

EAST BRADFORD TOWNSHIP 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Accomplishments & Notable Events

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
I. Organization & Administration	3
II. Advisory Boards & Commissions (ABC's)	3
III. Planning & Land Development	9
IV. Zoning	10
V. Legislation	11
VI. Engineering	14
VII. Building	15
VIII. Properties, Open Space & Trails	15
IX. Roads & Public Works	18
X. 2020 Budget	19



Introduction

The information contained in the following pages is intended to provide an administrative summary of the municipal activity occurring in East Bradford Township in 2020. The intent of the annual report is to serve as an educational resource and archival document for East Bradford taxpayers, property owners and citizens, elected and appointed Township officials, and those persons interested in the business of local government operation and administration. The details of the monthly business of the Board of Supervisors, its appointed advisory boards and commissions (ABC's) and the daily activities of the Township staff can be examined through recorded minutes, the annual budgets and audit, codes, land development files, routine reports, and numerous other municipal records available to the citizens of East Bradford Township and the general public upon request. In addition, a wide array of information can be obtained from the Township website (www.eastbradford.org).

COVID-19 Pandemic

2020 was a year like no other. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in January 2020 and a pandemic in March 2020.

COVID-19 was confirmed to have reached Pennsylvania in March 2020 (two cases). On March 12, Governor Wolf implemented social distancing measures in Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and

Montgomery Counties. By April 1 stay-at-home orders had been extended across the state. By the end of the year, there had been over 600,000 COVID cases in PA, about 20,000,000 in the US, and roughly 85,000,000 in the world.

Following the direction of Chester County and other municipalities, East Bradford moved to remote operations throughout April 2020. By May, construction activities had resumed, requiring the presence of building department staff. By June, in-office operations recommenced. Meanwhile, public meetings remained virtual throughout the year and countless public events were canceled. The impact of this pandemic is evident through the report that follows.

I. Organization & Administration

In January, Tim Christopher was hired in the Public Works Department and Rich Hicks was hired as Building Code Official, Fire Marshal, and Deputy Zoning Officer.

In February, Andrea Campisi was hired as the Director of Planning and Zoning, a newly created position.

In September, Codes Administrator (and former Zoning Officer), moved on from East Bradford.

In December, Debbie Livezey was hired as the new Front Office Manager to replace long-time employee Nancy Holland, who retired on December 31.

II. Advisory Boards & Commissions (ABCs)

The following volunteers were appointed or reappointed in 2020:

- Tom Egan, Vacancy Board Chair
- James Haigney, Brandywine Valley Scenic Byways Commission
- Lucia Millet-Lajusticia, Planning Commission
- Tom Russo, Historical Commission
- William Ronayne, Emergency Management Coordinator
- Richard Buchanan, Historic Architectural Review Board
- John Fidler, Parks and Recreation Board
- Judith Suska, Parks and Recreation Board
- Harry Hatzipavlidis, Parks and Recreation Board
- Mark Beaugard, Parks and Recreation Board*
- Matt Maturani, Parks and Recreation Board*
- Kathy Bergmann, Environmental Advisory Council
- Ed McConnell, Environmental Advisory Council
- April Locke, West Chester University Campus Coalition
- Joe Hamel, Board of Auditors

* In January the Board of Supervisors approved increasing the size of the Parks and Recreation Board from seven to nine members.

The following ABC members were not reappointed in 2020:

- Max Yocum, Board of Auditors
- Polly Robins, Historical Commission
- Donald B. Lynn, Planning Commission
- Jo Anne Yarnall, Traffic Committee
- Joe Hamel, Parks and Recreation Board
- Tim Healey, Parks and Recreation Board

The following ABC members asked to come off from a board mid-year:

- Tony Blanco (Parks and Recreation Board) – Moving out of Township
- Peter Midgley (Traffic Committee) – Unable to attend meetings due to work related travel

The Board of Supervisors re-commissioned the Trails Committee, Traffic Committee, East Bradford Art Scholarship Committee, and the Agricultural Security Area Advisory Committee.

Environmental Advisory Council

The 2020 Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) membership was as follows: Kathy Bergmann, Brooke Davis, Paul Lewis, Ed McConnell, Mark Pontzer, Maura Sheehan, and Robert Freed. Paul Lewis served as the Chair and Ed McConnell as the Vice Chair. Kathy Bergmann continued doing her outstanding job of taking the minutes. Mark Lucas was the staff contact although Mandie Cantlin also provided information and excellent technical help. John Snook was the Board of Supervisors' representative.

After two traditional in person meetings, COVID precautions dictated that the rest of the meetings for 2020 were held by Zoom teleconferencing. Mandie got us all going on that format but by the end of the year Mark was ably hosting.

The EAC under Maura's leadership continued to pursue learning more about recycling and single use plastics. Before in person gatherings were not wise, members of the Township staff and the EAC met with representatives of our trash and recycling hauler A.J. Blosenski. We learned that recycling is in a state of flux as the recyclers have troubles actually recycling materials and/or finding others to do so. In years past recycling generated revenues, but more and more municipalities are having to pay. Certain materials still can be recycled and/or have some value, but not everything. The EAC has worked with Township staff to inform residents of what can be recycled and what cannot through the Newsletter and website. It sounds counterintuitive to our goal of increasing recycling and the smart use of resources but "when in doubt throw it out" is necessary advice to ensure the continued viability of recycling.

The EAC has been monitoring other municipalities' efforts to limit the use of single use plastics, particularly for bags used in retail activities. We are waiting to see how these bans or fees are working before considering similar ordinances for our Township.

The EAC reviewed and discussed development plans, although the volume diminished throughout the year:

- SD 641 West Chester Crossings. The EAC was kept informed as Toll Brothers completed the requirements for this townhouse project.

