



# Plainsboro Reporter

A Quarterly Township Newsletter

Summer 2009

## Bulk Farm Purchase Increases Open Space

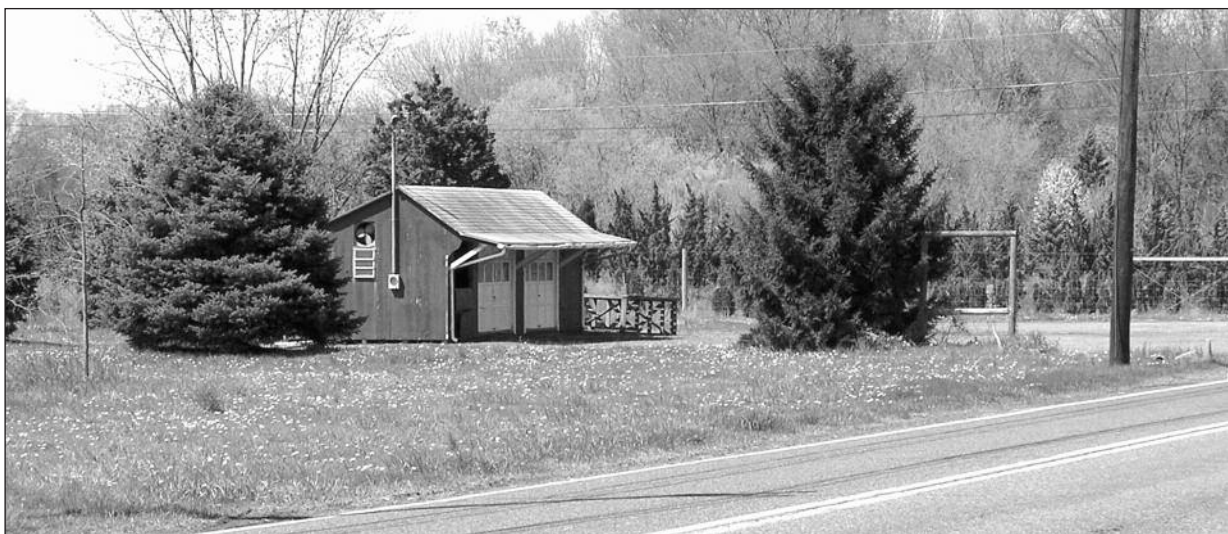
In December, Plainsboro completed the purchase of the Bulk Farm. This 80-acre property is located on Cranbury Neck Road in the Farmland Preservation Zone. It has served as a nursery for many years. As a result of this purchase, the property will be preserved as open space. The Bulk Farm represents the last large parcel to be preserved in fulfillment of the township's ambitious open space plan.

The purchase was made possible through a partnership with Middlesex County. The county provided the majority of the funding, \$2.7 million, with the remaining \$300,000 coming from the township's Open Space Preservation Fund. This fund is made possible through a one cent open space tax. After demolishing structures on the property, the township intends to lease the land for farming.

Plainsboro's open space objectives have been part of the township's Master Plan for many years. Faced with significant growth in the early 1980's, Mayor Cantu in concert with the Township Committee and Planning Board, led an initiative to revise the township's Master Plan to establish a more balanced plan for growth. The

open space plan was an essential element of that plan. Since that time, Plainsboro has accumulated 3,606 acres of open space, using a variety of methods. The township's zoning ordinance was employed to insure that development approvals were accompanied by significant open space set asides. This land was either held in private control - there are 946 acres of "private" open space - or the land was dedicated to the township. Plainsboro has also used funds available from state and county programs. In the southern area of the township, the farmland preservation zone, both state and county preservation funds were used to preserve 1,635 acres of farmland. In the northern area of the township, private land donations and county funds were used to assemble over 1,000 acres of preserved land that we now know as the Plainsboro Preserve.

"In Plainsboro, in excess of 50% of all of our land area is preserved as open space and will not be developed," stated Mayor Peter Cantu. "Remaining true to the plan we established years ago has allowed us to manage development and enhance the quality of life for our residents."



*The 80-acre Bulk Farm will now be permanently preserved.*

## Volunteer Spotlight on: Iris Chang



Iris Chang is a seemingly tireless volunteer. She is a member of the Library Board of Trustees, a translator of materials as well as a bilingual interpreter, a member of the original advisory committee which created the grant funded cross-cultural program called *America - A New Home*, the Recreation Department's unofficial ambassador

in networking with local and regional Chinese organizations, and an active volunteer in Plainsboro's arts and cultural events, including Chinese New Year celebrations. She is always ready with a smile and is an invaluable resource. Fortunately for Plainsboro, Iris Chang is also retired.

