

Charlestown Township Newsletter

Autumn 2024 Edition

www.charlestown.pa.us



11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1, Malvern, PA 19355 (610) 240-0326
Township Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

Charlestown Day

The Parks & Recreation Board organized the tenth annual Charlestown Day event held on September 28th. Members Makinlee Fox and Stephanie Robinson organized the event and developed vendor and sponsor flyers, yard signs, and social media material to promote it.

Proceeds went to Friends of Charlestown, which provides funding for local non-profit groups. The day's activities were held from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm under cloudy skies. Below are some photos of the day's events taken by the Township webmaster, Allen Underkofler and published with the subjects' permission.



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Frank A. Piliero, Chairman
Charles A. Philips, Vice Chair
Kevin R. Kuhn, Member
Louis P. Rubinfeld, Member
Hugh D. Willig, Member

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Christopher W. Heleniak

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Supervisors

1st Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Environmental Advisory Committee

2nd Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

2nd Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission

3rd Wednesday @ 1 pm
Jan-Mar-May-Jul-Sep-Nov

Parks & Recreation Board

3rd Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Hearing Board

Scheduled as-needed

Meetings are held at the
Township office, 11 General
Warren Blvd.





PICKERING DAM TRAIL

FALL 2024

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9TH AT 10:00 AM

TRAIL CLEANUP

CLEANUP SUPPLIES PROVIDED — PLEASE BRING DRINKING WATER

After several storms the trail needs some love. Come join us in cleaning up debris, moving fallen trees, reinstalling foot bridges and trash removal.

This will be a fun day, a great way to give back, and a chance to meet your neighbors!

If interested in helping please email makinlee@gofoxonline.com to confirm you are planning on attending.

Park or Trail rules and regulations apply to all events.
Follow the Charlestown Parks and Recreation Facebook page for event details, updates and cancellations.

Aurora Borealis over Brightside Farm
October 10, 2024

A rare treat appeared the evening of October 10th at Brightside Farm. Numerous residents stopped by to enjoy the view of the northern skies.

- Photo by George Csete



Snow Reminders



It's been a while since we had a snowy winter. Will this be the year?

The first objective is to have the roadways open for emergency vehicles. This is basically one lane with anti-skid and road salt applied only to areas that require extra traction such as hills and major intersections. The other roads are then opened.

After the snow has ended, the cleanup begins, that is, trying to get the roadways opened "curb-to-curb" and clearing snow and ice from the intersections, fire hydrants, storm water drains and inlets. We ask for your continued patience and understanding during these snow events.

This fall, check your property near the road and particularly in the road right of way. Improve the sight lines for your neighbors and fellow commuters by trimming back any vegetation that grew too close to the road over the past season. Perhaps you could offer to help neighbors who aren't able to do this work themselves.

When a plow operator is pushing back the snow and slush from a roadway, the plow must be run at a speed that throws the snow and slush off the road and over what has previously been plowed. This precludes the plow operator from stopping at each driveway and mailbox. If a plow is lifted at a driveway or mailbox, all of the snow and ice in the plow would be dropped on the road causing additional problems.

Inspect your mailbox to avoid damage from snow plows this winter. Mailboxes and posts should be no nearer than 6 inches from the face of the curb. Straighten leaning mailbox posts, and replace older, worn, and weakened posts that can snap or be pushed over when plows press snow up against them. Often it's not the snow plow itself that causes the problem, but pressure from the displaced snow.

The Township Office follows the Great Valley School District's schedule for weather-related closings.

For Maintenance Issues on State Roads listed below, call the PennDOT maintenance number at 484-340-3200.

Bodine Road	Hollow Road	Pikeland Road	Yellow Springs Road (north of Hollow Rd)
Charlestown Road	Merlin Road	Seven Oaks Road	
Church Road	Morehall Rd (Rt. 29)	State Road (Rt. 29)	
Coldstream Road	Newcomen Road	Valley Hill Rd (East of Rt. 401)	Yellow Springs Rd (east of Morehall/Rt. 29)
Conestoga Rd (Rt. 401)	Phoenixville Pike	Whitehorse Road	
Foster Road	Pickering Dam Road		

Highlights from Board of Supervisors Public Meetings in 2024

January

- Addressed Reorganization Matters including Annual Appointments and Setting of Salaries
- Approved Maintenance Items at Swiss Pines including bamboo control and chain link fencing
- Accepted GreenWeaver Landscapes proposal for maintenance at Charlestown Mill for 2024

February

- Accepted Resignations of Supervisor Susan Bednar and Auditor Francis Cantwell
- Appointed Kyla McFadden to the Parks & Recreation Board for a term ending 12/31/27
- Heard presentation on Beyond Pesticides Program by EAC chair Carol Armstrong
- Approved PECO Right of Way Agreement for Township-Owned properties along State Road

March

- Appointed Louis P. Rubinfield to the Board of Supervisors for the remainder of Ms. Bednar's term ending 12/31/25
- Appointed Richard Stipa to the Valley Forge Sewer Authority 6-member board for a term ending 12/31/27
- Approved Mark Overton's Waiver Request for construction of a garage in the front yard

