

Rush Township

Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania

Fall 2010 Newsletter

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The Rush Township Supervisors and staff are pleased to bring you this first edition of our new township newsletter. This publication provides you with information about municipal services and officials, contact numbers for municipal offices and other agencies, and updates on current projects being undertaken by the township. We hope to continue to issue a township newsletter on a yearly basis so that we can provide updates on programs and activities affecting you, the residents and businesses of Rush Township.

We extend a special thanks to the businesses and professional members of our community whose support through advertising has made publication of this newsletter possible at no cost to the taxpayers. Please support the local businesses that support Rush Township.

The Board of Supervisors would like to take this opportunity to encourage all residents of Rush Township to contact the municipal offices for any assistance you may need. Community service is a priority to us, the Supervisors, and the employees of Rush Township.

As of August 2, our new website became accessible for your use and viewing. Our address is www.rushtownship.org.

I am very excited about the following 2010 Improvement Projects:

Kahler Avenue Project – Under this year's annual road program, Kahler Avenue was selected for improvement. The road was deteriorated and in much need of repair. This location is also where our Route 54 sewage pump station is located. Work commenced and concluded in early May with additional improvements made on Joyce Street. The total construction cost was \$93,197.11. Through the Supervisors' cost-effective planning, this project was brought in under budget and also in a timely manner without much inconvenience to our citizens.

Meadow Avenue Sanitary Sewer Project – I anticipate the construction bidding to occur this fall. Engineering estimates for this project amount to approximately \$500,000. This is a high-priority sewer line replacement because of residential basements and our elementary school becoming flooded with raw sewage during heavy and long prevailing rains.

I would like to announce that our associates in the road department have been doing a wonderful job. In the early part of this year, they have been repairing all of last winter's damage. They continue to handle all day-to-day complaints, plus address our township roads. To date, they have purchased and installed approximately \$20,000 worth of asphalt and associated items used to improve our roads for our residents and businesses.

In closing, allow me to emphasize that the Board of Supervisors and all our professional associates, are here for **YOU**, the township residents and businesses. We are committed to being a progressive, business friendly and environmentally conscience place to live and work. We want to improve your quality of life.

Thank you,

Stephen W. Simchak

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors



104 Mahanoy Avenue, Tamaqua, PA 18252-4000

p: 570.668.2938 • f: 570.668.3129

Visit our website at: www.rushtownship.org

Welcome to Beautiful Rush Township!



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Direction of Rush Township

- The computer system was recently upgraded for the administration office, police department and road department. The Lenovo Thinkserver is designed for high performance and streamlined virtualization capabilities, and has twice the memory. All pertinent information is backed up to the server daily.
- A comprehensive road and stormwater/capital improvements plan is being finalized regarding the overall repairs to all roads and storm drains in our township. The Board has set a target period of ten years to complete this overall project.
- The Board of Supervisors is currently **looking into the possibility of forming a regional police force**. The implementation of this plan will hinge on the cooperation of other adjoining townships and boroughs. It will save taxpayers money and provide us with an expanded twenty-four hour qualified staff.

The Rush Township Board of Supervisors last month launched a new website as part of an electronic government initiative that will make important information more readily accessible to the public.

The website (www.rushtownship.org) contains a great deal of information about Rush Township's services and community history, as well as public documents such as the meeting agenda and minutes. Plans call for township ordinances and resolutions to be placed online, a process that will take some time.

"In today's world, an effective, user-friendly, and expandable website is a must-have resource," said Rush Township Board of Supervisors Chairman Stephen W. Simchak.

"The Supervisors of Rush Township recognize this and are embarking on an electronic government initiative that will make life easier for the residents of our township, placing information and communication just a click away," he added.

"In turn, this will make township employees more effective by reducing the large amount of time they currently spend providing information to the public. A great amount of information has already been posted on the website for everyone to download and read on their own. Township supervisor meeting agenda and minutes are available online right now. And in the coming months the township will work to increase the amount of

information that is placed online," he said.

