses earning over \$12K annually. This tax was expected to generate approximately \$8K in revenue for 2024. However, upon review by the new administration, the tax was deemed illegal due to the inclusion of a gross receipts threshold, which violated state law. As a result, the new borough council has repealed the tax and is refunding the collected amounts. This action will create a negative variance of approximately \$21.8K in the 2024 budget, considering both the refunds and the loss of anticipated revenue.

**Shaping Our Borough Together**

As we look ahead, we invite residents to better understand the financial decisions that we face as a council and to be an active part of the process. We encourage you to reach out with any questions you may have about our revenue sources or other financial matters. Your input and curiosity are valuable as we work together to ensure the continued prosperity of Chester Heights Borough. Additionally, we are committed to keeping you informed through regular updates in our newsletters and on our website, where we will be publishing updated financial reports once our audits are finalized. These resources will provide detailed insights into the decisions that impact our community.



## Municipal Engineers



Michael Kissinger

**Michael Kissinger, Project Engineer for the Borough:** Mr. Kissinger is an Associate Vice President and the Land Development Division Manager for Pennoni's West Chester, PA office. He manages a group of engineers, designers, and staff on regional site development projects. As a Land Development Engineer, he applies more than 23 years of experience in the design, review, permitting, inspection, construction administration, and project management of wastewater infrastructure, land development, stormwater facilities, stream restoration, road rehabilitation, traffic signals, and a variety of other projects. His Land Development experience includes developments in four states and over a dozen counties in Pennsylvania. He has represented his clients at various classes of Townships, Boroughs, and Cities within the Commonwealth. His vast history of projects includes all aspects of Land Development, from Zoning, Planning, Sewer Modules, NPDES, and Settlement Agreements.

**Megan Todaro:** Ms. Todaro, a Project Engineer with extensive civil engineering expertise, specializes in municipal engineering. Her experience spans subdivision and land development plan reviews, stormwater management, construction management and oversight, data collection and analysis, permitting, grant applications, MS4 coordination, cost estimating, and construction contract administration. She is also well-versed in municipal planning and zoning and regularly attends public meetings. Additionally, Megan coordinates the company's Intelligent Pavement Management (IPM) program.



Megan Todaro

### About the Pennoni Firm

Pennoni is the local, multi-discipline, full-service engineering firm that is ideally suited to serve as the appointed Chester Heights Borough Engineer Services. With 50 years of municipal experience in the region, Pennoni provides all the engineering and related services a municipality may need within one firm. Our local expertise includes providing similar services for West Chester, Kennett Square, Yeadon, and Oxford boroughs and Chadds Ford, Concord, Aston, Lower Chichester, Haverford, Springfield, Marple, East Goshen, New Garden, East Brandywine, Franklin, East Caln, Valley, and Lower Merion townships, among others.

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# Pointers for Gardeners

## Planting a Tree

Have you been thinking of adding a tree or two to your property? Autumn is the best time of year to plant trees. The soil stays warmer than the air, which allows the roots to grow and establish themselves in the soil. In our area, we tend to get more rain due to the residual effects of tropical storms. There are fewer stressors on newly transplanted trees from now until December. It is helpful to water the tree once planted and mulch with 2-3 inches but not touching the tree's bark. Most of us in Chester Heights deal with deer. Bucks like to rub the velvet off their antlers on tree trunks only a couple of inches in diameter. Placing fencing or the plastic ribbed tubing around the tree trunk should protect the young plant. One more pointer- younger trees tend to adjust more quickly to being transplanted than older/larger-sized trees.

It is recommended that you refrain from feeding your hardy shrubs and trees. Feeding shrubs and trees, at this point in time, would cause them to push new, tender growth. This growth does not have enough time to harden off before



winter and will be open to winter kill or die back because the plant's cells are too tender.

## Bulb Planting


Bulb planting can commence anytime between now and December. Bulbs send out feeder roots as the soil temperature cools. Using an organic bulb fertilizer as you plant will give the bulbs the plants need for the next year or two. Organic fertilizers tend to reduce the chance of burning the roots if the fertilizer gets too close to the young roots. One exception to planting now is the tulip which can be planted even in December if our soil is not frozen. We mention this because sometimes garden centers put remaining bulbs on sale in late November and December. Tulips would be a bargain.

## Daffodils

Daffodils are poisonous, so they become useful bulbs to use where deer are a problem. Tulips are a favorite food of many animals—squirrels, rabbits, and deer, to name a few. Choose your location wisely if you want to see tulips reach their blooming size, knowing that you are setting up a salad bar for these critters.