When asked why voluntarism is such an important part of her life, Iris responded by paraphrasing a Chinese proverb... "A person's source of happiness is in lending a helping hand." In a nutshell, Iris believes that she has found much happiness in doing things for others, and in return that she has become a happier person. Her interests are reflected in her volunteer pursuits - arts, culture, and diversity. One of her greatest pleasures is working on the types of projects that build bridges across cultures. "By sharing our cultural heritages we can learn about each other and gain an appreciation for the uniqueness each of us brings to our community," says Iris, continuing, "Whenever I travel, I am happy to return to my home in Plainsboro because of its richness in diversity and cultural activities."

Even before she retired in 2000 as Vice President of Worldwide Information Technology from American Re-Insurance Company (now Munich Re America), Iris was an active volunteer and contributor to her community. In 1994, she designated a 10 year service bonus provided by her employer to be used toward the purchase of English language books on Chinese culture for the Plainsboro Library. Two years later, she joined the Library Board of Trustees. Since 1996, she has been the volunteer coordinator for Chinese art, calligraphy, and performances at the annual Festival of the Arts, later expanding that role to include coordination of similar activities at Plainsboro Township's annual multicultural showcase event - Traditions. During the ensuing decade, her volunteer activities broadened, encompassing coordination of Chinese art exhibitions and Chinese New Year celebrations. Iris has been an ongoing volunteer for the *America - A New Home* project since its inception and works for the ongoing support of the library, particularly with the children's books collection and the *Build A Library* campaign. In 2005, Iris was awarded a 10 Year Community Service volunteer award by Mayor Peter Cantu.

Iris Chang's first thoughts on post-retirement volunteer pursuits focused on her calligraphy, and looking forward to having the time to be creative and enhance her skills. But she found that her initial volunteer activities snowballed into coordinating and networking, which led her to meeting new people with whom she shared interests and even more volunteer pursuits. And, she wouldn't have it any other way, saying "This is the unique Plainsboro environment!"

## Hospital and Nursing Facility Move Forward

The planning and zoning review phase for the skilled nursing facility and hospital is now complete and building permits have been issued for both facilities. In addition to these facilities, the cornerstone of the redevelopment will be a 32-acre park along the Millstone River. Although the hospital received Planning Board approval first, the skilled nursing facility will likely open for business sooner because the building's size is much smaller, resulting in a shorter construction period.

Sweetwater Construction Corporation has been chosen as the general contractor for the skilled nursing facility

and Turner Construction Company for the hospital. Both companies are diligently working on site clearing, grading and other land development prep work as well as pouring concrete. In the foreseeable near future, the framework of both structures will be erected.

Mayor Cantu is pleased with how the process has come together, "We are looking forward to these world class, state of the art, medical facilities here in Plainsboro Township. The hard work of all those involved in this project is starting to show."

## Keeping you posted...

### Meet Greg Mayers, Plainsboro's New Finance Director



**O**n January 28th, the Township Committee appointed Greg Mayers as Plainsboro's new Chief Financial Officer. Greg comes to Plainsboro from Asbury Park where he also served as Chief Financial Officer. Greg has also worked in municipal auditing with private firms.

Greg is a certified public accountant, a certified municipal finance officer and a certified tax collector. He

grew up in Linden, New Jersey and graduated from Kean College. "We are pleased to have Greg on our team. We conducted an extensive search with many qualified candidates. Greg's experience and enthusiasm set him apart from the others," said Mayor Peter Cantu.

Greg characterizes his experience in Plainsboro Township thus far by saying, "While accepting a position as a municipal CFO at the height of budget season can be quite a challenge, Plainsboro's responsible fiscal practices has helped to make the transition easier".

### Millstone River-Route 1 Bridge to be Reconstructed

**T**he bridge that carries Route 1 over the Millstone River will be completely reconstructed according to plans prepared for the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Work has begun to clear brush and remove curbing along the existing structure to allow for the relocation of power lines.

The NJDOT contractor on the job has assured the Township that traffic flow will not be restricted during the construction and that any lane closures will follow strict NJDOT policy to limit such disruption only during the hours of 12:00 midnight to 4:00 a.m.