Chairman Simchak encouraged residents to visit the website. "It's tremendously convenient to have all the township services and departments

located easily on one website. The site is also useful for people looking to move into our area, so they can quickly gain a thorough understanding of what our area of northern Schuylkill County has to offer."

Newly elected Supervisor Robert J. Leibensperger helped spearhead the website project shortly after taking office earlier this year.

"One of my first goals as a supervisor was to help improve residents' access to public documents, while at the same time reducing the workload on township staff, freeing them up from photocopying public documents that should have been easily available online," Leibensperger said.

"Of course, all websites are works in progress," he added. "We will be adding to the site in coming months and years, making it even more useful in the future. This project is an investment in the future of Rush Township's online presence. With this site, we will be able to more effectively meet the needs of our residents."



Become a Volunteer

Are you bored with your regular daily routine? Do you have some spare time that you would like to put to good use?

The Rush Township Board of Supervisors has a policy to encourage the spirit of volunteerism and to cooperate with volunteers who come forward and wish to donate their time or skills toward the betterment of the Township. Benefits of volunteering can range from making a difference in your community, sharing your knowledge and skills with others, making new friends, increasing self-esteem and feeling good.

A variety of activities and projects in the Township can benefit from volunteers like YOU:

- **Establish a Veteran's Memorial Park next to the municipal building to honor all men and women in the military.**
- **Volunteers needed to adopt a fire hydrant in your neighborhood**
- **Maintain and improve the parks**
- **Beautification projects**
- **Expansion of the Recycling Program**
- **Join the Crime Watch group**



If you would like more information about becoming a volunteer, please call the administration office. You can also visit www.rushtownship.org to apply online or download the volunteer policy and application form.

From Parks and Recreation...

Several parks and recreation areas are located within the boundaries of Rush Township. These include: Quakake Park/Playground; Lincoln Playground; Kelly Park; Ryan/Old Hauto Road Park/Playground; and Miller Park/Ball Field.

The Board of Supervisors asks for the community's support in helping to improve these parks. Potential upgrades include new picnic tables, pavilions, swing sets, modular play units, walking paths and trails, and tennis courts.

Our ultimate goal is to have the young and the old alike enjoy the many parks located within Rush Township. Donations received for 2010 are as follows:

• Air Products & Chemicals	\$5,000
• Mauch Chunk Trust	\$ 200
• Grand Prix Excavating	\$ 100
• Quakake American Legion-Post 973	\$ 100
• Mr. & Mrs. Walter Taylor	\$ 40
• Volunteers for Argall	\$ 25
• Taylor Rooter & Drain Service	\$ 25
• Mr. & Mrs. Stephen W. Simchak	\$ 20
• Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Leibensperger	\$ 20



Please contact the Rush Township administration if you are interested in making a monetary

A Special Thank You To The Businesses!

This publication is made possible at no cost to the residents of Rush Township through the generous advertising sponsorship of the businesses listed throughout our very first newsletter. We wish to encourage your patronage of these establishments. They are a very important part to the economic vitality of our community.

Be A Good Neighbor

- Assist your neighbors who, due to age or medical issues, may not be able to care for their property or need assistance.
- Call the police if you are concerned about a suspicious activity in your neighborhood.
- Become active and attend a monthly crime watch meeting at the township building if you are concerned about an increase of crime in your neighborhood.
- Please do not place your garbage, grass clippings, or leaf containers on the curb until after 6 p.m. the night before your scheduled collection.
- Volunteer, become involved, and take an ownership stake in your neighborhood.
- Please pull the weeds that pop out around your sidewalks and home.
- Please do not make your front porch a storage facility with any type of indoor furniture, boxes, or any type of flammable materials.
- Keep up with your property maintenance.



Call Before You Dig

What is Pennsylvania One Call System, Inc (POCS)?