April

- Heard Video Presentation of Parks with a Sustainable Future
- Approved Floyd Hertzfeld Settlement Agreement
- Passed Resolution accepting the Valley Forge Sewer Authority Act 537 Special Study
- Awarded mowing and landscaping contract to Charlestown Landscaping
- Accepted Charlestown Landscaping proposal to improve frontage along Township-owned Phoenixville Pike property

May

- Held hearing and adopted ordinance to Amend Sewers and Sewage Disposal Ordinance
- Awarded tree maintenance contract to Davey Tree Company
- Accepted proposal of Jane Dorchester to complete historic resources inventory for 9 selected properties
- Discussed PennDOT's plan for the Pickering Dam Road bridge replacement
- Discussed Swiss Pines site visit with the Supervisors, Planning Commission and consultants
- Passed Resolution to amend the 2024 Budget

June

- Held hearing for Conditional Use Application of John Gary Kulp
- Accepted Thomas Comitta Associates Preliminary Master Plan Proposal for Swiss Pines
- Discussed proposed amendments to the Standby Generator Ordinance
- Approved Green-Marks Settlement Agreement

Highlights – Continued from p. 4

July

- Heard presentation of Girl Scout Silver Award Project by Morgan Duffy
- Received Zoning Hearing Board overview of Bodine Properties LLC application
- Approved Alleva Lot Consolidation Plan
- Approved Design Manual Change for Devault Village at Spring Oak
- Approved John Gary Kulp Conditional Use Decision
- Authorized foundation repairs at 61 Swiss Lane to go to bid
- Appointed Jill Green to the Environmental Advisory Board for a term ending 12/31/25

August

- Adopted Resolution to commemorate U.S. Semiquincential
- Heard presentation of Girl Scout Gold Award Project by Aarna Singh
- Heard presentation of Girl Scout Silver Award Project by Sarabella Firkin
- Received overview of zoning hearing board application by Christopher & Meg Zaro
- Heard presentation by Uwchlan Ambulance Corps regarding 2025 funding request
- Heard interim budget report for 2024
- Renewed annual insurance policies
- Approved final escrow release for “The Meadows”

September

- Held conditional use hearing for Kurt Jablonski
- Denied waiver request of Ronald and Carol Vicker for pool in front yard
- Approved Bodine Properties sewage facilities planning module
- Appointed John Kulp to the Parks & Recreation Board for a term ending 12/31/27
- Approved the minimum municipal obligation for the pension plan for 2025

October

- Approved Turnpike Maintenance Facilities Conservation Easement Agreement
- Approved Conditional Use application for Kurt Jablonski
- Heard the annual MS-4 update from the township engineer

Coming in November & December:

- Signal Service Contract Renewal
- Resolution Re-Adopting the Emergency Operations Plan
- Resolution for Tax Levy 2025 and Adoption of the 2025 Budget

Other Matters addressed at the meetings include:

- Approval of financial reports, budget amendments and all payment transactions
- Acceptance of reports from the various boards & commissions
- Citizens’ Forum – Matters brought forward by residents of the Township

Embracing the Locavore Lifestyle: Benefits of Eating Local

- by Hazel Weakley

This summer, my Girl Scout troop had the amazing chance to visit Zurich, Switzerland, to study sustainability at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. We dived into energy, waste management, and agriculture. Given Pennsylvania's rich farming history, I was especially intrigued by how local farming practices fit into sustainable living. With 52,000 farms and 7.3 million acres of farmland, agriculture is a huge part of Pennsylvania's heritage and economy, generating around \$83.8 billion in direct output and supporting over 280,000 jobs.

My Girl Scout Gold Award project also revolves around agriculture. I'm working with Trellis for Tomorrow in Phoenixville, PA, to add berry bushes to their garden, aiming to provide fresh berries to Phoenixville Area Community Services for those facing food insecurity. I'm also passionate about spreading the word on the benefits of being a "locavore" and how it can positively impact you, our environment, and our community.

What is a Locavore?

So, what exactly is a locavore? A locavore is someone who makes a point to eat food that's grown or produced within a specific area—usually within 100 to 250 miles from home. The idea is to support local agriculture, cut down on the environmental impact of long-distance food transport, and enjoy the freshest possible produce.



Benefits of a Locavore Lifestyle

1. **Fresher, Tastier Food:** Eating locally means you're getting food that's often picked at its peak ripeness. This makes it not only fresher but also much more flavorful. Fresh produce can significantly enhance your meals, providing a better and more enjoyable eating experience.
2. **Supports Local Economies:** Buying from local farmers and producers helps boost your community's economy. Local businesses are likely to spend their earnings back into the community, which helps create jobs and supports local infrastructure. This is crucial for keeping small towns and rural areas vibrant and thriving.
3. **Reduces Environmental Impact:** Transporting food from far away requires a lot of energy and creates significant greenhouse gases. By choosing local foods, you reduce the carbon footprint linked to food transport. Plus, many local food systems use fewer chemicals and promote more sustainable farming practices.
4. **Strengthens Community Connections:** When you eat locally, you build a stronger connection with your food and the people who grow it. This means getting to know local farmers and artisans and understanding more about how your food is produced. It's a great way to appreciate the effort that goes into your meals and foster a sense of community.
5. **Enhances Seasonal Eating:** Locavores usually eat foods that are in season, which means their diet naturally shifts with what's available throughout the year. This approach not only diversifies your diet but also aligns with nature's cycles, promoting a more balanced and varied eating pattern.
6. **Promotes Food Security:** Supporting local food systems can make your community more food secure by reducing reliance on distant sources and global supply chains. A strong local food network is better equipped to handle disruptions, ensuring a steady supply of fresh food.