Actual bridge construction work is scheduled to begin in earnest this July, with a completion date of December

2010. The new bridge will be forty feet wider in total width. It will maintain three lanes in each direction and have shoulders wide enough to be used for the proposed bus-rapid-transit project currently in the works at NJTransit. The type of construction that will be used does not require piers to be placed in the river so water flows and disruption to wildlife will be minimal.

The existing Millstone River Bridge was constructed in 1928 and was upgraded in 1960. Originally part of the Route 1 Penns Neck study, it was broken out as a separate stand alone project. The estimated project cost is \$18.9 million.

### 2009 Summer Road Projects

**T**his summer, road improvement projects are scheduled for Plainsboro Road and George Davison Road. "These projects will provide needed improvements to two well travelled roads," stated Committeeman and Department of Public Works Liaison Michael Weaver.

This summer's first scheduled project is the reconstruction of Plainsboro Road from the new Plainsboro/Dey/Edgmere intersection to Enterprise Drive. The project includes repairing the entire length of the road, also included is the installation of a sidewalk from the Municipal Building to the Plainsboro/Dey/Edgmere intersection and one along the north side of

Dey Road, from Plainsboro Road to the Village Center. Funding for this project, in the amount of \$345,357, was received from the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Municipal Aid Program.

The next project will be the reconstruction of George Davison Road. This project includes the reconstruction of the road's base and surface from Beechwood Lane to approximately the middle of Stult's Farm. Also included are the milling and resurfacing of the remainder of the road, and the installation of storm drains and curbing from the corner of Plainsboro Road to the entrances of the Ashford and Brittany developments.

## “Shred” Those Old Documents and Files

Identity theft is a well known problem that, according to the Federal Trade Commission, annually affects nine million Americans. In order to prevent identity theft, experts advise people to shred documents that contain any type of personal information. For the third consecutive year, Plainsboro Township is hosting a SHRED IT! event. This event enables residents to bring old files, receipts, bills, financial statements or any document containing confidential information for disposal in a mobile shredding machine.

Hosted in conjunction with the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Plainsboro’s third annual SHRED IT! event will take place Saturday, July 18, 2009, from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm (or until the shredding truck is filled) at the Plainsboro Municipal Complex, 641 Plainsboro Road. Residents are encouraged to bring all of their personal documents for shredding. The removal of paper clips, staples and paperboard binder covers are not required. Residents may watch their documents shredded through a closed circuit camera and,

if desired, obtain a receipt for its disposal. Committee Member Michael Weaver states, “Plainsboro’s Shred IT! event has been a big success and is an excellent resource for the disposal of confidential documents.”

Plainsboro hosted its first shredding event in 2007. 60 people participated and shredded 3,300 pounds of paper. It was decided that it would be in the best interest of the residents to host an annual shredding event. In 2008, the event drew 59 people 3,140 pounds of paper was shredded. These events not only allow the disposal of confidential documents, but also ensure that the shredded paper is recycled. All paper generated is then processed as recycled materials through the Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste.

Please remember that this event is solely for residents of Middlesex County. Private businesses are not allowed to participate in this event, but are encouraged to obtain this service elsewhere. Plainsboro Township urges all residents to come and SHRED IT! on July 18th.

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## US Census Coming to a Neighborhood Near You

The year 2010 marks the next census of all Americans. Your cooperation is needed to make sure that each and every Plainsboro resident is counted.

Why is such an accurate count so important to the Township? The federal government uses population data to allocate funds in a number of areas such as: Title 1 grants to school districts; head start programs; women, infant, and children food grants; public transportation; road rehabilitation and construction; programs for the elderly; emergency food and shelter; and empowerment zones.

In addition, population totals from this census will determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. States will also use the totals to redraw legislative districts. Corporations also use the population data for market research to determine locations for commercial enterprises such as food stores, pharmacies, and other essential services.

Your answers on the census are completely confidential as spelled out in the law. In fact census employees face stiff penalties and jail time for disclosing any information about an individual or household.

The method to capture the population data from 2010 census will differ from past censi in that just ten questions will be used. The long form that most of us are familiar with has been replaced by the Annual Community Survey which uses sampling to answer the more

detailed questions. For the first time census takers will use handheld computers with Global Positioning Systems to confirm addresses.

For more information, including part-time employment as a census taker, go to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).