POCS is a not-for-profit corporation that provides underground utility notification services under Pennsylvania Act 287 of 1974, as amended, in all 67 counties in the Commonwealth. POCS is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Why Should I Contact POCS?

If you plan to dig anywhere in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, you are required by law to call before excavation begins. The purpose is to keep everyone safe and free from damaging the facility owner's lines, which could be costly to repair and cause unnecessary service interruptions to their customers.

What is Considered Excavation Work?

Pound-in-headers for a new deck, removing a tree stump, installing a fence, digging a trench, replacing a driveway, laying a foundation, repairing drainage lines, and landscaping are examples of excavation, which includes any type of use of powered equipment.

When Should I Call POCS?

The law requires a notice not less than three business days before you start

digging. This gives the utilities enough time to check their records and physically mark the lines or respond if they are clear with no facilities in the area.

What Number Should I Call?

Call 1-800-242-1776 and be prepared to give the customer service representative your county, township/borough, or city and your dig site information. The call only takes a few minutes.

PA One Call References

RED = Electric

YELLOW = Gas

ORANGE = Communications (telephone or cable TV)

BLUE = Potable Water

PURPLE = Reclaimed Water

GREEN = Sewer and Storm Drains

PINK = Survey Markings

WHITE = Proposed Excavation



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

For more information or a copy of the POCS User's Guide, please send an email to membership@pa1call.org or call 1-800-248-1786, extension 7168.



Grants Applied for in 2010

1. **January 4** – the Board gave authorization to Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) to apply for funding through the state Department of Environmental Protection. DEP makes available grants for projects through the PA Conservation Works Grant Program. This grant would convert/ and or retrofit existing traffic signal lights, which currently utilize incandescent lamps to LED bulbs, thus saving our township significant energy costs. Rush Township was awarded the grant money to a maximum of \$7000.
2. **January 9** – submitted grant application to the Department of Labor and Industry for funding (Pa. Conservation Corps) Corps members will assist with developing walking/biking trails for the 26 acres of Ryan Memorial Park. Maximum reimbursable amount of funding may not exceed \$15,000.
3. **April 9** – Small Community Development Conservation Partnerships Program Grant- \$20,000 for the project titled “Ryan Memorial Park Development.” This project includes the development of a walking and bike path in Rush Township. Work to include the construction of approximately 1,800 feet of walking path to connect several portions of the municipality to the Ryan Memorial Park, parking area, landscaping, and ADA access.
4. **April 28** – Recycling grant through the EPA Grant Opportunity for Recycling. The grant amount is limited to \$50,000 but average awards range from \$5,000 to \$25,000 and there is no match needed. The Rush Township Supervisors see the need for increased recycling and composting in their community. Educational materials would be mailed to the residents regarding how organic waste separation and recycling is important and how they can do their part to help save the environment. Personal composting collection bins and construction of composting collection dumpster sites at various locations throughout the township for the residents to deposit their organic waste would be made available. The total estimated project cost would be near \$32,000
5. **May 3** – Act 137 Funding Program – this application was submitted to Schuylkill Community Action requesting \$20,000 in grant funds under the Schuylkill County Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The receipts of funds under this program will allow Rush Township to apply these funds towards establishing a HOME Program for Housing Rehabilitation for low and moderate income persons within the township. **On Wednesday, June 23, the Schuylkill County Commissioners awarded Rush Township the maximum amount of \$20,000 to proceed with the program.**
6. **June 30** – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant monies available for cities, boroughs, and townships through the United States Rural Development. Eligible projects include earth-moving equipment, municipal trucks, etc. Grant funding limitations are based upon the median household income of the service area and the population in the community. Deadline for submission is September 30, 2010.
7. **September** – Rush Township will be submitting for grant monies totaling \$330,000 for the Home Housing Rehabilitation Program through the Department of Community and Economic Development.

LOCAL FIRE COMPANIES NEWS

Hometown Fire Company

Upcoming Events

Breakfasts begin September 26 and are held every second and fourth Sunday of the month

Ballroom Dance Classes are held every Wednesday, starting at 6:30 p.m.