- SD 650 Radford. Proposed two lot subdivision with planned very “green” construction. The net lot area is not compliant and thus problems were presented.
- 725 West Miner St. Use change to allow a carriage house to be rented will require alterations to Mercers’ Mill agreement.
- The Farm @415 Birmingham Road. The application continues to be on the agenda, but nothing has moved as hearings etc. are scheduled and rescheduled.

Ed McConnell continued to drive the EAC efforts to work on energy issues. COVID restrictions certainly slowed, but did not stop progress from occurring in 2020. East Bradford Township participated with the other municipalities in the West Chester Area Council of Governments (COG) in working with Cadmus to develop an energy plan for the area. Most of the work was done in 2019, but the plan was completed and presented to the WCACOG early in 2020 and approved by the six participating municipalities. The heart of the plan included 18 specific strategies to pursue. The strategies were separated into four categories: Enabling Strategies, Community Engagement, Lead by Example, and State-level strategies. A few specific actions taken in 2020 include the COG sending out a request for information to get pricing for a group solar power purchase agreement for the COG’s electricity use. In addition, a group was formed to lead up the Community Engagement portion of the plan, which Ed participated in representing East Bradford Township. The group created materials for planned public meetings in 2021 to summarize the energy planning effort and get people educated and involved. The presentations will be targeted towards different energy sectors including residential, small business, healthcare, and education.

There was discussion about ensuring that Township master plans and records are accurate and that the same standards that apply to property owners applies to the Township.

The EAC was supportive of the Plum Run Trail work and stream restoration.

In a discussion of the Open Burning Ordinance the EAC recommends permitting burning yard waste on tracts of 10 acres or more and not when red flag warnings are posted and only in accordance with DEP regulations. The Township and the EAC noted that yard waste is collected and recycled, obviating most homeowners’ need to burn.

The EAC continued to monitor pests, invasive species, and vectors.

- Deer Management. Mark Lucas provided monthly updates on the Township’s deer management program. 2020 proved to be very similar to 2019. The program is looking to attract more participants who can spend more time, thus increasing the yield and improving the health of the deer remaining and our natural areas.
- The Spotted Lantern Fly continued to be a real problem with few highly effective and scalable solutions found yet.
- West Nile Virus was not much of a factor this year.

The EAC continued its practice of having each member report on a specific Township Commission or Board to enhance understanding and coordination:

- Board of Supervisors – Kathy Bergmann
- Planning Commission – Paul Lewis
- Trails Commission – Maura Sheehan
- Historical Commission – Brooke Davis
- Parks and Recreation Board – Mark Pontzer
- Traffic Committee – Bob Freed

Historical Commission

The Historical Commission held eight meetings in 2020. Beginning in 2020, Andrea Campisi, the Township's new Director of Planning and Zoning, served as the staff liaison to the Historical Commission. During 2020, The Commission worked on the following projects:

- Final wording of the Jefferis Ford Historic Plaque
- Partial demolition of the Strode's Mill dam, a Class 1 DOE resource
- Compilation of a list of properties to be considered for demolition by neglect
- Strode's Barn Heritage Center Plan graphics and interpretive panels
- Jefferis Ford Nature Area interpretive panels
- Reviewed various ordinance amendments and provided input
- Reviewed exterior changes to various historically designated properties, including proposed signage, and provided recommendations to the Board of Supervisors
- Reviewed subdivision, land development and conditional use applications submitted during 2020 and provided input to both applicant's, staff, and the Board of Supervisors
- Reviewed and supported placement of a historical marker honoring suffragist Jean Kane Foulke at Bala Farm
- Advised staff on the Design Guidelines consultant selection process

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission held ten meetings in 2020. In addition to reviewing the subdivision, land development, and conditional use applications listed in the Planning Section of the report, the Commission also reviewed and provided recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on seven of the ordinance amendments listed in the Ordinance section. The Planning Commission provided a letter of support for a grant application for Phase III of the Plum Run Stream Restoration project. The Planning Commission also reviewed and commented on the West Bradford Township Comprehensive Plan. Beginning in 2020, Andrea Campisi, the Township's new Director of Planning and Zoning, began serving as the staff liaison to the Planning Commission.

Parks and Recreation Board

During 2020, the Parks and Recreation Board:

- Issued park facility and field use permits, collecting \$17,760.00 in revenue, a respectable figure in light of the significantly truncated spring sports season as caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Reviewed and approved three Eagle Scout projects for various Township parks.

- Oversaw implementation of the Mt. Bradford Preserve and Jefferis Ford Nature Area improvement plans.
- Submitted a Penn Cares Grant Application for self-guided history hike implementation at Harmony Hill Nature Area (grant request not awarded).
- Worked collaboratively with residents and Township staff to plan for maintenance changes at Shaw's Bridge Park as part of an effort to reduce trash accumulation and rules violations that negatively impact and threaten the health of the public and wildlife.
- Formalized a written safety policy concerning lightning and severe weather that represents a threat to the public in attendance at Township outdoor events and programs.
- Reviewed two subdivision plans and a Township special event ordinance.
- Admirably and proactively responded to the emergent COVID-19 pandemic by working with Township staff to frequently review State and County-produced guidance and recommendations, taking necessary steps to temporarily close and/or limit the use of certain public amenities at parks and open spaces for the overall wellbeing and health of the community. This occurred simultaneously with a significant increase in the amount of public use observed at parks and trails in the Township. The Board represented East Bradford exceptionally well in exhibiting sound judgement, patience, and the ability to adaptively respond successfully to such an unprecedented and overwhelming phenomenon.

Also refer to the Property, Open Space, & Trails Section below.

Traffic Committee

In 2020 the traffic committee met four times: January, February, July, and September. The February and September meetings did not have a quorum. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were not too many traffic related issues to review.

