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**NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP  
OPEN SPACE REVIEW BOARD  
845 S. Hanover Street, Pottstown, PA 19465  
(610) 323-1694**

January 26, 2010

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Chris Washburn, for the Open Space Review Board (OSRB)

Subject: 2009 Report on Township Open Space Program

Our open space program continues to make remarkable progress in preserving our township's natural resources and character. In 2009 we achieved the following:

- The Township acquired 60 acres to expand our Coventry Woods Preserve to 415 acres of forest dedicated to the passive recreation and enjoyment of the public. Most of the newly acquired land is between Camp Fernbrook and Wells Road, but it also includes a Jones Road parcel which protects the Chestnut Hill access to the Preserve.
- The Township acquired 11 acres at Hanover Street and Kemp Road, including access to the UGI entrance. This parcel joins Hanover Meadows near Town Square and Kemp Road Park into a combined 48 acre park for active and passive recreation. This park forms a key link for a planned connection between the Schuylkill River Trail and Coventry Woods Preserve and French Creek State Park, and it protects the Bickel Run watershed.
- The Township received a vital donation of a 3,340 foot, 1.5 acre trail connecting the Chestnut Hill Subdivision and Coventry Woods Preserve with South Coventry's Woody's Woods and Cherry Hill Lane. We also worked with South Coventry Township which completed an acquisition of land connecting our trail with Woody's Woods.
- The Township actively discussed alternatives for preservation of natural areas with owners of 339 additional acres. This includes 212 acres under written or verbal agreement at the end of the year.
- In the seven years of our open space initiative, the Township directly or with others has preserved or has under contract 1,145 acres of natural lands, including 508 acres of forest and trails, 32 acres of active recreation parkland, 538 acres of perpetual agricultural easements on farms, and 67 acres dedicated by developers as open space as required by our township ordinances.
- The total value of all land saved in 2009 is \$1,043,400. We were awarded \$1.1 million in grants from Chester County for completed or pending acquisitions. The total value of all land saved in the last seven years is \$13.8 million. Since 2002 the Township has received \$7.5 million in grants from the State and Chester County, and \$4.4 million through land owner donations or conservation organization assistance. As a result, the Township has successfully leveraged over 86% of all acquisitions with funding from other sources.

- To initiate these purchases, the Township borrowed \$3 million in 2003. Since the Township receives over \$500,000 each year in earned income tax for open space, we have been able to fund our acquisitions and still reduce the debt to \$1,904,000. We still have over \$1.0 million remaining in open space funds and over \$1.4 million in grant applications outstanding at the end of the year for completed or pending projects.
- The Open Space Review Board made a presentation and had a display at the Coventry Woods Festival on May 31. An estimated 750 citizens attended the event, some of whom gave us good land preservation suggestions. The Township also is an active participant in both the Hopewell Big Woods Partnership and the Northern Federation Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan workshops to preserve this region's unique resources and create regional trail and tourism links between our Township and nearby parks and attractions.
- The Open Space Review Board made three recommendations at the request of the Planning Commission to enhance open space within proposed developments.

Enclosed is a map that shows the land that has been preserved.

Although much has been done in seven years, it is critical that we do more to preserve open space throughout the township. All citizens are encouraged to help us achieve this objective and coordinate their efforts with the Open Space Review Board. Through ordinance revisions, open space planning and initiatives, and partnerships, we hope to preserve as much of the natural landscape and character of our township as possible.

cc: Kevin Hennessey, Esq., Township Manager