Getting Started as a Locavore:

If you're ready to embrace the locavore lifestyle and support local agriculture, here are some tips to help you get started, no matter where you are in the United States:

1. Explore Local Farmers' Markets:

- **Find a Market:** Farmers' markets are a great place to discover fresh, local produce and artisanal goods. Look for farmers' markets in your area and visit them regularly. Many cities and towns have markets that operate weekly or seasonally.
- **Use Online Resources:** Websites like LocalHarvest.org or the USDA Farmers Market Directory can help you locate markets in your area.

2. Join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program:

- **Find a CSA:** CSA programs allow you to receive a regular supply of seasonal produce directly from local farms. Check out local farms or CSA directories like Farmigo or CSAware to find programs near you.
- **Consider Options:** Many CSAs offer a variety of packages, including vegetables, fruits, meat, and dairy, so you can choose one that fits your needs.

3. Visit Local Farm Stores and Co-ops:

- **Explore Farm Stores:** Many regions have farm stores or cooperatives that sell fresh, locally-sourced products. Visit these stores to find high-quality meats, cheeses, and produce.
- **Find a Co-op:** Look for local food cooperatives in your area, which often provide a range of local and organic products. Membership may offer additional benefits and discounts.

4. Dine at Farm-to-Table Restaurants:

- **Discover Local Restaurants:** Support restaurants that focus on farm-to-table dining and emphasize locally sourced ingredients. Use online review sites or local food guides to find establishments near you that prioritize local and seasonal foods.
- **Check Menus:** Look for restaurants that highlight local farms and seasonal ingredients on their menus. This not only supports local agriculture but also ensures you enjoy fresh and flavorful meals.

5. Grow Your Own Produce:

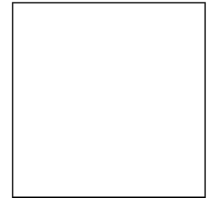
- **Start a Garden:** If you have space, consider growing your own vegetables, herbs, or fruits. Even a small container garden can provide fresh produce and reduce your reliance on store-bought items.
- **Join a Community Garden:** If space is limited, community gardens are a great way to grow your own food and connect with others interested in local agriculture.

6. Get Involved with Local Food Organizations:

- **Volunteer or Support:** Many communities have food organizations and nonprofits focused on local agriculture and food security. Volunteering or supporting these groups can enhance your connection to local food systems.
- **Participate in Events:** Attend local food events, workshops, or farm tours to learn more about local agriculture and meet local farmers and producers.

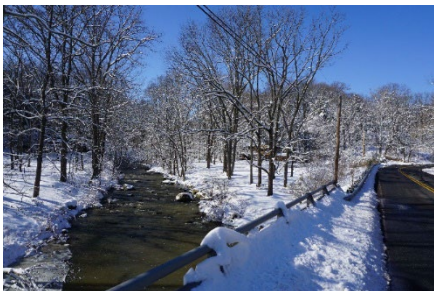
By incorporating these practices into your routine, you'll not only enjoy fresher and tastier food but also contribute to a healthier environment and a stronger community. Start exploring local options today and experience the many benefits of the locavore lifestyle!

Charlestown Township
11 General Warren Blvd. Suite 1
Malvern, PA 19355



An Excellent Resource: The PennDOT District 6 Website

Charlestown Township is part of PennDOT's District 6, which is responsible for the state maintained transportation network in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties. Approximately half of the roads in Charlestown are owned by PennDOT, including the major ones such as Route 401 (Conestoga Road) Phoenixville Pike, Route 29 (Morehall and State Roads), Charlestown Road, and Pikeland Road. The District 6 Website, located at: <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-6/Pages/default.aspx> and is a great resource for our residents. You can get updates on current road conditions, the paving plan, and projects in the design phase or under construction.



Above: a view of the Pickering Creek from PennDOT owned Merlin Road

There's an easy to use feature to submit a non-emergency roadway concern such as a pothole or vegetation affecting your sight line. You receive a tracking number and will get email updates on how your issue is being addressed. Under FAQs you can sign up for emails to receive travel updates and weekly road reports.

The Charlestown Calendar Is Back!

After a hiatus of almost a decade, an all-new, redesigned 2025 township calendar is ready and waiting for you.

This hanging wall calendar, featuring the beautiful photographs of Charlestown by George Csete, will be for sale (\$15) at the Historical Society Booth at the polls on Election Day, November 5.

After that, you can stop by the township offices to buy yours. Fair warning: our supply is limited. So, we'll see you when you vote.