Speeding Issues:

- Many of the traffic and speeding issues were exacerbated by new traffic patterns caused by the rebuilding of the Lenape Road Bridge.
- Speeding complaints were discussed for Ridgehaven, Birmingham, Scanneltown, and Highland Roads.
- Speed monitoring devices were deployed and new 25 mph signs installed on Ridgehaven Road. PennDOT reduced the speed limit on Birmingham Road from 40 to 35 mph after a request from the Township. Scanneltown Road speed limit will remain unchanged for now. Speed monitoring devices were installed on Highland Road.
- DVRPC is reviewing a request to reclassify both Birmingham and Scanneltown Roads from "major collector" to "local roadway."

- Holding a public forum on speeding concerns was discussed. It was decided that a forum would be a good idea. However, due to COVID-19, the conducting of this forum has been put off until the situation returns to normal.

Other Business:

- Discussions with Paradise Farm Camp about poor sight lines at their southern entrance on Valley Creek Road. The Camp is reviewing possible revisions to their truck traffic routes within the camp.
- Ravine Road bridge damage has been an ongoing issue. The bridge has been repaired and high-resolution game cameras have been installed at the bridge to capture footage of damage events.
- Discussions of how to improve the signage at the Hillsdale School crossing at Bradford Avenue resulted in decisions to replace existing signage and re-mark the crosswalk markings with better, more visible markings.
- Sight distances for the intersection of Squires Drive and Birmingham Road were determined to be adequate.
- Mr. Cavanaugh evaluated sight distances at the McFadden subdivision on Birmingham Road.
- Committee and public discussions were held on the proposed upgrading of the Jefferis Bridge. There were concerns that raising the load limit would increase truck traffic. The Committee felt that due to narrow and winding roadways, truck traffic is not likely to increase even with the proposed higher load limits for the bridge rebuild project.
- Ed Nathan recommended extending the left turn lane queue area at the intersection of the 322 Bypass. Mark Lucas will submit a request to PennDOT to conduct a traffic study for this situation.

Membership Changes:

- Peter Midgely is moving out of the area and was thanked for his service on the Traffic Committee.
- Ed Nathan was appointed as a new member on the Traffic Committee, replacing Peter Midgely. He comes with excellent credentials.
- Michele Porco, who is the Transportation Manager for West Chester School District, was appointed as a new member on the Traffic Committee, replacing Joanne Yarnell, who retired.

Trails Committee

The Committee participated in the following activities:

- Raised \$1,815 through donations for trail maintenance and trail-related programming.
- Reviewed two subdivision plans and a Township special event ordinance.
- Completed the Township's participation in the Farmland Raptor Project, resulting in the distribution and placement of several American kestrel boxes on open spaces throughout the Township.
- Made the difficult decisions to cancel the 2020 Trail Blazer Run and Hawkes Naturalist Walks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with intentions to bring these events back in 2021 under safer and more stable conditions.
- Worked closely throughout the course of the year with Township staff to review and advance the Plum Run Trail design and engineering project, scheduled for completion in 2021.
- Integrated the new Sugar's Bridge Nature Area parking lot and trailhead into the Brandywine Trail system and began planning draft alignments for the southward extension of the Brandywine Trail under the new Rt. 322 bridge, towards Ingram's Mill Nature Area.

Also refer to the Property, Open Space, & Trails Section below.

III. Planning & Land Development

Subdivisions & Land Developments

The following subdivision/land development applications were reviewed and/or approved in 2020:

- SD 638, Preliminary Subdivision Plan, 855 Copeland School Road, Abernethy property. In October 2019, the applicant submitted a proposal to create eight lots from the 13.42-acre property. The existing house was proposed to remain and be located on one of the lots. The application was ultimately withdrawn in March 2020.
- SD 641, Preliminary and Final Land Development Plans, 250 N. Bradford Avenue, West Chester Crossing/Former Daily Local News property. In September 2019, Toll Brothers submitted a proposal seeking Preliminary Land Development approval for a 56-unit townhouse development. The Preliminary Land Development Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in July 2020. In August 2020, the Final Land Development Plan was submitted and was approved by the Board of Supervisors in October 2020.
- SD 646, Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan, 590 Birmingham Road, McFadden property. In June 2019, the applicant submitted a proposal to divide the 4.4-acre property into two lots in order to construct one new home. The plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in February 2020.

- SD 648, Preliminary/Final Lot Line Change Plan, 326 Highland Farm Road, Thomas property. In August 2019, the applicant submitted a proposal to adjust the lot line between two parcels to enable the construction of a pole barn. The plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in June 2020.
- SD 650, Sketch Plan, 800 Hillsdale Road, Radford property. This application was submitted in June 2020 and showed the subdivision of the existing lot into two new lots to enable the construction of one new home.
- SD 651, Sketch Plan, 1120 Skelp Level Road. The applicant submitted a proposed lot line change plan in December 2020.

Conditional Uses

The following conditional use applications were reviewed in 2020:

- 725 W. Miner Street – In July 2020, the applicant and property owner, Jeff Hilker, submitted a conditional use application to amend a condition of approval imposed on a prior conditional use application to convert the existing carriage house into a residential rental unit. Hearings were held in August and September and the application was approved in September 2020.
- 1199 Muirfield Drive – The property owner, Michael Earyes, submitted a conditional use application to install two ground mounted solar panels greater than 500 square feet in October 2020. A hearing was held in November 2020. Shortly after the hearing the applicant withdrew the application.
- 415 Birmingham Road – This application was submitted in 2019 by John Marshall and Dara Gans to operate a bed and breakfast estate on the property. The first hearing took place in April 2019. The application was extended through 2020 and is still pending.
- 900 Copeland School Road and 905 Conner Road, Stoney Ridge Farm – This application was submitted in late 2018 and was extended through 2020 by the applicants, Patrick and Kathryn Comerford. The application includes a request to operate a bed and breakfast estate at 900 Copeland School Road. Extensions were granted through 2020 to schedule the initial hearing.