*Ms. Debra Baer, President, West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Association presents a check for \$500 to Dr. Nuran Nabi of the Plainsboro Township Committee, to support the Plainsboro Scholarship Assistance Program. This program awards scholarships to low and moderate income families seeking to enroll in the Plainsboro Summer Camp.*

# Plainsboro's Community Policing Initiatives

The Plainsboro Township Police Department strives to provide the community with the most professional and responsive service possible. Community policing is based on this premise. For this reason the police department created the Community Outreach, Resource and Enforcement (C.O.R.E) Unit to provide programs which address concerns regarding personal safety, protection of property or other pertinent public safety issues.

The programs provided by the C.O.R.E. Unit include the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program, Defensive Driving, Youth Police Academy and Child Safety Seat Inspections.

The D.A.R.E. Program is aimed at 5th grade students and is designed to give kids the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. It is a police officer-led series of classroom lessons that teaches kids how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives. 2009 marks the 20th year that Plainsboro Township Police Department has coordinated this program in our Middle School.

The Defensive Driving Course is a standardized nation wide program designed around proven safe driving techniques, with components addressing behavior change aimed at reducing human error-produced collisions. The C.O.R.E. Unit presents the Defensive Driving Course to all sophomore students each year as part of the West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North curriculum. This allows our officers to have direct contact with students who will soon be new drivers and provide them with the necessary skills and attitudes to be safe and defensive drivers.

Each year The C.O.R.E. Unit holds two Youth Police Academy sessions that are open to 4th and 5th grade residents. Cadets practice various team building exercises that emphasize self-discipline, self-esteem, leadership and commitment to the community. They visit the New Jersey State Police Museum, and are given tours of the Police Department, Fire Department and Rescue Squad. Their classes include overviews of police history, traffic stops, fingerprinting, evidence collection, tactical gear and operations, physical fitness and nutrition and marching skills. Each academy session ends with a formal graduation attended by the cadets' parents where the cadets have the opportunity to show the skills they have learned.

Child Safety Seat Inspections are designed to educate parents and caregivers in the proper use of child restraint systems and safety belts to reduce misuse and child injuries in motor vehicle collisions. C.O.R.E. Unit officers who are trained as Child Safety Seat Technicians conduct individual inspections and Child Safety Seat Checkpoints each year throughout Plainsboro Township. This program also offers new child safety seats to residents who are financially unable to purchase them, at no cost. This program is funded by a Child Safety Seat grant which is awarded yearly to the Plainsboro Township Police Department by the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety.

"Through these, and many other programs, the specially trained officers of the C.O.R.E. unit are in the schools, businesses and the community educating thousands of youths and adults in various personal safety and protection programs each year," stated Deputy Mayor Neil Lewis. If you are interested in any of the C.O.R.E. Unit programs you can contact the police department at 609-799-2333.



*Pictured above is Officer Thomas Newbon with Jack Paley, a Millstone River Elementary School student and winner of the DARE program essay contest, along with Jack's 5th grade teacher, Mrs. Tami Hutchison.*

## Tree Care Advice and Responsibilities

Plainsboro residents frequently seek advice about basic tree care. Here are some frequently asked questions on the topic.

### ***Who owns the tree located in front of my house?***

The majority of street trees located in single-family neighborhoods are owned by the homeowners. If a tree is directly abutting the street, commonly it is owned by the Township. If a tree is located behind a sidewalk, usually it is owned by the homeowner. A definitive answer can be obtained by checking your property survey.

### ***If a resident owns a tree, what are their responsibilities?***

Any privately owned tree that abuts a sidewalk or street must adhere to certain standards. Overhanging limbs and branches that interfere with the pedestrian use of a sidewalk or vehicular use of a roadway must be removed to provide safe passage. "Best management practices" recommends that in order to provide safe pedestrian passage on a sidewalk the lowest extending branch should be no less than eight (8) feet from the ground. In order to assist Plainsboro's residents with their responsibilities, the Shade Tree Advisory Committee posted a **Tree Maintenance Guide** on the Township's website, [www.plainsboronj.com/pubworks-main](http://www.plainsboronj.com/pubworks-main).

### ***What is the best type of tree to plant?***

Different conditions warrant different trees. In order to assist municipalities and residents with tree planting questions the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation, published **Trees for New Jersey Streets**. Copies of this publication are available through the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation ([www.njstf.org](http://www.njstf.org)) for a nominal charge.

### ***What is the proper way to prune a tree?***

Primarily trees require pruning for safety, health and aesthetics. There are several methods of pruning the tree, but according to the USDA Forest Service the most common proper pruning technique is as follows:

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Park and Forestry recommends hiring a New Jersey Certified Tree Expert to conduct most pruning jobs and they post a list on their website, [www.communityforestry.nj.gov](http://www.communityforestry.nj.gov).

