



Welcome To

FLORENCE
TOWNSHIP

A COMMUNITY WITH CHARACTER AT THE BEND IN THE RIVER









Florence Township - New Home to Subaru of America



A3 • FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2013

LOCAL



DORANN WEBER

Two large plate suspension hangers and two wire sleeves (center) will be on display at the Roebling Museum in Florence.

Pedestrian bridge relics added to museum

The steel cable sleeves and a suspension hanger plate once graced the Lumberville-Raven Rock span.

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — What appeared to be a few pieces of rusty metal were more like gems to those who gathered Thursday at the museum dedicated to preserving the town's steel mill roots.

Representatives from the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission visited the Roebling Museum on Second Avenue to present steel cable sleeves and a suspension hanger plate that once graced the Lumberville-Raven Rock pedestrian bridge that

links Solebury in Bucks County, Pa., with Delaware Township in Hunterdon County.

It was a homecoming for the two items, considering the John A. Roebling's Son's Co. steel mill designed and constructed the bridge in 1947. The objects are now part of the museum's collection and will be replaced on the bridge with replicas as part of a rehabilitation project.

One of John A. Roebling's descendants also visited Thursday to acknowledge the conveyance.

"Roebling Museum really has no other source for these rare artifacts. It's one of the things that make it historically accurate to

know it really came from the bridge," said Karl Darby, a resident of Stockton, Hunterdon County, who helps organize the museum's annual car show.

The items are the first pedestrian bridge relics for the museum, which opened in 2009 and showcases the history of the spans and wire-rope products manufactured in the company's locations in the township and Trenton.

Joseph Donnelly, deputy executive director of communications for the New Hope, Pa.-based bridge commission, said the bridge's construction roots aren't lost on the New Jersey and Pennsylvania communities that use it.

"As with many of these historical bridges, there's a sense of pride and place. Most

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Video archive:
www.phillytribune.com

Cop saves heart attack victim in traffic stop

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — A township police officer who was about to write a traffic ticket ended up helping a heart attack victim instead.

In her rush to get her husband to the hospital one day in late March, Mary Pacia ran a stop sign and got pulled over. Patrolman Jason Shafer quickly realized the reason for her erratic driving and immediately offered to get oxygen and an ambulance for Thomas Pacia.

Pacia initially resisted, then luckily relented. After a 2½-hour procedure at St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, doctors informed him that the outcome could have been dire had he not arrived by ambulance.

"In conclusion, God was watching over me and sent

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Florence Township Receives Energy Efficiency Grants

Florence - As part of an Energy Efficiency Grant from the State of New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, Florence Township has recently upgraded Heating and Cooling Equipment in the newly renovated Community Center.



New HVAC equipment is lifted onto the roof of the Community Center.

LOCAL



Florence passes bond ordinances

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — The Township Council intends to spend \$2.1 million to improve a water tower, further Route 130 corridor development, and preserve open space.

The plans were memorialized with the passage of three bond ordinances Wednesday.

The first ordinance is \$450,000 in water and sewer utility bonds to repaint the Cedar Lane water tower. The tower is the older of two in the township and is difficult to maintain because moisture gathers at the bottom, Township Administrator Richard Brook said.

"Even though structurally it's sound, stripping and repainting will keep it in shape for the next five to 10 years. Really, this is preventative maintenance to see that the township has two operating water towers at all times," Brook said.

The second ordinance is for a \$937,000 bond to acquire three Route 130 lots adjacent to the Burlington Coat Factory warehouse in Burlington Township. The site would be occupied by a mid-rise business-class hotel and restaurant project, in accordance with the township's redevelopment plan.

"Whenever we are courting new potential businesses, one of the first questions we get is, 'Do you think we'll have any new restaurants and a hotel?'" Brook said.

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Road Repairs

WATER TOWER PAINTING

Route 130

Business

Development

Florence Township receives park development grants.



The Eagle Has Landed

In the summer of 2005, Burlington County hosted a public art display at the New Jersey Transit Light Rail Commuter Stations. The display was titled, "The Eagles Have Landed".