IV. Zoning

In 2020, nine applications for variances were submitted to the Township and reviewed by the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB):

- 725 W. Miner Street – A variance was sought to allow more than one residential dwelling unit on the property by converting the existing carriage house into a residential rental unit. The variance was granted in October 2020.
- 1325 Circle Drive – The applicant requested variances to encroach into the building setback and the side yard setback and to exceed the building and lot coverages for proposed additions onto the existing home. The variances were granted in June 2020.

- 950 Copeland School Road – The applicant requested a variance to construct a deck that encroaches into the building setback. The variance was granted in August 2020.
- 781 Hillsdale Road – The applicant requested a variance to disturb steep slopes associated with the construction of a barn. The variance was granted in August 2020.
- 983 Regimental Drive – The applicant requested a variance to encroach into the front yard setback and to exceed the maximum lot coverage for an addition to the existing residence. The variance was granted in October 2020.
- 698 Downingtown Pike, Tower Health Urgent Care, Bradford Plaza Shopping Center – The applicant requested a variance to exceed the maximum size limit for a business sign of 32 square feet. Although the application was submitted in October 2020 the hearing was not conducted until 2021. The variance was approved.
- 790 Tree Lane – The applicant requested a variance to construct a detached garage and a retaining wall that encroach into the side yard setback. Although the application was submitted in October 2020 the hearing was not conducted until 2021. The variance was denied.
- 800 Hillsdale Road – The applicant requested several variances associated with a proposed subdivision of the existing lot into two new lots where the existing home was shown to remain. The variances requested included allowance of a reduced lot size for the newly created lot, to permit less than the required setback from a historic structure for the proposed home, to permit the disturbance of both steep and prohibitively steep slopes for the construction of the proposed home and driveway and to allow the existing house to encroach into the side yard setback. Although the application was submitted in November 2020 the hearing was not conducted until 2021. The variance was denied.
- 870 Copeland School Road – The applicant requested a variance to install a shed that encroached into the rear yard setback. Although the application was submitted in December 2020 the hearing was not conducted until 2021. The variance was approved.

V. Legislation

Ordinances

The following ordinances were adopted in 2020:

- In March, the Board adopted Ordinance 01-2020 amending the Zoning Code, Chapter 115 to modify the powers and duties of the Historical Commission.
- In June, the Board adopted Ordinance 02-2020 amending the Zoning Code, Chapter 115 to modify the powers and duties of the Environmental Advisory Council, the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board. This ordinance also amended Chapter 45 to incorporate the International Fire Code, including Appendix D.

- In July, the Board adopted Ordinance 03-2020 amending the Zoning Code, Chapter 115 to add new defined terms, to delete the Riparian Buffer regulations in their entirety and replace them with new regulations, and to modify the Supplemental Land Use Regulations associated with Wireless Communication Facilities. This ordinance also amended the Subdivision and Land Development Code, Chapter 95, to modify the requirements for private streets and amended Chapter 94, Stormwater Management, to add new definitions.
- In October, the Board adopted Ordinance 04-2020 amending the definitions of structure and accessory structure in both the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Codes, Chapters 115 and 95, amending the Historical Commission procedures in the Zoning Code and amending parking and speed limit regulations in Chapter 104, Vehicles and Traffic.
- In November, the Board adopted Ordinance 05-2020, to add hotel/motel as a defined term and a permitted use in the Zoning Code, Chapter 115, along with bulk, area, setback and parking requirements for this use. This ordinance also amended Chapter 96 of the Zoning Code, entitled Nonconformities, to require any change in use of a nonconforming use to be subject to conditional use approval from the Board of Supervisors, and to add any lawful use not permitted elsewhere in the Zoning Code as a use permitted by conditional use in the I, Industrial District.
- In November, the Board adopted Ordinance 06-2020 which authorized the incurrence of debt through the DeVal Loan Program to purchase land.
- In December, the Board adopted Ordinance 07-2020, amending Chapter 104, Vehicles and Traffic, to allow trucks operated by the Township and West Chester Borough to travel along certain roads in the Township and to amend parking regulations.
- In December, the Board adopted Ordinance 08-2020 by adding a new Chapter 81 to the Township Code, which requires the Township to be compensated for services required for private special events.

Resolutions

The Board of Supervisors adopted the following resolutions in 2020:

- Resolution 01-2020 to adopt the East Bradford Township Emergency Management Plan.
- Resolution 02-2020 describing the emergency service providers and first response boundaries for the Township in 2020.
- Resolution 03-2020 appointing all current members to the Zoning Hearing Board as provided in Article IX of Act 246, as amended.
- Resolution 04-2020 updating the Township fee schedule.
- Resolution 05-2020 authorizing application to the 2020 Chester County Municipal Grant Program for the Plum Run Stream Restoration Phase III.

- Resolution 07-2020 in support of a Citizens Commission for legislative and congressional redistricting.
- Resolution 08-2020 designating Public Works employees as first responders as federally mandated by the President of the United States.
- Resolution 09-2020 declaring local State of Disaster Emergency due to Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Resolution 10-2020 authorizing restatement of Qualified Retirement Plan.
- Resolution 11-2020 implementing Act 15 of 2020's Property Tax Relief Provisions (related to COVID-19).
- Resolution 12-2020 accepting the West Chester Area 100% Renewable Energy Transition Plan prepared by Cadmus on behalf of the WCACOG.
- Resolution 13-2020 declaring certain provisions of the East Bradford Township Zoning Ordinance to be substantively invalid and to direct all necessary steps be taken to enact a curative amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to cure such invalidity.
- Resolution 14-2020 does not exist. This number was unintendedly not used.
- Resolution 16-2020 authorizing the Township Manager to submit the application for Traffic Signal Approval to PennDOT.
- Resolution 17-2020 authorizing the Township Manager to complete all required forms and documents for the purpose of obtaining financial assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act related to COVID-19.
- Resolution 19-2020 endorsing the Brandywine Creek Greenways Water Trail
- Resolution 21-2020 amending the pension plan.
- Resolution 22-2020 authorizing staff to attend settlement for purchase of the JCL Sterling Co/LLC and JAL Partners property.
- Resolution 23-2020 authorizing an application to the PA Fish & Boat Commission for a public access grant for Shaw's Bridge.
- Resolution 25-2020 to declare that the property tax for the 2021 fiscal year remain at 1.50 mills.
- Resolution 26-2020 adopting the 2021 Fee Schedule.
- Resolution 27-2020 declaring a winter storm snow and ice emergency.