### ***What is the proper way to use mulch around a tree?***

Unfortunately, a quick drive through Plainsboro finds numerous residents improperly using mulch around trees. What most people do not realize is that this practice is actually killing their trees. The right way to mulch a tree is to start six (6) inches from the tree trunk at ground level and mulch outward to the edge of the dripline to a maximum depth of 2 to 4 inches. Mulch as much of the area under a tree as possible without touching the trunk; mulch should never touch a tree's trunk. The mulch pattern should be in a donut, but most importantly mulch should never be layered in a cone ending at the base of the tree.

Township Committeeman Michael Weaver, who serves as liaison to the Public Works Department, advises that "Staff is available to assist with tree care questions. Please, do not hesitate to contact the Department of Public Works and the Plainsboro Shade Tree Advisory Committee at 609-799-0099."

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## Enjoying a Summer of Safe Cookouts

With the warmer weather upon us, many Township residents will be looking to their backyard barbecue as the centerpiece of their social activities. There is something special about cooking food over an open fire. However, many serious fires and injuries occur each year as a result of barbecue fires.

If you have a gas grill, check all of the connections from the fuel tank to the burner. A simple solution of dish detergent and water sprayed over connections will quickly find any leaks. Clean all of your tubes for potential blockages and insects. Spider webs and nuts carried by animals may interfere with the gas flow, causing an uneven and potentially dangerous flame.

Charcoal grill owners must never use gasoline or other

unapproved methods to start the fire. Every year, many people are burned as a result of improper use of lighting fluid. Fire starter sticks are an environmentally safe alternative to liquid methods.

The New Jersey Uniform Fire Code prohibits apartment and condominium residents from storing and using a barbecue grill of any type within five feet of any part of the building. While the law does not regulate this in a single family dwelling, as a good rule of thumb, you should keep your grill on a sturdy surface at least five feet from any materials capable of catching fire.

"By following these few simple procedures, it will help you to have a safe and enjoyable barbecue season" states Committee member, Ed Yates.

# At your service . . .

## Township Clerk's Office 799-0909 ext. 547

### Passports

The passport office is available by appointment only. For further information, see the Township website or call 799-0909 ext. 200.

### Pet Licenses

New Jersey State law mandates that all dogs six months of age or older must be licensed. Renewal applications will be mailed by the Township in December to owners of currently licensed pets. If you receive a renewal, please follow the instructions and return it with the appropriate fees. Applications are available for all new pets in the

Township Clerk's Office at 641 Plainsboro Road. Proof of rabies vaccination must be submitted with the application. **According to state regulation, when licensing, the rabies vaccination immunity must extend through at least ten (10) months of the 12-month licensing period.** Therefore licenses cannot be issued if the rabies vaccination expires before November 1st of each year. If for any medical reason the animal cannot be vaccinated in the required time, a letter from the veterinarian with an explanation must be submitted with the renewal form.

Submit a copy of the spay/neuter certificate, if applicable. The license fees are \$13.20 for spayed/neutered animals and \$16.20 for non-neutered animals. Late fees of \$5.00 per month were assessed as of February 1st.

### Vital Records

Vital records such as birth, marriage/civil union and death certificates are issued through the Township Clerk's Office. For information regarding requirements call the office or visit the township website at [www.plainsboronj.com](http://www.plainsboronj.com).

## Public Works Department 799-0099

### Conservation Center Hours

Summer Hours  
(April 1st – December 13th)  
Monday and Thursday from  
5:30pm – 7:30pm  
Saturday 10:00am – 5:00pm

### Brush Collection Guidelines and Schedule

#### Brush Collection

- Must be curbside by 7:00am the first Monday of the month designated for your street ONLY. No brush should be placed in the street or on sidewalks and no closer than 10' from any catch basin.
- Brush left curbside during non-scheduled months is subject to fines and removal costs.

- Trimmings from trees, shrubs and vines accepted (max. 6 ft length and 5 inches diameter)
- NO roots, stumps, soil, grass or leaves
- Brush shall be neatly placed parallel to the road with limb ends facing the same direction.

