

**New Garden Township**  
**OPEN SPACE REVIEW BOARD**

***2010 Annual Report***

The Open Space Review Board (OSRB) remained very active during 2010. Among the notable activities and accomplishments are the following areas.

**Open Space Preservation Activity**

- New Garden Township now has an estimated 1001.5 acres of protected lands.
- OSRB, with BOS approval, is actively pursuing 6 properties for easement or purchase totaling 114 acres.
- Board members have contacted and had confidential discussions with 20 different property owners whose properties are of potential interest for purchase, preservation or for trail easements.
- Board members also have identified a total of 32 properties for potential consideration for easements or purchase should the opportunity arise.

**Board Membership Activities and Accomplishments**

- In January, the Board of Supervisors confirmed the appointments of OSRB members Deb Du Bois (2012), Don Peters (2012), Rich Chadwick (2011) for the terms indicated.
- Members of the OSRB assisted the Brandywine Conservancy in obtaining landowner permission for the New Garden Township Botanical Survey team to access selected tracts for the documenting of plant species and notable geographical areas. A report will be available in early 2011.
- In April, OSRB hosted a graduate student at Temple University who is doing her Master's Thesis on open space in Southeastern Pennsylvania.
- OSRB submitted a grant proposal for development of the Old Mill Trail to the Kodak Foundation, which was unfortunately not funded.
- *New Garden Township Greenways Plan and Phelps Property Plan* were approved and formally adopted as an addendum to the *New Garden Township Comprehensive Plan*.
- Several members of the OSRB marched in the Landenberg Day Parade celebrating the opening of bridge. The OSRB also had an information table at that event.

- During the year the members of the Open Space Review Board devoted 563.5 volunteer hours to Board activities.
- OSRB members have been in discussion with members of the Brittany Hills community concerning the potential acquisition of several properties adjacent to that development.
- Many of the OSRB members were also active with the Friends of New Garden Trails, established by the OSRB. That organization's accomplishments are listed below.

## **Friends of New Garden Trails**

### **Laurel Woods Trail**

- In April Friends of the New Garden Trails organized and conducted a clean-up of the Phelps property on both sides of Penn Green Road. The property on the west side of Penn Green had been used for a dump site for years. The clean up, conducted over three weekends, produced more than 150 bags of trash, about two dozen tires, assorted car parts and a truck full of metal and plastic.
- Spring clean-up of the Laurel Woods Trail focused on clearing invasive plants in and along the Meadow. This was followed by fencing and other efforts to protect the laurel plants throughout the trail area.
- The Friends of the NG Trails conducted three educational programs during the Spring. The topics included: Local Railroad History; Birds, Bees, Flowers and Trees; and Mountain Laurels. Each was conducted by a volunteer local expert and drew dozens of local and regional participants.
- In addition to routine maintenance throughout the summer and fall, a roadside sign was added at Laurel Heights Road to identify the trail head, benches were installed along the trail, and additional split rail fencing was erected.
- In November an observation platform was built at the railroad cut to enable hikers to view the historic Pomeroy and Newark Railroad bed. On the platform an educational marker has been installed with information about the railroad known locally as the "Pommie Doodle."
- Since its opening in September 2009, the trail has been used by a steady stream of local residents.

### **Old Mill Trail**

- In December, 2009 the plan of the *White Clay Creek Corridor Inter-Municipality Trail Link Study* was published. The plan was accepted by the Chester County Planning

Commission as well as by the BOS of Franklin, New Garden and London Grove Townships. The Old Mill Trail, on New Garden Township owned property, is an important portion of the plan.

- The Old Mill Trail can be accessed from either Lavender Hill Lane where parking is provided, (Park in one of the designated spots on the right side of the road and walk down the hill toward the split rail fence.) or from Auburn Road. This trail is different from the Laurel Woods trail in that it follows closely alongside the White Clay Creek. There is beaver activity along the trail which has been cleared and is open, informally, for hiking now.
- An official opening of the Old Mill Trail will be held in the spring of 2011 after board walks and engineering can correct some of the particularly wet areas.
- Volunteers worked more than 650 hours on the two trails during 2010, usually in small groups of 6- 10 of the most dedicated participants.
- Recruitment of additional volunteers is an on-going effort. Anyone wishing to gain more information may visit the web site [www.friendsofnewgardentrails.org](http://www.friendsofnewgardentrails.org) or e mail [Friendsofthetrail@aol.com](mailto:Friendsofthetrail@aol.com).

The OSRB meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the third Tuesday of each month at the township building on Starr Road. Meetings are open to the public and all are welcome to attend.

#### **Open Space Review Board Members**

**Bernie McKay (2010), Chairman**

**Mary Sproat (2010), Secretary**

**Gary Bell (2011), Vice Chair**

**Debbie Du Bois (2012), Treasurer**

**Don Peters (2012), Grants Coordinator**

**Chris Robinson (2012), Member**

**Rich Chadwick (2011), Member**

**Jack Stefferud, Natural Lands Trust, Regional Director, Consultant**