A spaghetti dinner will be held on November 6th.

The Christmas party is scheduled for December 11th

For information about hall rentals, call 570-668-5028.

Quakake Volunteer Fire Company

The Ladies Auxiliary holds fund raising events throughout the year to support the fire company. The auxiliary is well known for their Election Day pork and sauerkraut dinner.

Rush Fire Police

Merle Wertman is the captain of the Fire Police. There are 15 active members, who serve throughout the counties of Schuylkill, Carbon and Luzerne. The fire police respond to accidents, search and rescue, fires, crowd control and other special assignments. They also are vital assets to our police department.

Rush Township Housing Rehabilitation Program

Applications are available at the administration office or online at www.rushtownship.org.

The Housing Rehabilitation Program for Rush Township is designed to encourage low/moderate-income, owner-occupants to restore their homes to a decent, safe and sanitary condition. Eligible homeowners will receive financial assistance to help restore their homes in conformity with established minimum housing rehabilitation standards.

Because of the low-to-moderate income of the residents, the housing rehabilitation program assistance will be in the form of grants/non-interest bearing loans that will be forgiven at a rate of 25 percent per year for four years.

Homeowners can obtain a "Housing Rehabilitation Application" at the Rush Township Building. Complete and return the application to enter the program. The program will start on a lottery basis and then continue on a first-come, first-served basis until all funds are depleted.

Annual income is the gross amount of money that all adult household members are expected to bring in during the coming 12 months. The Technical Guide for Determining Income and Allowances for the HOME Program will be used to determine annual income and annual net family assets.

The following limits represent income by family size for the area as reported by the Housing and Urban Development department as of May 14, 2010. Township supervisors will revise these limits whenever HUD adjusts the Section 8 low/moderate income for Schuylkill County.

Family Size Limits	Gross Income
1 person	\$30,350
2 people	\$34,650
3 people	\$39,000
4 people	\$43,300
5 people	\$46,800
6 people	\$50,250
7 people	\$53,700
8 or more people	\$56,850

The unit to be rehabilitated must be owned and occupied by the applicant for at least one (1) year before the date of the application for rehabilitation assistance.

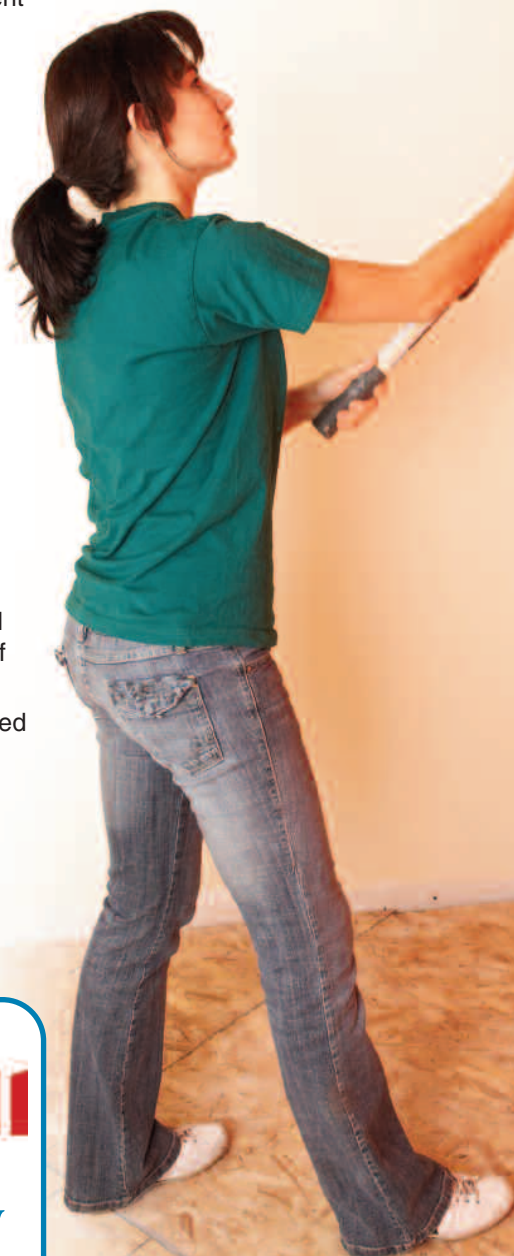
Additional requirements for qualification will be addressed further in the application.