**CHESTER HEIGHTS BOROUGH**


## HOMETOWN HEROES



The Borough of Chester Heights hopes to honor Armed Forces Veterans & First Responders through an initiative to recognize Hometown Heroes. A team will explore options like a banner program or a memorial in green spaces to enhance visibility and community pride.

If you wish to honor a Chester Heights Veteran/First Responder for this future project, please submit their name here: <https://bit.ly/CHHEROES>.

*Remember & Honor*





## UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2025

SAT. NOV. 9	Diwali Celebration
SAT. DEC. 7	Visit with Santa
JAN & FEB	Learn to Play Cards
JAN. 23	PA State Police - Scam Safety
APR. 6	Easter Egg Hunt
APRIL/MAY	Garden Workshop tbd
MAY 26	Memorial Day Observance
TBD	Community Day & Chester Heights 80th Birthday



Easter Bunny & Helpers



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Septa Senior Passes



Recycle Day 2023

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Ten Easter Egg Helpers



Garden Workshop



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Vision Zero Focus Group Volunteers

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# 5 Key Benefits of Adopting a Historic Preservation Ordinance

In the CHB 2024 Spring Newsletter, we highlighted some key initiatives of the Borough Council for 2024, one of which is the adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance. In this fall issue, we would like to feature the benefits such an ordinance would bring to our community.

Chester Heights stands at a pivotal moment in its history. According to U.S. Census Data, our population has grown by 12% since 2010, far outpacing the 1.2% growth projected in our 2013 Comprehensive Plan. As we continue to expand, our cherished historic structures and landscapes are increasingly at risk. Recognizing this urgent need, we—led by our Public Safety Committee Chair, Tim Hudak—have taken decisive action by appointing a dedicated group of local residents and historic preservation experts. This group has carefully evaluated the key provisions necessary for a tailored historic preservation ordinance that will safeguard our invaluable resources while respecting property rights.

After thorough consideration, the ordinance is now with our solicitor, who will draft the new tailored version. We are optimistic that a draft will be available later this fall for both the Planning Commission and the public to review, with the goal of adopting the ordinance soon thereafter.

The decision to pursue a historic preservation ordinance is rooted in several key benefits that such an ordinance would bring to our community. These benefits include enhancing property values, managing development, securing access to state and federal resources, and ensuring that our town's growth is balanced with the preservation of its historical assets. The following are five compelling reasons why adopting this ordinance would be highly beneficial for Chester Heights:



*Chamberlain-Pennel House - "Hill of Skye"  
Circa: 1722 with 18th and 19th century updates  
Chester Heights, PA*

## 1. Cementing Community Identity and Sense of Place

A historic preservation ordinance is crucial for preserving Chester Heights' unique identity within Delaware County. Our open spaces and historic resources are sacred and our own—neither are for sale. These historic properties, open spaces, and landscapes are not just physical structures; they are integral to the borough's character, contributing to its small-town charm and community spirit. By protecting these resources, the ordinance ensures that future generations can experience and appreciate the area's rich history, thereby cementing the community's sense of place and continuity.

## 2. Economic Benefits Through Enhanced Property Values

Historic properties retain property values longer and see increases in value faster than similar-sized properties that are not historic. This economic stability not only protects individual investments but also contributes to the overall financial health of the community. The ordinance would create a protective framework that fosters property appreciation, making historic preservation a smart financial strategy for Chester Heights.

## 3. Managed Development and Preservation of Open Spaces

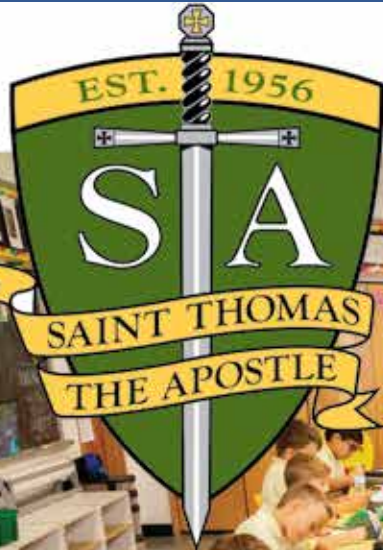
Historic preservation is a useful tool for preserving the remaining open space in Chester Heights. The ordinance would guide residential development patterns, helping to limit incongruent developments and keep excess traffic in check. Protecting historic sites through this ordinance also helps preserve our remaining open spaces, ensuring that development does not encroach on these valuable areas.