A total of fifteen eagle statues were displayed at various stations along the rail line. The Florence Park and Ride Station was the temporary home of "Captain of Industry" commissioned by Whitesell Construction Company and created by Roebling artist Gary Bykowsky. Captain of Industry's "feathers" are made of nuts, bolts, cables, washers, masonry nails and antique wrenches. On its chest, "Roebling" spelled out in wire cable and the word "Florence" spelled out in pipe. These materials are a tribute to the industries that supported our town and employed our residents for so many years.



Burlington Coat Factory New Corporate Headquarters in Florence Township





Happy 100th Birthday!

Virginia Shaver

Doris Krieger

Cecile Bernice Wainwright

Michael Malmos



Doris and Virginia at their birthday celebration.

A Centenarian is a person who reaches the age of at least 100 years young.



Destination Maternity

Maternity firm starts new life

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

Destination Maternity, a \$500 million apparel retailer based in Philadelphia, will be reborn in Burlington County.

The company last week announced relocation plans that include a 74,000-square-foot headquarters in Moorestown by fall 2014 and a 400,000-square-foot distribution center in Florence by early 2015.

The company has operated in the city out of a combined headquarters and distribution center on North Fifth Street and offices in the Philadelphia Navy Yard since 1996, company officials said.

"The headquarters move will allow us to create a more modern, spacious, bright and open office environment for our headquarters team members, which promotes the kind of collaborative teamwork, creativity and problem solving across all brands and functional areas which is so critical to our continued growth and success," CEO Ed Krell said.

"The distribution center move will provide us with a new, build-to-suit, state-of-the-art facility with greater space, a more efficient single-story layout, and new material-handling equipment to increase the capacity and efficiency of our operations."

The warehouse will be in the Haines Center industrial park on Route 130, Florence Township Administrator Richard Brook said. Moorestown officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

A "critical factor" in the decision to move was a 10-year, \$40 million incentive package from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, Krell said.

Destination Maternity operates 1,893 retail locations, including 606 stores,

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MAJOR PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY TO MAKE FLORENCE TOWNSHIP NEW DISTRIBUTION AND FULFILLMENT HUB





“this senior affordable housing project preserves a part of the history and fabric of Florence Township.”

Craig H. Wilkie, Mayor

NEW LIFE FOR DUFFY SCHOOL SENIOR COMPLEX CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN SPRING 2014

Florence grants tax abatement for senior complex

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — The Township Council has authorized a long-term tax exemption for a 53-unit senior housing project planned at the site of the former Marcella L. Duffy School.

Under the 30-year payment in lieu of taxes, or PILOT program, the municipality would receive scheduled payments from Moorestown Ecumenical Neighborhood Development, an affordable housing developer known as MEND.

“The success of turning the former Duffy school into senior affordable housing is really dependent on the financing falling into place. The project has a great deal of merit. Providing affordable housing has benefits for our society that reach far beyond numbers and statistics,” Township Administrator Richard Brook said after Wednesday’s meeting.

The \$14.5 million project would entail preserving the historic integrity of the West Second Street structure, which closed in



BURLINGTON COUNTY TIMES FILE PHOTO
The former Marcella L. Duffy School in Florence will be converted to affordable housing units for seniors.

2007. MEND CEO Matthew Reilly said Thursday that the existing building would house 35 apartments and a small addition would accommodate 18 more.

The township’s authorization of the PILOT program is required as part of the developer’s application for funding from the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, one of a few funding sources Reilly

said he is pursuing. The application is due in June, he said.

Reilly said if he does not use a loan from the agency, the project would use a slightly different redevelopment tax abatement the township previously authorized as a possible option. Both abatements are calculated as a percentage of revenue, but the finance agency’s structure deducts

utilities from the equation, Reilly said.

“The redevelopment (abatement) does not require that deduction. So there’s a little bit more money to the town under the redevelopment abatement, but it’s insignificant,” he said. “This is the town just being very, very cooperative and understanding and doing everything in its power to position us to get

the funding for the project.”

If the funding is in place by fall, Reilly said he expects construction to begin in December. The project would be completed by late 2014.