Mr. Stephen W. Simchak, Chairman
Rush Township Board of Supervisors



TurkeyHill

**2600 Conrad Weiser Parkway
Womelsdorf, PA 19567**



From the Rush Township Police Department

How to Contact Us

Call 9-1-1. You should call 9-1-1 only for an emergency, which is any life-threatening situation, including fires, medical issues, traffic accidents, or any crime in progress or a serious crime that has recently occurred.

What to Expect. When you call 9-1-1 for an emergency it is important that you remain calm and prepared to answer questions from the dispatcher. The “who, what, when, where, and why” of the emergency situation are extremely important. It may seem that these questions are unnecessary or may not make sense to you at the time, but the details of the incident may be crucial to successfully resolving the emergency. You can help by providing brief, accurate answers. Your patience will help process the emergency call and get help to you as quickly as possible.

For non-emergencies. You can contact the Rush Township Police Department at 570-668-6100. All non-emergency calls for service are routed through the Schuylkill County Communications Center and dispatched to Rush Township police officers. All citizen phone calls are viewed as important and residents should never be reluctant to place the call. Telephone callers may remain anonymous if they so choose.

CRIME WATCH PROGRAM



Rush Township Board of Supervisors and the Police Department established a Crime Watch program. The first meeting was held on Wednesday, July 7 at the municipal building with six residents in attendance.

Corporal Duane Frederick and Officer Brian Thompson explained to the public how the crime watch works. The citizens were given an informational booklet explaining the do's and don'ts to follow when keeping an eye on things happening in your neighborhood and throughout the township.

All residents are encouraged to attend and participate in trying to keep our community free from crime. Applications are available at the administration office.

Tips for Securing Your Home

Late summer/fall is a time when many residents will be leaving town for extended periods of time. A vacant home is an attractive target for thieves. Here are a few steps you can take to secure your home:

Make doors crime resistant

- Install deadbolt locks, solid doors and sturdy hinges and strike plates. (Be sure all materials meet building and fire codes.)

Secure sliding doors

- Install locks to prevent sliding or lifting.
- Drill a hole through the inside frame, and insert a nail to prevent sliding.
- Place a strong piece of wood in the track.

Prevent window entry

- Use window key locks. Keep keys in locks for quick exit in case of emergency or fire.
- For double-hung windows, drill holes downward where inside and outside sashes meet. Insert nails or bolts.
- Consider grates for basement and first floor windows. (Check local fire codes first.)

Crime-proof outside areas

- Keep yard, porch and entrances well lit. Look into motion detection lighting.
- Store tools, toys, etc., after use.
- Never hide keys outside your home.
- Keep bushes trimmed near doors and windows.

Safeguard valuables

- Engrave television sets and other household valuables with some identifiable number or label.
- Rent a safe-deposit box for small valuables.

Have peace of mind when you're away

- Inform a trusted neighbor of travel plans. Have him or her collect mail and other deliveries.
- Don't share your plans with strangers.
- Leave shades in their normal positions.
- Have Police conduct security checks on your home while you are on vacation.
- If you are interested in vacation security checks, please contact the Rush Township Police Department at 570-668-4242.

2010 Real Estate Taxes

Schuylkill County is divided into 68 municipalities. Out of that total, there are 39 municipalities that have a higher property tax rate than Rush. Our rate is 5.62 mills. The Schuylkill County rate is considerably higher at 11.98 mills. Property owners in Tamaqua Borough pay 33.36 mills, more than three times the rate in Rush Township.