## 4. Access to State and Federal Resources

Enacting a historic preservation ordinance would qualify Chester Heights for participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program, providing access to technical assistance, grant programs, and other preservation resources available only to certified municipalities. This access could enhance local preservation efforts and provide funding opportunities to support the borough's historic preservation initiatives, benefiting both the community and property owners.

## 5. Balancing Growth with Preservation

Striking a balance between growth and preservation was a key consideration by the subcommittee. Historic preservation will encourage sustainable best practices for our land use by focusing on the preservation and refurbishment of existing historic resources. This approach is essential for maintaining our community identity and ensuring that new developments complement, rather than detract from, Chester Heights' historic fabric.



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# Chester Heights Volunteer Fire Company No. 1



Chester Heights Fire Company's volunteer firefighters, live, work, raise families, and enjoy the company of good friends in the same community that you do. We are your neighbors, and more importantly, we are volunteers. However, when an emergency strikes, this group of men and women drop everything to save their neighbors' lives and property.

We have been part of the community since 1947, also providing fire prevention, demonstrations and participating in community events. The Department consists of approximately 30 members, and we are always looking for more men and women no matter what your experience level. Stop by our station any Thursday evening between 6:00-10:00 pm to meet the men and women who unselfishly volunteer their time to help others.

October is Fire Prevention Month and this year's theme is Smoke Alarms: Make them work for you. The goal for every home is to have smoke detectors installed in each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on each level of the home. You should test the smoke alarms each month, by pushing the test button. Lastly you should replace the batteries every six months, and replace all smoke detectors every 10 years.

As we head into the Fall Season, it is vital for you to service all of your heating equipment. Contact your HVAC technician to have your heater serviced prior to the season to ensure good working order and proper ventilation. Those who use a fireplace should have the chimney cleaned and inspected prior to lighting that first fire. Another safety item that should be in every home is a Carbon Monoxide detector. These devices will detect the presence of very dangerous, colorless, and odorless gas.

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# Fire Inspection Update

244

Apartment Units

97

Single Family/Condo Units

74

Commercial Units

91%

Completed

14

Cited for Failure To Comply

In the Spring Newsletter, we introduced our borough's rental inspection program, aimed at enhancing fire safety across rental and commercial properties. As we approach the fall, we are excited to share the impact this program has had so far, including key fire risk findings commonly identified throughout the inspections. Our goal is to raise awareness among homeowners about these risks, encouraging everyone to take proactive steps in their own homes.

Based on the inspection findings, the borough is considering the introduction of a voluntary inspection program for homeowners. This program would allow residents to pay the standard inspection fee to receive a comprehensive fire safety report, similar to those conducted for rental properties. While these recommendations would be non-binding, they would offer valuable insights to help homeowners address potential fire hazards.

**COMMON ISSUES FOUND IN RENTAL PROPERTIES**



Electric Panels
Smoke Detectors
Chimneys
Dryer Vents

## STATISTICS & KEY FINDINGS BY NEIGHBORHOOD AND CATEGORY

### Valleybrook:

- 31 rental properties identified; 27 inspected, 4 cited for non-compliance
- Common issues include non-certified electrical panels and outdated smoke detectors.

### Darlington:

- 50 rental properties confirmed and due for inspection, 36 inspected, 10 cited for non-compliance
- Common issues include outdated smoke detectors, chimney lining issues, and unclean dryer vents

### Hollows of Fox Valley (Lydia Hollow):

- 16 rental units were identified; 6 were inspected.
- Common issue: smoke detectors over 10 years old, often original from 2006.

### Madison Apartments:

- All 244 units were inspected.
- All smoke detectors were replaced, and additional detectors were added to bedrooms; all emergency lights were replaced prior to inspection.

### Commercial Units:

- 74 units were identified; 64 inspected.
- Common issue: Emergency exit signs and lights failed to activate during a power and loss.

## ***Parastudy, where spirit and education meet***

If you have driven down Valleybrook Road, I am sure you have seen the Yellow Victorian Mansion along your route. It is at the forefront of a beautiful 4 acres of land that it sits on. Built in 1870 by Dr. Cornelius Crawford (a Physician's Assistant to President Lincoln) to house his Private Medical practice, it has been the home of Parastudy since 1959.

