

Friends of Lower Providence  
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## Holiday Home Decorating Contest

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Home Holiday Decorating Contest was held in December. We would like to thank everyone who participated and helped us to raise \$150.00 which was donated to the Lower Providence Community Library at our February Board Meeting.



Carmen Branco & Kathie Eskie present check to Library Director, Joseph Sherwood

## Annual Golf Outing

Our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing is scheduled for June 23. If you need more information or would like to sponsor a hole or know of a business you could ask, please contact Kathie (610-539-5995).



## Annual Yard Sale

FLP is planning another yard sale in the fall of this year. Watch our website for more information. If you have items you would like to donate to the sale, please contact Peg Hine at 610-666-5164. We will begin collecting items August 1.

## President's Message:

The turn of the year is an occasion for looking backward and forward, all at the same time. The month January takes its name from Janus, the ancient Roman god of doorways, beginnings and also the rising and setting suns. Over the threshold yet still standing near the doorway of this new year, what is our view now?

The Friends of Lower Providence (FLP) ended the year 2006 having achieved goals to which it and its supporters dedicated themselves since the founding of FLP in January 2004. The goals were to ensure a Village Commercial (VC) ordinance for Lower Providence Township that defines, protects and promotes a well-planned village commercial concept, and also to preserve from destruction an historic landmark central to one of our villages, the Audubon Inn. The ordinance and the Inn became linked in late 2003 when the township first considered amendments to the VC ordinance permitting a large commercial project, a CVS Pharmacy, that in early plans included demolition of the Audubon Inn. Concerned with issues of increased traffic, pollution, loss of local business, historic structures and context, and pedestrian and even motorist safety, citizens rallied to found and support FLP. Many felt that village and neighborhood values were being sacrificed to pass-through motorists and corporate out-of-state businesses. Our citizens appealed to their local government, regional agencies, preservation groups and finally sought legal justice for missteps of the both the municipality and the development company for CVS. The legal cases were settled in August, 2006, with important conditions accepted by the developer to reduce impact at the site and neighboring homes, and to ultimately safeguard the Inn's historic building, which will become law offices of Furey and Baldassari, P.C.. At the same time, Lower Providence Township moved to repeal the ordinance that had been the source of the issues and forever altered the Village of Audubon. To learn about the newly formed Village Commercial Committee, please read "Village Commercial Update" elsewhere in this newsletter.

Through these experiences citizens of Lower Providence have a renewed awareness of the importance of good public planning and responsible local government. They know communities need the active participation of their residents as much as the leadership of a responsive government. Thomas Jefferson stated "The government closest to the people serves the people best." The people of Lower Providence must hold themselves close to the activities of their government to ensure their best possible future.

Looking forward into 2007 we can see a better future for our township possible with the continued involvement of its citizens.

FLP invites you to join us in our continuing goals of informed awareness on topics that affects our lives and dedication of our best efforts on behalf of our shared communities. We welcome your support and participation, once again, in this new year."

Leslie Bass, President, FLP

## Community Stormwater Program

Stormwater management is an ongoing concern for anyone who lives in Lower Providence. Immediate effects of stormwater runoff include: flooding of roadways, wet basements, ponding and erosion on properties. Local streams, creeks, rivers and their associated wildlife also suffer, as rainwater, carrying pollutants from the land, increases the flow in waterways, causing erosion of banks and damage to the aquatic ecology. In September of 2006, FLP partnered with the Friends of Worcester and The Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy to present an educational Community Stormwater Program for the public. Attendees at the Worcester Community Hall learned about the impact of storm runoff close to home and more broadly upon the natural environment that supports our quality of life. Rain barrels, rain gardens, and tree planting demonstrations showed simple ways we can make a difference on our own properties by slowing runoff and helping rain to soak back into the soil to replenish the underground water supply. Increased runoff is a fact of life in urban and suburban areas where development brings more impervious surfaces, such as asphalt, roof tops, and concrete. Residents can take steps on their own properties to address these impacts by encouraging smart planning practices by township leaders, including preservation of trees and substituting porous surfaces for impervious ones where possible.

To learn more contact the following:

Montgomery County Conservation District  
143 Level Road, Collegeville 610-489-4506  
[www.montgomeryconservation.org](http://www.montgomeryconservation.org)

The Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy  
1 Skippack Pike, Schwenksville  
610-287-9383 [www.pwc.org](http://www.pwc.org)

The Philadelphia Water Department's "A Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management"  
[www.delawareestuary.org/pdf/HomeownersGuideSWMgmt.pdf](http://www.delawareestuary.org/pdf/HomeownersGuideSWMgmt.pdf)

A list of other local resources can be found on homepage of the website of Friends of Worcester [www.friendsofworcester.org](http://www.friendsofworcester.org).  
Stormwater Projects Land Resource List

## Village Commercial Update

This past year has brought about many changes to our township in the form of plans being approved and changes to the general status of the Village Commercial Ordinance. These changes result from the successful efforts of FLP. Most visible to the public is the Audubon Inn which we saved from complete destruction now and possible threat in the future. The original structure is currently being remodeled for use as a professional office building. Furthermore, FLP's settlement of its lawsuit with the Township and Redwood Holdings led to the repeal of the Village Commercial Ordinance (VCO) which had allowed large commercial buildings, like CVS in VCO zoned areas. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) then voted to revert back to the original VCO that is more restrictive and does not disrupt the village concept. The BOS has voted to form a committee to investigate and recommend to the BOS a new Village Commercial Ordinance that will be acceptable to every one. This committee will be under the direction of Supervisor Chris DiPaolo. Issues to be discussed will be the size of commercial buildings, traffic, parking, preservation of historic structures, and any other issues that are brought to the committee's attention. Other members of the committee are Planning Commission members Joseph Stemple, Naomi Satterwhite and Mark Kuberski; Doug Hager, a former Supervisor; George Ozrowski, Esq; Mike Comroe, former Planning Commission Chairman and FLP member; Tom Borai, former Zoning Hearing Board member; Joe Ferraro; Cathy Maris and Rev, Sunny Hallahan, St Marks Church. The meetings began February 6, 2007, and will meet the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm at the township building. The meetings are open to the public, and all interested township residents are encouraged to attend.



Renovation work begins on the Audubon Inn

Support Friends of Lower Providence and be a part of our constant vigilance of our community. You deserve a good quality of life and deserve the preservation of your investment in both the community and in your property.

Yours Truly, Jean Branco, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to support the Friends of Lower Providence.

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend \$35 \_\_\_\_\_ Partner \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your tax deductible contribution to Friends of Lower Providence, PO Box 26637, Collegeville, PA 19426-0637. FLP is a community group in Lower Providence Township, organized as a PA non-profit corporation and approved as a federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.