The Supervisors adopted the following records disposition resolutions in accordance with Act 428 of 1968:

- Resolution 06-2020 (February)
- Resolution 15-2020 (July)
- Resolution 18-2020 (August)
- Resolution 20-2020 (October)
- Resolution 24-2020 (December)

VI. Engineering

The Township further enhanced and analyzed its Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) reduction plan for reducing sediments to the Christina River basin (called the Brandywine River in Pennsylvania). The plan was a directive of the EPA and PADEP and will be implemented over a 15-year period. In 2020 the Tigue property streambank stabilization was completed, and the Birmingham Road basin retrofit project was begun.

Residential development planning was lessened in the Township during 2020, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Township conditionally approving a residential land development project by Toll Bros., Inc. for the former Daily Local News property (“West Chester Crossing” - 56 carriage homes). One other, smaller residential project reviewed was the Abernethy subdivision (9-lot subdivision), which was ultimately withdrawn.

Several drainage projects were reviewed in the Township as a result of significant rainfall occurring over the Spring and Summer months of 2019.

Construction continued on the “Darlington Ridge” project, a 107-unit residential land development project located on the former Tigue farm at the intersection of Route 52 and Tigue Road.

Several bridges were discovered to be in need of maintenance due to the excessive rainfalls of 2017 to 2019. The Brookworth Bridge, Ashbridge Street Bridge were scheduled for major repairs requiring innovative techniques (geopolymer resurfacing for Ashbridge), while the Cann Road and North Creek Road culverts were scheduled for replacement, in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

A technique called “geo-nailing” was investigated as a potential repair for the Ravine Road and Sunset Hollow Road embankments. This method will be further investigated in 2021, with possible repairs scheduled for the future.

Several properties were enforced upon for violations of the floodplain ordinance for nonpermitted activities related to placing obstructions in the floodplain.

The Township Engineer aided the Mercer’s Mill, Scanneltown Farms, Brandywine River Estates, Sagamore and Darlington Drive home owners associations interpret and execute their stormwater management facility maintenance obligations.

VII. Building

The following fees were collected in 2020:

Permit Type	Quantity	Total Fees Collected
Building	254	\$118,899
Electrical	4	\$314
Erosion and Sedimentation	28	\$18,705
Sign	10	\$1,650
Zoning	<u>149</u>	<u>\$28,625</u>
Totals	445	\$168,193

VIII. Properties, Open Space & Recreation

Properties/Open Space

In June, the Township completed acquisition of the 651 W. Ashbridge Street property (.37 acres), a purchase accomplished through the Chester County upset tax sale process. The property (tax parcel no. 51-5-61) was acquired primarily due to its location at the intersection of W. Ashbridge Street and Downingtown Pike, where future intersection and roadway improvement projects could render its ownership advantageous to the municipality.

In December, the Township completed acquisition of the 1001 Skelp Level Road property, a 169-acre complex of undeveloped parcels known historically as the Starr Farm, and also known formerly as Valley Creek Farm. The main purpose of this acquisition is the desired preservation of the natural, scenic and historic resources found on the property, in addition to public recreational access. The Township will have to pursue State and County grant funding support before final determinations can be made concerning the preservation of portions of the property. Certain portions of the property may be partitioned and sold to private buyers in the future, subject to conservation easements, as the Township may decide.

In December, the Township was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Brandywine Conservancy's new Brandywine Creek Greenway Mini-Grant Program for the restoration design of the historic Strode's Barn structure. The Friends of Strode's Mill will partner with the Township on this project and pledged \$3,650 in matching funds towards the grant award.

In partnership with the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance and the Stroud Water Research Center, Phase I stream restoration along the Plum Run was completed in spring with the planting of 1,300 native trees within the immediate riparian buffer zone. Phase II of the stream restoration was subsequently completed in the fall with the planting of additional trees downstream to the extent of the historic mill dam. The Township was awarded a \$65,901 grant from the Chester County Preservation Partnership Program for completion of the final phase of stream restoration work that will commence in 2021, ending at Birmingham Road.

There were 33 individuals on record that volunteered time in 2020 helping to maintain Township properties and open space. This number was greatly reduced from 2019 due to the widespread closures

and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, these volunteers logged 407 hours of volunteer services that equates to \$10,175 of in-kind value.

Natural Lands completed its stewardship assessment of the Birmingham Road Tract of the Plum Run Preserve and submitted a full report with recommendations to the Township. The report was accepted by the Supervisors and will act as an important strategic guide to the future stewardship of this portion of the Plum Run Preserve.

The Township's multi-municipal Brandywine Battlefield Heritage Interpretation Plan project received a \$29,000 grant award from Chester County's Vision Partnership Program and officially kicked off in 2020. The project includes the planning of a battlefield-scale network of interpretive sites that will coordinate with one another in commemorating and educating the public on the Battle of the Brandywine, one of the most significant military engagements of the American Revolutionary War.

The Brandywine Valley Archery Club was reauthorized to hunt on Township parkland for the 2020-2021 deer archery season. Twenty-three members gained access to the club following June testing. Twenty-three deer were harvested from Township lands in calendar year 2020 (this includes deer taken during the end of the 2019-2020 season).

