

John
Fisher
7th Ward Commissioner

Community Newsletter

January 15, 2008

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New Radnor commissioner sworn in
John Fisher, center, is sworn in as 7th Ward commissioner for Radnor Township on Monday. His wife, Jill Huentelman, looked on as his sons, Thomas and Brian, held the Bible he swore upon.
The Suburban and Wayne Times

Hello Friend:

I hope your Holiday was enjoyable and the New Year brings promise and joy to you and your family. I am John Fisher and as your newly elected Commissioner for the 7th Ward of Radnor Township, I look forward to serving you in the next four years. I was sworn in on November 26th to complete the unexpired term of Dave Cannan and began my four year term on January 2, 2008. I thank all of my supporters who have faith in me to be your representative and hope to earn the trust of all residents in the coming year.

7th Ward Priorities

During the last year I spent much time getting to know many of the residents of the 7th ward. I used this time as an opportunity to better understand the issues in our Ward and gain insight from many residents from their great ideas of how to enhance

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"GHC wants to seize the opportunity to preserve and enhance Garrett Hill"

Garrett Hill Overlay District Planning

In August, 2007 the township was awarded a \$48,000 grant and contributed an additional \$12,000 to develop an overlay district plan for Garrett Hill. On October 17th, 2007, residents formed the Garrett Hill Coalition (GHC). Their "Save Garrett Hill" signs have been displayed throughout our community to raise awareness because the GHC wants to seize the opportunity to preserve and enhance Garrett Hill. During public meetings, the GHC appointed nine Steering Committee members (GHSC) to guide the Garrett Hill overlay district planning. The Board of Commissioners officially appointed the GHSC during our December 17th meeting and have since awarded a contract to URS develop the plan with guidance from the GHSC.

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Pedestrian Safety



“Reduced speed limits in our neighborhoods will make it safer for those walking and our children at play.”

Pedestrian safety is a big issue for our Ward. I will work to help transform our neighborhoods into a safer walking town. For example, I have helped residents in getting a much needed **speed reduction** from PENNDOT on Lancaster Avenue. The speed limit was reduced from 35 to 25 MPH on Lancaster Avenue from Spring Mill (320) to Allendale Road through the 7th ward in the 1st week of January 2008. This change should make it much safer for the estimated 800+ pedestrians walking to Bryn Mawr each week and our cars entering Lancaster Avenue from Garrett, Lowrys, Old Oaks, Hawthorne, Black Friar and Barley Cone roads. The new speed limit will be posted in the coming weeks and police will issue warnings in the first month of enforcement. This effort took about 8 years and success came after I worked with a resident to measure the roadway and state our case to the township and PENNDOT. Our request led to a traffic study which showed high crash rates and a need for the speed reduction.



“Speed Indicating signs remind drivers to slow down, collect safety data 24/7 and make it safer for pedestrians and children at play.”

For our neighborhoods, I have requested Speed Indicating Signs (SIS) as another way to achieve traffic calming in addition to use of speed tables. The SIS cost about the same but does not generate traffic noise for residents. These signs detect an oncoming vehicles speed and display it real-time.

I plan to continue working at reduced speed limits in our neighborhoods. However, this will require a legislative change to allow our police to legally post and enforce speed limits below 25MPH. Currently the state will not permit speed limits below 25MPH except in active school zones. Residents in most of our neighborhoods are crying out for reduced speed limits to make it safer for those walking and our children at play. I hope we can see drivers slow down and drive at people speeds when traveling our local streets.

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and improve our neighborhoods. I also learned of several issues that need attention and will require community effort to fix. These are: pedestrian safety, community policing, student housing and our new Garrett Hill overlay planning. I have created an on-line community forum to keep you informed at RadnorWard7.com - please visit often.

