



MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
OPEN SPACE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION COUNCIL
Spring 2018



**HOM FARM ON WINDSOR ROAD ENTERS
FARMLAND PRESERVATION**



The picture above shows the Hom farm seeded in rows, being sprayed with water to aid the germination of the seed. Note the irrigation system installed to supply water during the growing season.

The Hom Family has been no stranger to the preservation process in New Jersey. The first farm was preserved on April 22, 2008. It is 166 acres located on Battleground Road in Millstone Township. The second farm preserved entered the New Jersey Farmland Preservation program on November 28, 2017. This 96-acre farm is located on Windsor Road with 33 acres in Millstone Township and 63 acres in East Windsor.

Cong and his wife Fay, along with his three brothers, came to this area in 1946 and began farming on Perrineville Road (current location of Make a Wish Foundation) in Monroe. In 1958 they moved to the historic Nathaniel Cox Farm on Millstone Road to raise their family. From the beginning they raised Chinese vegetables, such as bok choy, cabbages, bitter melon, mustard greens, turnips and winter melon. Regularly they loaded up their farm trucks and drove to Chinatown, New York to sell their produce to restaurants and markets. As their business grew, they leased additional land and their increased production allowed them to extend their marketing to Washington DC, Boston and Chinatown, Philadelphia.

In the 1980s the family purchased two additional farms and their sons, Wickie and Frank, took over the business from their parents. They continued growing Chinese vegetables on 370 family owned acres plus another 150 leased acres for a total of 570 acres of production. Wickie reports that *“A farmer’s work schedule is 18 hours a day, 7 days a week for 8 months a year”!* There are many challenges that farmers must face during that time to successfully produce a crop that they can harvest and sell.

In 2007 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan reports that our county was ranked nationally in the “Top 100 counties” in several US Census agricultural categories. In particular, we ranked 5th in the Nation in Chinese Cabbage, largely due to the production on the Hom Farms and the Wong and Lee Farms in Millstone Township. Monmouth County was also ranked 81st nationally in the value of agricultural products sold directly to individuals for human consumption.

In 2013, Wickie and Frank “retired” and switched to grain farming which consists of high protein soybeans and wheat. Due to their dedication and love of farming, they are providing a small plot of land on their property to a young, local farmer. This young farmer now has an opportunity to raise vegetables and experience the same kind of life the Homs have always enjoyed with hopes of keeping agriculture alive in New Jersey. The Hom brothers are active members of the farming community and are always willing to share their knowledge with other farmers.

Millstone residents are fortunate to have dedicated farmers who are preserving their lands for farming that will feed our future generations local, fresh produce. **Thank you, Hom Family!**

Letter from the Chair

Welcome to our second annual spring edition of the **Millstone Township Open Space & Farmland Preservation Council and Agricultural Advisory Council** newsletter. It has been a great year full of accomplishments and there is more to come with 2018.

Last year the Council received 2 preservation applications. One was a municipal farmland and the other was for an open space. Once the preservation process is completed, both properties will add to the more than 7,000 acres currently preserved. The applications were submitted to the State Agriculture Development Committee and Green Acres respectively. This is a great accomplishment because, not only are we continuing to add additional preserved properties to our beautiful town but it also helps towards keeping our local taxes low. The township works hard to maintain its rural character by preserving farmland and open space, keeping residential densities low, supporting the continuation of a viable agricultural industry and maintaining a rural roadway.

Last year the OSFP Council monitored seven (7) preserved open space properties as part of our stewardship program. Our ordinances are designed to keep a balance between farmland/open space and new development - it's no coincidence that developments are surrounded by many acres of beautiful open space. The zoning codes seek to protect the local ecosystem which includes a "convergence zone" for the watersheds. By monitoring these properties, we ensure compliance and easement restrictions imposed on builders are being followed, and document the real-time condition of each property as it matures. This process will continue throughout 2018.

This year we also created our very own Facebook page where residents share their pictures of farmland, open spaces, nature and wildlife so residents can appreciate the beauty of our community and preservation efforts. In addition, we continue to maintain a webpage on the Township's website where we post our annual meeting schedule, member's roster and contact information, event information and copies of our OSFP and Ag Council's newsletters and other relevant information relating to land preservation and conservation. As always, we are excited to co-sponsor our annual Clambake Fundraiser and hope you can join us this year. More information about the Clambake can be found in this newsletter.

We are proud of our accomplishments and continue to work for the residents of Millstone in preserving some of the most beautiful areas of our town so that Millstone remains the beautiful town that it is.

Diane Morelli **Open Space & Farmland Preservation Council Chair**



Deer in Our Community

Have you ever been driving down the road on a nice evening with your family and all of a sudden out of nowhere a deer appears and you are unable to avoid hitting it? This could cause major damage to your vehicle and possible serious injuries to you or yours. I'm sure everyone reading this article knows someone who has had this experience. According to State Farm Insurance Company statistics, one out of every 247 motorists in the Garden State will hit a deer this year.