The project, which received Planning Board approval in June 2011, was previously slated for development by Community Investment Strategies in Lawrenceville, Mercer County. The Burlington County Board of Freeholders had approved a \$500,000 loan for the project from the federally funded HOME Investment Partnerships Program in August 2011, but had to rescind it when Community Investment Strategies could not secure tax credits.

The municipality enlisted MEND to take over last year.

In October, township officials authorized the \$175,000 acquisition of property adjacent to the school to facilitate MEND’s use of the entire 200 block for the project.

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Residents can now enjoy the convenience of payment by major credit cards or electronic transfer from their banking institution.



Florence offers residents option to make payments online

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — Residents can now pay their tax, sewer and water bills from the comfort of their homes.

The township's website, www.florence-nj.gov, has a link that allows users to access their account information and pay bills using a credit or debit card or an electronic check.

Township Assistant Administrator Thomas Sahol said he wants to get the word out to residents.

"Hopefully this added convenience will help people. We have snowbirds who have to send in a check or get the bank to send a check. Also, people can get frequent flyer mileage points for using a card," he said.

Another plus, Sahol said, is that professionals in the property appraisal, real estate and

mortgage industries who are seeking the information won't have to personally visit the municipal building to do so.

"So, it's less time that people have to spend to come here and tie up our staff," he said.

The link is on the left side of the website. Users need only a name or address to access an account. He also emphasized that even though the tax, sewer and water account information is public record and therefore accessible to anyone, the payment portion of the transaction is confidential.

Sahol said township officials did plenty of research to ensure that the company met the state and federal banking standards for safeguarding information.

Payments are processed by FIS, a certified government payment company. The global company is

based in Jacksonville, Fla., according to its website.

Fees are \$1.05 for an electronic check, \$3.95 for a Visa debit card and approximately 2.95 percent of the total bill for all other debit and credit cards.

Sahol said that while the technology has existed for a few years, township officials were hesitant because of the high fees that initially were required.

"We're much more comfortable now offering it because we've seen the decrease in the fees," he said.

Residents still have the option of paying in person or sending a check, and still will get paper bills, which is a state requirement.

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Florence ushers in 4th with patriotic celebration

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — As far as this town is concerned, the Independence Day holiday weekend is all about honoring those who served their country.

The residents will do just that on Saturday during the township's annual patriotic day celebration, and they'll have some fun while they're at it.

"The community really looks forward to it," Mayor Craig Wilkie said of the festivities, which will include a patriotic observance, parade, live music and food vendors.

A flag-raising ceremony will start the celebration at 11 a.m. at the monument at Oak and Fifth streets. A special invitation has been extended to military members and veterans.

A parade will begin at noon at Delaware Avenue and Oak Street and proceed along Hornberger Avenue to Second Avenue and Main Street, and end at 10th Avenue. Judging for the floats will be staged in front of the community center at Seventh Avenue and Main. Prizes will be awarded for floats in the band, business and civic-religious categories. All parade

participants will get sodas and hot dogs.

This year's grand marshal is Alexis Carey Smith, a 2013 Florence Township Memorial High School graduate who holds the national career scoring record in varsity field hockey with 191 goals.

Food vendors are expected to offer everything from "funnel cakes to cotton candy to sausage and pepper sandwiches to meatballs," said assistant business administrator Thomas Sahol, who is helping to coordinate the event.

Evening activities will be held at the Water Works Field at Sixth Avenue and Broad Street. Musician Danny Montagno will take the stage from 6 to 9 and a fireworks display at 9:10 will conclude the day. The rain date will be Sunday for the concert and fireworks only.

The fete will mark the second revival of the patriotic celebration, which was cut in 2010 and 2011 because of budget issues. The township's Economic Development Committee launched a fundraising effort in 2011 to bring back the tradition, which usually took the form of a day-long spate of kids' attractions, food,

parade, concert, fireworks, and a 5K run to raise money to offset medical costs for all residents.