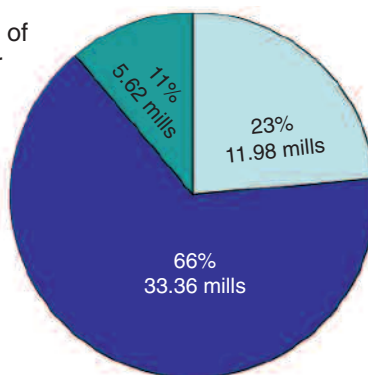
By the way, a mill is \$1 in tax for every \$1,000 of a property's assessed value.

Taxes are always a concern, no matter where you live or how much you pay. But since we all have to pay taxes, wouldn't you want to have the best quality of life possible.

Living in Rush Township provides residents with a community that is safe, friendly and a comfortable place in which to live and raise a family.

Township officials will continue to monitor its expenses just as each of our residents are doing in these unsettling economic times.

We hope that our budget picture for 2011 will provide us with better news.



-  Schuylkill County
-  Tamaqua Area School District
-  Rush Township

This pie chart illustrates where your real estate tax dollar goes.

FAQ – Trash Collection

When should I put out my trash?

Trash should be put out the night before your scheduled pickup day. Sometimes, the truck comes very early in the morning; if your trash is not out, they will not come back for it.

Why wasn't all of my trash collected?

If you put out more than five (5) containers, bundles or bags, with any weighing more than 70 pounds, they will not be collected. If your trash contains unacceptable items, such as refuse resulting from repair, excavation or construction of buildings (for example, sand, earth, lumber, brick, stone, mortar, plaster, roofing materials, plumbing fixtures) or tires, auto parts, hazardous wastes, or household appliances, they will not be collected.

What can I do with large items?

You can put out one (1) large item per week. Acceptable items include a sofa, chair, television or mattress (cut to reasonable size). Items specifically prohibited from collection are refrigerators, air conditioners, washing machines, dryers, automotive parts and tires.



If you have any questions about trash collection, please call the Rush Township Building at 570-668-2938 or the Tamaqua Transfer Station at 570-668-4515.

When is a Permit Needed?

They may seem unnecessary to some people, but the Township requires permits in a variety of situations to protect residents from unsafe or shoddy workmanship and to ensure adherence to Township regulations.

You are reminded that zoning permits are needed before you: install a fence or build a shed; increase any impervious surface areas in walkways, patios or driveways; swimming pools; and for any commercial change of occupancy.



Building permits are needed for: sheds or detached buildings more than 120-square feet that require a foundation; swimming pools; decks; basement renovations; roofing projects that involve replacing more than 25 percent of the roof; new buildings, additions or alterations other than cosmetic work; electrical work that exceeds normal maintenance; and plumbing work.

Other areas where permits are required include: storm water management projects, if impervious surface added is more than 1,000-square feet; signs; demolition; forest or timber harvesting; installation of a fireplace, wood stove or coal stove; tank removal; and wells.

In the very near future, permit applications and fees schedule will be available on line at our new web site.

Municipal Directory

104 Mahanoy Avenue, Tamaqua, PA 18252 • Phone: 570-668-2938 • Fax: 570-668-3129

Email: info@rushtownship.org • Website: www.rushtownship.org

Board of Supervisors

Meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Township Building

Stephen W. Simchak, Chairman
Shawn E. Gilbert, Vice-Chairman
Robert J. Leibensperger, Member

Administration

Terri Conville,
Secretary/Treasurer
Marie Skripnek, Administrative Assistant

Police Department

Duane Frederick, Corporal
Emergency dial 911
Non Emergency **570-668-4242**
or **570-668-6100**

Road Department

Gene Rutch, Road Foreman
570-668-2438

Sewer Department

John Tiejaro **570-668-4336**

Professional Staff

Solicitor
Robert Yurchak
1 E. Catawissa Street
Nesquehoning, PA 18240
570-669-6650