Have you ever wondered what it is that happens in the mansion? We offer classes, workshops, and lectures on everything from Astrology to Reincarnation, and so much in between.

We welcome all walks of life, religious backgrounds, ethnicities, and individuals who are open to learning more about spirituality, divination, and the intangible and metaphysical aspects of a higher purpose and power.

Our Enlightenment Shop is open during all events, which includes products like incense, crystals, consignment from members, Oracle and Tarot decks.

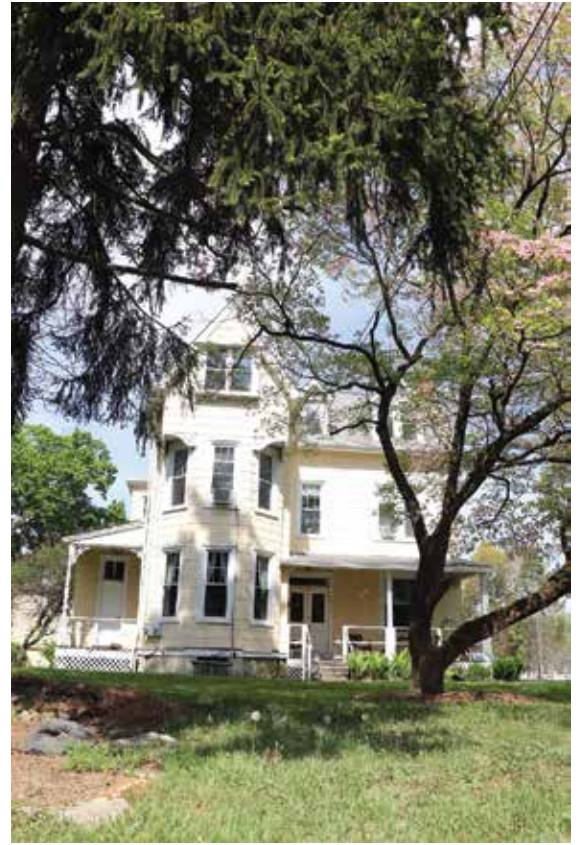
**Energy Fair, Psychic Nights, and Psychic Fairs** have been a long-running success for us and we are open to all to attend!

Starting with a young Board of Directors this past April, we are working hard to restore the Mansion to its original glory, both inside and out. Adding new events, classes, workshops and lectures monthly, we hope this brings in new faces and leads to membership from those new faces. All our information can be found on our website, [parastudy.org](http://parastudy.org), or you can find us on Facebook and Instagram, Parastudy, Inc Chester Heights, PA.

### **Upcoming vendor and community events:**

October 12th - Harvest Festival

November 9th - Holiday Market!



*We hope to see you at the mansion!*

Submitted by Kit Spayd, Event Coordinator, Membership Liaison



**Merrill J. Mirman, DO**  
*Internal Medicine*

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While the Borough DOES NOT ENDORSE any business, service, or product, we would like to thank the businesses that appear in this newsletter and recognize each of them as contributors to our community. Thanks to their advertising support, this newsletter has been produced at no charge to our residents.



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The advertisement features a collection of Wawa smoothies in various colors (brown, yellow, red) and sizes, some topped with whipped cream and fruit. The background is a light blue gradient. The Wawa logo is prominently displayed in the lower left corner.

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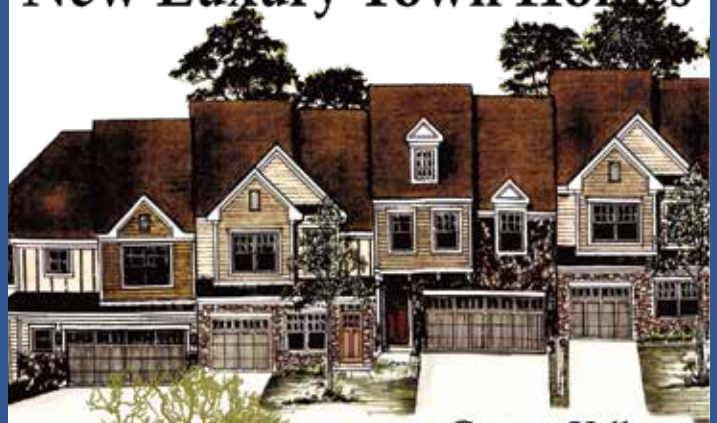
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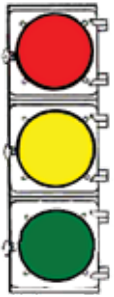
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