Community Policing

In the fall of 2007, I worked with the community to hold a meeting on **crime and crime prevention**. During that meeting, officers Lt. Joe Lunger and Detective Joseph Paolantonio from Radnor Police provided details about many of the burglaries that occurred in our area in the spring and summer. We also provided crime prevention tips and guides to residents. Unfortunately, we are still experiencing burglaries as of late December and continuous theft from cars in our neighborhoods. Please take precautions to secure your home and vehicles and report any information or suspicious activity to our police department at 610-688-5600. I have requested additional patrols, community policing and ask for volunteers to join the Radnor Town Watch to help reduce this problem.



Quick Security Tips

- Keep all doors and windows closed and securely locked.
- Create the illusion that you are home by using timers on lights and small radios.
- Keep the perimeter of your home well lighted using motion sensing lights when possible.
- Never leave clues that you are away on a trip. Have mail stopped or collected while away.
- Ask a neighbor to park in your driveway and check on your home daily.
- Keep some shades and blinds up and curtains open to maintain a normal everyday appearance.
- Never change your outgoing answering machine message telling people that you are away.
- Keep shrubbery trimmed away from entrances and walkways.

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On Tuesday, January 15, 2008 the GH Steering Committee and URS Planners kicked-off the Garrett Hill Overlay District Planning Process. You may watch their public meetings on Comcast Ch10 and Verizon FiOS CH30.

This incredible volunteer effort by residents will ensure that the future of Garrett Hill is guided by the residents and not outside interests. All of the workshop and planning meetings will be open to the public. The monthly steering committee meetings will be held in the Radnorshire Room of the Township Building, located at 301 Iven Avenue, Wayne. These meetings will be televised on Comcast Channel 10 and Verizon FiOS 30. The GHC holds meetings weekly on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at the Radnor United Methodist Church (930 Conestoga Road). All of their meetings are open to the public and encourage public input. Please visit the GHC website at www.SaveGarrettHill.com for more information.

"This incredible volunteer effort by residents will ensure that the future of Garrett Hill is guided by the residents and not outside interests."

Pedestrian Safety from page 2

As your Commissioner, I regularly attend police staff traffic meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at 10AM to support resident requests. If you have any concerns and would like representation for your request I will gladly attend the meeting and advocate for your concern.

Student Housing and Taxes

Student housing continues to have a negative impact on our neighborhoods with increased noise and parking issues for our permanent residents. While we must respect the right of landlords and their tenants, we can take steps to encourage home ownership to help make our neighborhoods more family friendly. I am taking steps now to increase enforcement and compliance of our rental ordinance and will work to strengthen the current ordinance in the coming year.

Increasing taxes are a big concern for all residents. Looking at our community's finance, our current debt of \$156M (\$105M school district plus \$51M township) is good reason for concern.

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New Yard Waste Collection

Beginning Friday, January 18th, 2008 Township residents may drop off their yard waste at Skunk Hollow Park between 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on January 18, February 15, May 16, June 20 July 18, August 15 September 19 and October 17.

Township crews will also collect residential yard waste at curbside over the two-week period of March 24 - April 4, 2008.

All shrubbery trimmings, plant materials and other yard waste to be collected must either be tied in manageable bundles no longer than 3 feet and 4 inches in diameter or must be placed in a biodegradable bag or in a trash receptacle not weighing more than 25 pounds per bag/receptacle.

Good schools and good government translate into increasing property values but we must avoid wasteful spending and the risk of excessive debt, increasing cost of debt service and its negative impact on our property values. I spent a great deal of time getting familiar with our 2008 budget and drove detailed discussions about policy during our 2008 budget adoption process in December 2007.

Although, Commissioners have no direct control over school district's deficit spending, I personally don't like to see 31% of our municipal tax dollar in 2008 being used to service debt. Why so much debt in the township? Aside from borrowing \$16M in 2005 to construct a new township building which will cost \$35 million over 30 years, we currently use 30 year bonds to pay for township vehicles with a 3 year life - this is foolish and expensive. I will work hard to change this policy and to drive fiscal responsibility over the next four years to help reduce unnecessary tax increases.

I plan to be in the community often, hold town hall meetings and produce periodic newsletters to keep you informed. If you would like receive the newsletter via email, please register at the community website at www.RadnorWard7.com