Auditors

Carmen Forke, Walter Taylor,
Brian Turner
104 Mahanoy Avenue
Tamaqua, PA 18252
570-668-2938

Tax Collector

Dolores Walck
117 Cumberland Avenue
Tamaqua, PA 18252
570-668-5661

Assessor

Michelle Kabilko
25 Oxford Street
Tamaqua, PA 18252
570-668-5731

Engineer

Alfred Benesch & Co.
1 South Church Street
300 Renaissance Center
Hazleton, PA 18201
570-454-2750 Ext. 106

Sewage Enforcement Officer

William Brior
Surgarloaf, PA
570-384-3408

Building Inspector

Building Inspection
Underwriters, Inc.
Glenn Everitt
570-906-7319

Fire Companies

Hometown Fire Co.
Barry Messerschmidt, Chief
15 Mahanoy Avenue
Tamaqua, PA 18252
570-668-0274

Quakake Fire Co.

Scott Brill, Chief
130 Tamanend Road
Quakake, PA 18245
570-467-2383

Northeastern Schuylkill Joint Municipal Authority

(Rush Ryan Sanitary Sewer)
570-467-2176

American Water Services

(sewer billing)
717-533-4825

Tamaqua Borough (water billing and service)

570-668-0300

Tamaqua Transfer Station (garbage collection)

570-668-4515

Planning Commission

The Rush Township Planning Commission consists of five residents who serve as volunteers appointed by the Board of Supervisors for staggering four-year terms. The Planning Commission works toward providing for the coordinated development of the township and the general welfare of its citizens.

The functions of the Planning Commission are to review subdivision and land development plans, conditional use applications and lot line changes, and to make recommendations regarding these to the Board of Supervisors. Planning in Rush Township is governed by the 2009 Eastern Schuylkill Planning Region Joint Subdivision and Land Development Organization (SALDO), which was enacted by the township supervisors on October 20, 2009. These regulations are adopted to protect, promote, and create conditions favorable to the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the citizens of the ESP region.

Because planning is a continuous process that shapes and guides the physical growth of Rush Township in harmony with its social and economic needs, the planning commission urges all members of the public to attend its meetings and make their views known.

Rush Township Planning Commission

Robert J. Ritsick, Chairman
Thomas Murphy, Vice Chairman
Lisa Price, Secretary
Cathy Riotto, Member
Kenneth C. Hoppes, Member

The Rush Township Planning Commission meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the township building as needed.

Zoning Hearing Board

The purpose of the Rush Township Zoning Hearing Board is to help assure fair and equitable application and administration of the Zoning Ordinance by interpreting the ordinance, by hearing appeals from the Zoning Officer's decisions, and by granting relief from the literal enforcement of the ordinance in certain hardship situations.

Since the board has no legislative power, it can neither make nor modify zoning policy, cannot enact or amend the Zoning Ordinance, and cannot create or change any zoning classifications. It is a quasi-judicial body; that is, its powers are judicial in nature and it is the first step in the judicial system.

The board schedules hearings on applications of appeals that come before it, at which time it hears evidence and then issues written decisions that may contain findings of fact and conclusions of law.

Zoning in Rush Township is governed by the 2009 Eastern Schuylkill Planning Region Joint Zoning Ordinance, which was enacted by the township October 20, 2009.

All residents are encouraged to attend the board's hearings.

Rush Township Zoning Hearing Board

William McMullen – Secretary
Wayne Postupack – Chairman
Thomas Klein Jr. – Vice Chairman
Catherine Schimpf – Member
Kevin G. Leitzel – Alternate
Michelle Griffiths – Alternate

Meetings of the Rush Township Zoning Hearing Board are scheduled as needed.

Physical Therapy Specialists
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Mary Ann Gimbel, PT, CHT • Timothy P. Kelly, PT, DPT

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