The Shaw's Bridge Park canoe/kayak launch development project was paused for most of the year, first due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and then following notification that the Cabin Club dam located downstream of the park was slated for full removal. This provided the Township with an opportunity to submit a grant application seeking \$20,000 from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission for the launch project. The grant application was successfully submitted in December.

Park Improvements

The following improvements occurred in 2020:

- At the Mt. Bradford Preserve, volunteers completed installation of single-track wooded trails and Eagle Scout Colin O'Brien constructed and installed a new visitor information kiosk. Public Works repaired the springhouse entrance and completely refurbished the pond-side cottage for use as an equipment storage site. Public Works also installed a parking area and made public access improvements in preparation for installation of a 9-hole disc golf course.
- At Jefferis Ford Nature Area, the Township's Historical Commission worked in partnership with the Brandywine Battlefield Task Force and the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution and its Color Guard to devise and install a historical marker in commemoration of the British army's fording of the east branch of the Brandywine Creek on route to the Battle of the Brandywine on September 11, 1777. Public Works also installed a parking pull-off to allow public access to the Nature Area.
- At Harmony Hill Nature Area, volunteer Bob Perna led an extensive effort to clean out, restore and stabilize the historic Gray/Kerr Farm ruins, bringing added utility and beauty to what has become a main attraction within the park and a feature of focus on history hikes led by the Township.

- At Shaw’s Bridge Park, Eagle Scout and seasonal intern Calvin Pash made extensive repairs to the wildlife observation platform overlooking the freshwater wetland. The structure had been damaged by the flow of floodwaters following an August storm event. Additionally, Eagle Scout Will Stanley planted 100 sapling native hardwood trees within the developing riparian buffer along the Brandywine Creek.
- At Sugar’s Bridge Nature Area, Eagle Scout Arthur Compton constructed and installed a new visitor information kiosk at the Brandywine Trail trailhead next to Route 322. The West Chester Rotary Club also volunteered time watering and protecting new plantings placed along the banks of the Brandywine Creek following replacement of the Route 322 bridge.
- At Paradise Valley Nature Area, a second successive prescribed burn took place in early spring in order to promote native plant regeneration and inhibit the spread of invasive plants.

Trails

With \$115,000 of grant support from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and an additional \$65,000 in support from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Township commissioned the design firm of McTish-Kunkel and Associates to engineer the Phase I segment of the Plum Run Trail and associated Strode’s Barn Heritage Center infrastructure. Work on this project got underway in May after McTish-Kunkel was selected for the job following a competitive bid process. The project is anticipated to cost \$227,906 and will be completed towards the end of 2021.

On June 16, 2020, PennDOT officially announced the completion of the U.S. 322 (Downingtown Pike) bridge replacement over the east branch of the Brandywine Creek. Construction operations began in November 2018 to build the new two-span, concrete bridge structure downstream of the former steel beam bridge that was built in 1929. Allan Myers, LP was the general contractor on the federally funded replacement project. East Bradford Township had been working with PennDOT and local stakeholders on the project since the fall of 2015, when the new bridge was still under design.

Out of the project, the Township was able to obtain a new 40-vehicle parking lot within the former roadbed that now serves the popular East Branch Brandywine Trail. Additionally, PennDOT designed the new bridge and graded the site to provide for a future trail underpass so that the Township can continue the Brandywine Trail southwards without having to cross the U.S. 322 highway. The new parking lot offers expanded access to Sugar’s Bridge Nature Area, Township-owned public land that adjoins the M. John Johnson Nature Center and Harmony Hill Nature Area.

Events

The following events took place in 2020 (all other planned events in 2020 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic):

- History Hike – February 1 – Harmony Hill Nature Area
- Volunteer Day – February 1 – Shaw’s Bridge Park
- Volunteer Day – February 29 – Mt. Bradford Preserve
- History Hike – February 29 – Harmony Hill Nature Area
- History Hike – March 7 – Harmony Hill Nature Area

IX. Roads & Public Works

Road Maintenance

- Installed flashing speed signs throughout town at various locations.
- Repaired inlets and roll curb on streets to be paved in 2020.
- Worked with the West Chester Police on several projects, including painting VASCAR lines in locations throughout the Township.
- Made major repairs to the Ravine Road bridge approach areas due to the roadway washing out during storm Isaias.
- Completed drainage projects on Shenton Road and Trio Lane.
- Repaired inlets throughout the Township.
- Performed normal maintenance: repair of potholes, roadside mowing, inlet cleaning, branch/tree cleanup after storms, trimming around signs, road bank mowing, sign maintenance, installation, and repair throughout the Township.

Streets Paved in 2020

A total of 2.26 miles of roadway was paved in 2020:

- Wencin Way
- Wencin Terrace
- Blue Rock Road
- Allegiance Drive
- Greene Countrie Drive

Parks and trails

- Collected and placed boulders to replace fencing around the Harmony Hill, Jefferis Ford, and Ingram's Mill parking areas.
- Park cleanup after storms.
- Installed new gates at Ingrams Mill, Brandywine Trail, and Mt. Bradford.
- Repaired fencing at parks and trails.
- Weekly trash runs throughout parks and trails.
- Weekly grass cutting in season.
- Supplied, transported, and spread stone at the ruins near the Brandywine Trail.
- Rebuilt the shed and spring house at Mt. Bradford.
- Constructed a new gravel parking lot at Mt. Bradford.
- Ground stumps at Mt. Bradford.

Facilities

- Painted many areas in the Township building.
- Replaced hot water heater in Township building.

