

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

***2012 Annual Report***

The Open Space Review Board (OSRB) remained very active during 2012. Among the notable activities and accomplishments are the following.

**Open Space Preservation Activity**

- New Garden Township now has an estimated 1,115 acres of protected lands. Board since its inception has contacted and had confidential discussions with 48 different property owners whose properties are of potential interest for purchase, preservation or trail easements.
- In the last 3 years the OSRB members had discussions with 31 property owners (19 in 2012) concerning the purchase or conservation easement of their properties; totaling in excess of 1,450 acres. Conversations have proceeded, with BOS approval, to make offers to purchase of land or building rights in 5 cases: 1 property was purchased, 1 conservation easement was completed, and 3 offers were refused, though contact is continuing.
- OSRB members have also completed trail easement agreements with two property owners finalizing both agreements in December. Discussions of trail easements continue with 15 other property owners.
- The OSRB met several times with PREIT representatives early in the year to lay out alternatives for walkways and trails if and when the development goes forward.

**Other Board Membership Activities and Accomplishments**

- OSRB Members put in 1304.5 volunteer hours during 2012.
- In January, the Board of Supervisors reappointed Rich Chadwick and Gary Bell to 3 year terms ending in January 2015.
- Also in January Board Member Chris Robinson made a presentation to the Planning Commission about the trail plans for White Clay Pointe and elsewhere.

- Chairperson McKay reviewed the Chester County Planning Commission Report on Open Space and provided up-dates and corrections.
- In March Debbie DuBois announced that she would resign from the Board in June creating an opening on the Board and for the position of Treasurer.
- Chris Robinson put together maps showing the Exceptional Natural Areas on the Airport Property with proposed conservation easements.
- In May several OSRB members attended the Annual White Clay Creek Fest. Both the OSRB and the Friends of New Garden Trails had a booth at the event.
- In July, Ben Marsden was appointed to the Board as Debbie DuBois' replacement. Ben agreed to take on responsibilities as Treasurer.
- In October, OSRB member Bernie McKay indicated he would be resigning from the Board as of 12/31/2012 leaving open the year remaining on his term and the position of Chairmanship of the Board.
- In December the OSRB submitted a proposal for funding to the PECO Green Region Open Space Grant program for \$10,000 to improve access to the proposed trail head on the former Hendrickson property. OSRB continues to search for other grant opportunities.
- The OSRB had an information table at New Garden Day.
- OSRB members have been in discussion with members of the Brittany Hills community concerning the potential acquisition by the HOA of several properties adjacent to that development.
- Many of the OSRB members were also active with the [Friends of New Garden Trails](#), which was established by the OSRB.

## New Garden Township Trail System



- During 2012, the Friends of New Garden Trail maintained the Laurel Woods Trail and completed the Mill Race Trail as part of the New Garden Township Trail System. The Mill Race Trail may 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 Kiosk and split rail fence.) or from Auburn Road.
- On April 14, a “Tree Walk” was held with approximately 30 people in attendance. Marilyn Flannery led the tour, identifying and placing labels on different species of trees. The following week a “Bird Walk” was held with 15 participants.



- Trail directional signs were constructed for and placed in key locations along both trails.
- McDonalds Corporation donated a picnic table on the trail and a steel bench which was placed at the observation area near RR Bridge #42.
- Boy Scouts made the kiosk, bird boxes and benches that were placed throughout both trails.



- Signs directing motorists to the trail heads, made as an Eagle Scout project, have been placed along Penn Green Road.



- Trail Brochures have been completed and placed in the display boxes on the kiosks at the entrances to both trails.
- On December 1, a trail hike and “Rail Road Spike Hunt” was held. Approximately twenty participants heard historical lectures on the train wreck of 1904 and on the original mill for which the trail is named. Children participated in the Spike Hunt and were rewarded for their finds with prizes.
- Volunteers worked more than 743 hours on the two trails during 2012, usually in small groups of 6 - 10 of the most dedicated participants. A major portion of that time was committed to work with David Rickerman on the drainage issues.



- 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).

Photos in this report were provided by Chris Robinson & Lori Schmittle.

## Membership

The OSRB meetings are held at 7:00 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 (2013), Chairman**

**Mary Sproat (2014), Secretary**

**Gary Bell (2015), Vice Chair**

**Ben Marsden (2013), Treasurer**

**Don Peters (2013), Grants Coordinator**

**Chris Robinson (2013), Member**

**Rich Chadwick (2015), Member**

**Erin Lee, Natural Lands Trust, Consultant**