The event returned last year as part of the Fire Department's 100th anniversary celebration. This year, the town received a donation from NFI Industries, owner of the Route 130 business park where Subaru of America opened a facility. Sahol said the gift will cover fireworks for the next four to five years.

A spirit of volunteerism fuels the event, which Sahol described as a "celebration of our nation's freedom."

"We generally get about 50 or 60 people who help with everything from setup to staging," he said. "And we couldn't have such a successful and safe event (without) the Burlington County Community Emergency Response Team and the Burlington County Fire Police. They do a great job."

For information about the event, contact the Recreation Department at 609-499-2525, ext. 112, or email recreation@florence-nj.com.

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Concerning the ordinance, Burlington Township resident David Van Camp said, "I just wanted to reiterate how important and well-written it was,"

Florence creates solar energy guidelines

By JEANNIE O'SULLIVAN
STAFF WRITER

FLORENCE — In response to the growing emphasis on renewable energy, the township now has guidelines for residents and companies seeking to operate solar energy systems.

The Township Council on Wednesday night approved a lengthy ordinance outlining standards for photovoltaic facility uses and installations.

The purpose of the guidelines is to protect and preserve farmland, the historic/rural character of agricultural areas, and the quality of life for residents, according to the ordinance.

The state's master plan and the township's own goals were among the considerations when drafting the guidelines.

"There's a lot to the ordinance," Assistant Township Administrator Thomas Sahol said.

While solar systems started popping up in town a few years ago, the need for an ordinance was spotlighted in May when a Bergen County firm applied to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a ground-mounted photovoltaic facility consisting of 100,000 3-foot-by-5-foot panels on 138 acres of farmland near homes along the Burlington Township border.

The plan sparked an outcry from

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Energy

Continued from Page A3

Burlington Township officials and residents from both towns who opposed the size of the facility, citing potential environmental and aesthetic issues. The company, RenewTricity of Ridgefield Park, scaled down the plan but withdrew the application in January after a series of contentious meetings.

David Van Camp, the residents' ringleader, said he'd examined the ordinance and applauded the establishment of the guidelines Wednesday night.

"I just wanted to reiterate how important and well-written it was," the Burlington Township resident told the council.

After the meeting, Van Camp praised officials for balancing the benefits of renewable energy and farmland protection.

Solar energy systems will now be permitted in the township as a principal use in manufacturing zones, but only as an accessory use in residential or agricultural areas. Major ground-mounted facilities are not considered accessory uses under the ordinance.

The 17-page ordinance goes on to outline standards for various aspects of operating ground- and roof-mounted systems, including size, scale and appearance; principal versus accessory use; residential, commercial and agricultural zoning; the permitting process; and decommissioning plans, among other things.

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Imagined by the late Steve Mognanski and the product of his daughter Joann Trout's hard work, this memorial quilt contains the names of the Florence Township men who made the Supreme Sacrifice during their service to our country in the Armed Forces.



One-time center of industrial might undergoes reclamation in Florence



FLORENCE — Riverside Avenue runs along the Delaware River in the township, but throughout the past few decades, a 6-foot fence has blocked residents from stepping anywhere near the river to enjoy closer views.

While the federal Environmental Protection Agency continues to clean up the 240-acre former Roebling property that was deemed a Superfund site in 1983, it's planning on peeling back the fence and exposing residents to something cleaner — and greener — come next fall.

The fence, topped with barbed wire and covered with overgrown weeds, will be taken down, granting visitors unbridled access to a 34-acre passive recreational park currently in the works where they can finally enjoy wildlife and the scenery as they stand atop the former cleanup site, officials say.

"This was once the way a lot of residents were able to get down to the water's edge. After the fence went up, they lost that enjoyment," said Thomas Sahol, Florence Township's assistant administrator, as construction crews worked behind him last week depositing sand over the area to prevent pollutants from migrating.



Work continues on a passive recreational park on the Roebling steel mill site by the Delaware River in Florence on Wednesday, December 18, 2013. Martin Griff / The Times of Trenton

The Mayor and Township Council
wish to express their sincere
appreciation to everyone who
attended the reorganization meeting
this evening.

We also wish everyone a very happy
and healthy New Year.