Has any aspect of your property, either landscaping or vegetable gardens been destroyed by deer? Are you or a loved one suffering the effects of Lyme disease due to the bite of an infected deer tick, carried onto your property by a deer? These and many more issues are on the rise due to the over population of these beautiful creatures. This over population is a direct result of the housing boom which began in this area in the late 1980's.

Deer population across the state is exploding. This is very evident in our community. Many areas in Millstone Township contain parcels of land where deer find a safe place to live, beyond the reach of legally licensed hunters (whom are on the decrease). This allows the deer to reproduce at an alarming rate, increasing the number of deer per square mile to exceed the acceptable state standards. In addition, at night these deer invade farmer's crops causing an excessive amount of damage. This results in many thousands of dollars in losses, leading to an increased challenge for these farmers to survive financially.

The solution to this problem isn't an easy one. I feel an aggressive deer management plan needs to be established in Millstone Township to aid in decreasing the numbers of deer. This could only be done with the cooperation of local residents, farmers and township officials coming together in a concerted effort to formulate this plan.

Please, when you are out and about, protect yourself from the bites of ticks by wearing the appropriate clothing as well as being aware of deer in the roadway.

Be careful out there.

George Asprocolas

Our Secret Garden: Benefits of Open Space in Millstone Township

Throughout history many have regarded open space as an amenity, although too often New Jersey's local leaders have relented when real estate interests pressured them to "develop" to enhance property values. Millstone Township has remained purposefully excluded from this over the years, leading to the unique character of our neighborhoods and the culture in our community.

Local land development ordinances have been crafted to keep an equal balance between existing farmland and housing development, preserving not only the rural way of life but Millstone's surrounding ecosystems. New Jersey classified Millstone as "Planning Area 4b Environmentally Sensitive", recognizing the necessity to protect and preserve the valuable natural resources which exists within our community. Our ability to build is limited by steep slope conditions which is an important characteristic of



watershed headwaters. Millstone being the headwaters of five major watersheds in New Jersey, is home to many unique habitats for endangered species of birds, plants and animals. We have a civic duty and responsibility to protect those water resources for many residents of the state.

There are many reasons why, as Millstone Township residents, we should care about continuing to maintain and acquire open space, as this preserved land allows for many benefits to our people and the local environment. For one, rain can effectively replenish the groundwater on which many of us depend for drinking water. This same open land provides vegetation and the lush undergrowth of the forests cleanse storm runoff before it enters our local watersheds. Millstone has some of the best soils found in the state of New Jersey providing our residents with quality food products each season. Supporting the continuation of a viable agricultural industry through the permanent preservation of farmland has been most important.

Further, our local park and trail systems provides opportunities for our community to enjoy the outdoors in all seasons through multiple forms of recreation such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, and fishing.

With continuous community involvement and active township management, our open space becomes a soft and subtle way to continue shaping the form and character of our neighborhoods today, and for future generations who come after us. **Keep up to date and share your thoughts and photographs through our committee Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Millstone Open Space And Farm Land Preservation.**

Join Us for the Weekend in Old Monmouth Event at the Thomas Baird Homestead

Saturday, May 5th, 10am-5pm and Sunday, May 6th, 12:00pm-5pm



The Friends of Millstone Township Registered Historic Properties & The Millstone Township Historic Preservation Commission

will be hosting this free weekend of events located at 24 Baird Road.

There will be sheep shearing, house tours, refreshments and much, much more.

Check out other historic sites around the county at www.visitmonmouth.com/page.aspx?ID=3464

Get to know your historic roots and visit us!

**Millstone Township
Committee**

*Gary Dorfman, Mayor
Nancy A. Grbelja, Deputy Mayor
Bob Kinsey
Michael Kuczinski
Fiore Masci*

**Open Space &
Farmland Preservation Council**

*Diane Morelli, Chairperson
Pat Butch, Vice Chairperson
George Asprocolas
Mark Blackwell
Nancy A. Grbelja
Anthony Marra
Rose Oxley
Randi Rosenfeld
Kelly Scott*

Agricultural Advisory Council

*George Asprocolas, Chairperson
Randy Peck, Vice Chairperson
Pat Butch
Tom Dancer
Shirley Pinhas
Kate Posten

Nancy A. Grbelja,
Township Committee Liaison*

12th Annual Clambake Fundraiser

Sponsored by the Agricultural Advisory Council and the
Open Space & Farmland Preservation Council

Sunday

June 10, 2018 at Wagner Farm Park

Adult Tickets are \$34.00 if purchased before May 30th.
Choice of 4 items from the menu and one dessert item:

- Lobster with an ear of corn
- 6 Shrimp Cocktail
- 6 Roasted Clams
- 6 Clams on 1/2 Shell
- 12 Steamers
- BBQ Pork Sandwich
- Hot Dog
- Hamburger

Tickets must be purchased in advance.

Contact :
Lori Maher
(732) 446-4249 x 1103

or
L-Maher@millstonenj.gov

to purchase tickets or if you would like additional information.

TOWNSHIP OF MILLSTONE

Agricultural Advisory Council
Open Space & Farmland Preservation Council
470 Stage Coach Road
Millstone Township, NJ 08510

Resident

Millstone Township, NJ 08510