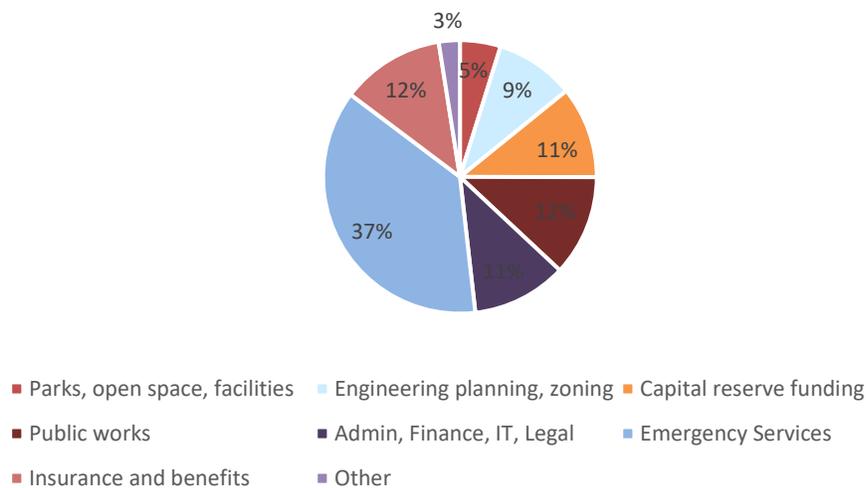
X. 2021 Budget

The 2021 East Bradford Township Budget consists of seven distinct budgets – General, Capital Reserve, Capital Investment, Sewer, Open Space Liquid Fuels, and Highway Improvement.

General Fund

The General Fund is the principal operating fund for the Township. The \$5.1 million budget for 2020 included funding for functions like police, fire, public works, administration, recreation, codes, engineering, and legal services, with 10% of the budget reserved for future capital needs.

2020 General Fund Expenditures - Actual

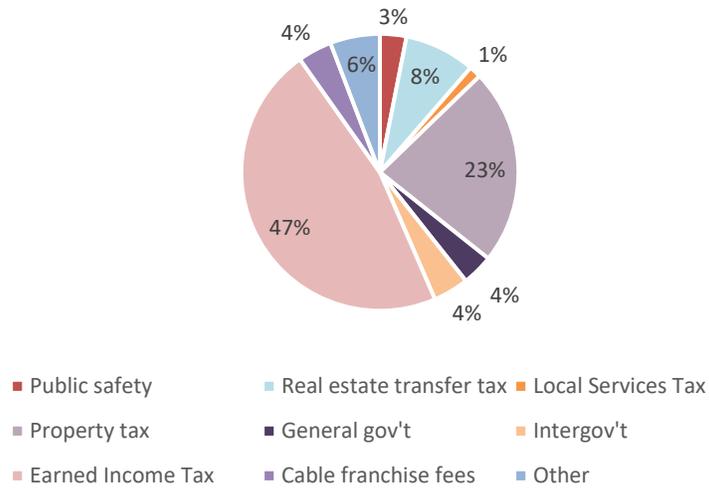


The 2020 General Fund Budget included a property tax increase from 1.0 to 1.5 mills. One mill is equal to \$1 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value; so, a \$500,000 property (which would have an assessment value of about \$250,000) paid an additional \$125 in local real estate tax in 2020. Projected to add \$400,000 in annual revenue, the purpose of the tax increase was to balance the budget without having to dip into accumulated savings.

East Bradford was fortunate that the Covid-19 pandemic did not significantly impact Township revenues. Since real estate tax bills are mailed out in January, 84% of property taxes had been received by April 2020. This important receipt ended the year just 1% under budget. Likewise, Earned Income Taxes were within 1% of budget for 2020, signaling strong local employment despite the challenges of Covid.

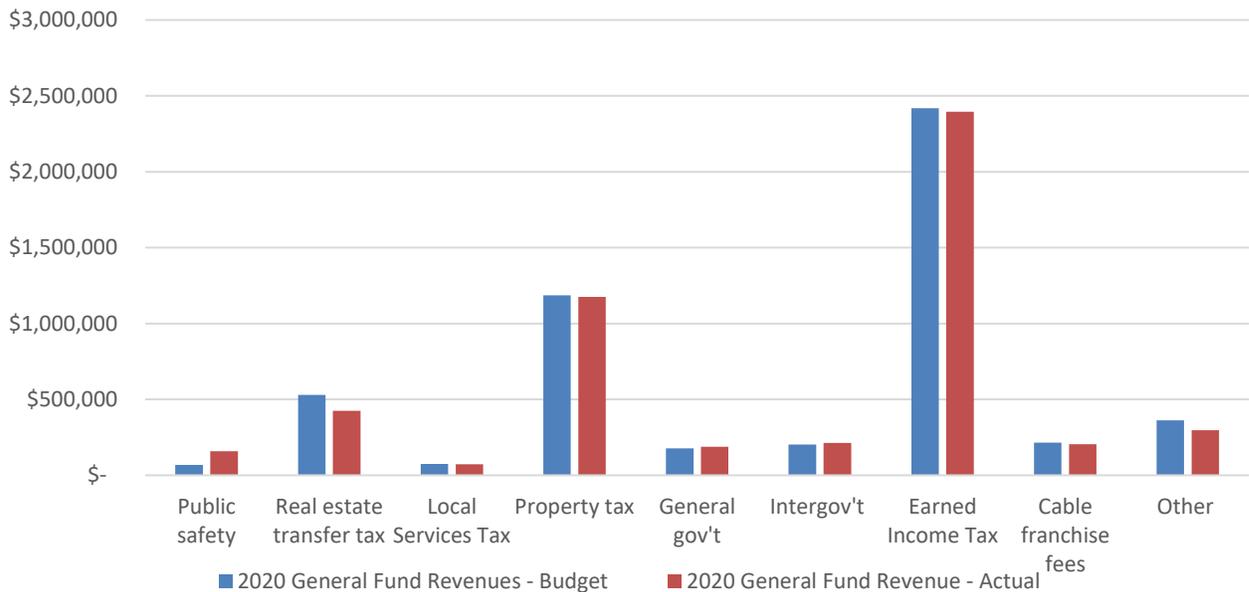
The single major revenue item impacted by the pandemic was the real estate transfer tax. Property sales in the Township include a 2% tax (generally split between buyer and seller) divided among the Commonwealth (1%), Chester County (0.5%) and East Bradford (0.5%). With the sharp decline in listings and open houses due to Covid, this line item came in 20% under budget.