#### April, June, August, October

Beechtree Lane, Brentwood Drive, George Davison Road, Mapleton Road, Perrine Road, Princeton Collection, Princeton Crossing, Princeton Manor, Serina Drive, Shallow Brook Estates, Woodland Drive

#### March, May, July, September

Brookside Court, Cooks Corner, Cranbury Neck Road, Dey Road, Eiker Road, Gentry, Grovers Mill Estates, Grovers Mill Road, Millstone Court, Nostrand Road, Petty Road, Plainsboro Road, Pollack Court, Ponds End, Scotts Corner Road, Stults Drive, Village Area, Walker Gordon Estates

#### Curbside Recycling

Schedule—June 8, 22; July 6, 20; August 3, 17, 31

#### Remaining 2009 Bulk Waste Days – August 8, November 7

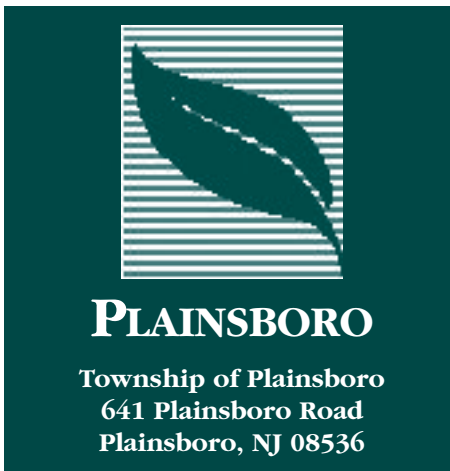
## Middlesex County Programs

The following services are provided by Middlesex county. For more information, contact *Middlesex County Solid Waste*, 732-745-4170.

- Residential Paint Drop-Off
- Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off
- Consumer Electronics Drop-Off

# Directory and Information

PLAINSBORO TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL OFFICES	TOWNSHIP MEETINGS	SCHEDULES TO NOTE
<p><i>Location:</i> 641 Plainsboro Road <i>Hours of Operation:</i> Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm <i>Phone:</i> General 609-799-0909 Court 609-799-0863 <i>Web Site:</i> www.plainsboronj.com</p> <p><b>Plainsboro Public Works Department</b> <i>Location:</i> 20 Woodland Drive <i>Phone:</i> 609-799-0099</p> <p><b>Plainsboro Police Department</b> <i>Location:</i> 641 Plainsboro Road <i>Phone:</i> Non-Emergency 609-799-2333 <b>Emergencies 9 1 1</b> <i>Police</i> <i>Web Site:</i> www.plainsboropolice.com</p> <p><b>Plainsboro Public Library</b> <i>Location:</i> 641 Plainsboro Road <i>Phone:</i> 609-275-2897</p> <p><b>24-Hour Recorded Message Lines</b> Park Rangers 897-7844 Passports 799-0909 x 200 Recreation Programs 799-0909 x 550</p>	<p>All meetings are held at 7:30pm in the Municipal Building, 641 Plainsboro Road, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><b>Development Review Comm.</b> 3rd Tuesday, 6pm <b>Environmental Advisory Comm.</b> 4th Monday <b>Fire Commissioners</b> 3rd Monday, 7pm, Firehouse <b>Historical Society</b> 3rd Tuesday, Wicoff House <b>Human Relations Council</b> 2nd Monday <b>Library Board of Trustees</b> 1st Tuesday, Library <b>Local Assistance Board</b> Qtrly. Call x218 for date <b>Shade Tree Advisory</b> 2nd Tuesday, Public Works <b>Township Committee</b> Regular Mtg. 2nd Wednesday Agenda Mtg. 4th Wednesday <b>Planning Board</b> 1st &amp; 3rd Monday <b>Zoning Board</b> 1st Wednesday</p>	<p><b>Library Hours</b> Monday &amp; Friday 9:00am – 5:30pm Tuesday, Wed., Thursday 9:00am – 8:30pm Saturday &amp; Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm</p> <p><b>Passport Office</b> Information: 799-0909 x 200 <i>Also check the website</i></p> <p><b>Recycling/Bulk Waste</b> <i>See Public Works Page</i></p> <p><b>More Numbers:</b>  School District Information 716-5000 Report Street Light Out to PSE&amp;G 1-800-436-7734 Report Pot Hole to Public Works 799-0099</p>



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**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**

- Peter A. Cantu, Mayor
- Neil J. Lewis, Deputy Mayor
- Nuran Nabi
- Michael T. Weaver
- Edmund C. Yates

**TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR**

Robert O. Sheehan

**NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR**

Teresa Carson

**ECRWSS  
POSTAL CUSTOMER  
PLAINSBORO, NJ 08536**