2020 General Fund Revenues - Actual

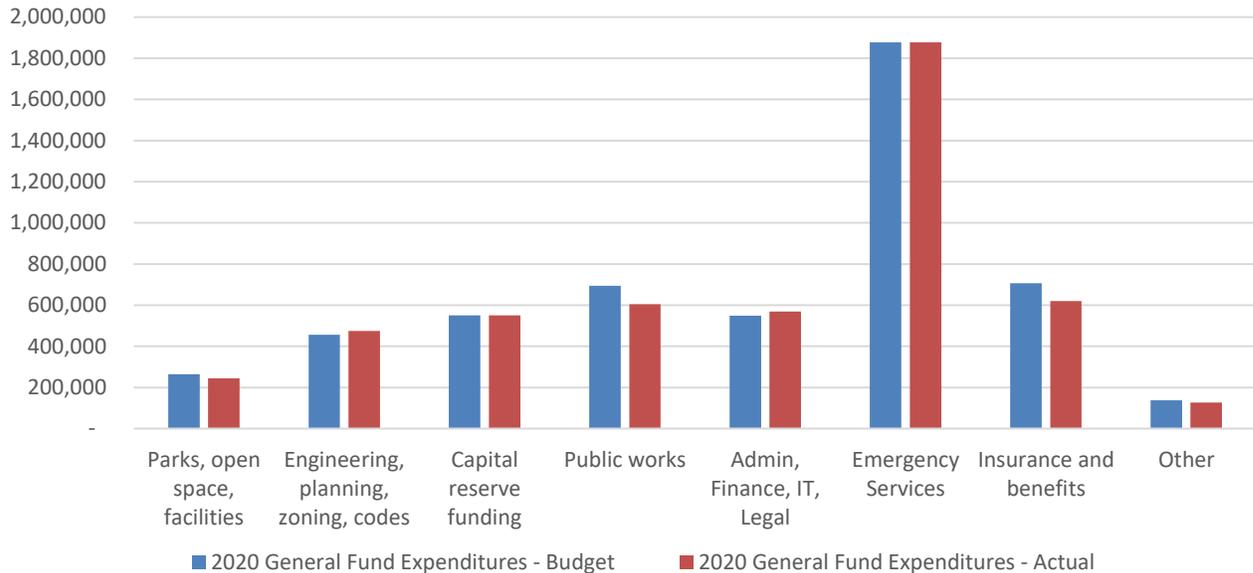


On the expense side, the Township’s 5-year agreement with West Chester Borough to provide police services to East Bradford included a relatively steep 13% increase to help compensate for high costs to the Borough in the last two years of the prior contract. Modest 3-4% increases are expected in the next few years in this critical public safety category.

2020 Revenues - Budget vs. Actual



2020 Expenditures - Budget vs. Actual



Ninety percent of the \$3,800 spent on unanticipated Covid-related costs (for PPE, additional cleaning, IT services related to Zoom meetings and remote work, etc.) were mitigated by a FEMA grant. Additionally, in 2020 the Township hired a full-time code enforcement/building inspection official and a Director of Planning and Zoning to manage zoning, land development, and construction activities.

Other Funds

The remaining six funds are discussed briefly below:

Capital Reserve Fund. The Capital Reserve Fund is funded primarily by an annual transfer of \$550,000 from the General Fund. New vehicles and equipment, building and parks facility improvements, road and bridge infrastructure, and stormwater projects are all funded out of this account. In 2020, expenses totaled just 51% of budget, as \$200,000 in bridge and stormwater projects and an additional \$225,000 in paving work was put off because of funding concerns related to the pandemic. These projects were deferred, not cancelled, and remain in the Township’s 5-year capital plan.

Open Space Fund. The Open Space Fund, created in 1999, is funded principally from a designated 0.25% Earned Income Tax. Expenditures are restricted to property acquisition and associated costs, including maintenance and improvements. In December 2020, the Township took on a \$6.1 million variable rate note to acquire a 175-acre property in the northwestern corner of the Township.

Sewer Fund. Because the Township sold its public sewer system to Aqua PA in 2018, activity on this fund was minimal. An intergovernmental cooperation agreement with the Borough of West Chester, plus operation and maintenance of public sewer service at the Darlington Ridge subdivision on Route 52, are anticipated to continue through 2022.

Liquid Fuels. PennDOT’s Liquid Fuels program is funded by a statewide tax added to every gallon of gasoline purchased at the pump. East Bradford’s annual allocation from the Commonwealth of

approximately \$350 million provides essential support for the paving program. Because 2020 allotments were based on 2019 gas tax receipts, the pandemic did not affect Liquid Fuels funding; but this receipt will be impacted in 2021 and 2022 by reduced driving.

Highway Improvement Fund. This fund functions as a contingency account for roads and related infrastructure. Revenues originally were derived from developers' contributions during the 1990's. A pedestrian safety project at Route 322 near Bradford Plaza was delayed in 2020, but construction is expected to begin in 2021. This project is a multi-jurisdictional effort financed primarily by a PennDOT grant with smaller contributions from East Bradford, West Chester Borough, and Bradford Plaza.

Capital Investment Fund. This fund was created in 2018 to manage the proceeds from the sale of the public sewer system (\$5,000,000). The Board of Supervisors intends to conserve the principal and utilize the annual return on investment to supplement the Township's General and Capital Reserve Funds. Unfortunately, plummeting interest rates reduced 2020's anticipated \$180,000 interest receipt by 50%.