

TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
September 9, 2024

The meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held on this date at the Knowlton Municipal Building, 628 Route 94, Columbia, New Jersey and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Shipps. Mayor Shipps led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Shipps read the following statements “This meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: P: 1975, Chapter 231, noting that notice of all regularly scheduled meetings has been published in the *New Jersey Herald* and/or Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk’s office.”

Roll Call: Bates--absent Cuntala—yes, Mazza—absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps—yes
Committeeman Van Horn joined the meeting via conference phone.

PUBLIC COMMENT- Limited To 20 Minutes With 3 Minutes Per Member Of The Public

Ms. Susan LaFalce addressed the committee regarding down wires on Delaware Rd. Mayor Shipps advised Ms. LaFalce that those are telephone wires and she will follow up with the telephone company to rectify the situation.

Ms. Mary Dobis addressed the committee with concerns of increased truck traffic on Linaberry Rd. Committeeman Van Horn advised that they are local farmers hauling wheat and corn.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2024-87 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session

A. Personnel

Executive session was cancelled.

DEPARTMENT REPORT

Transportation: I80-611-Amtrak

Tara Mezzanotte addressed the NJDOT hosting a public information center at Knowlton Elementary regarding the I-80 Retaining Wall Project. Ms. Mezzanotte requested to compile a list of unanswered questions and concerns that the Township has regarding this project. Ms. Mezzanotte will present these questions to the NJDOT. Mayor Shipps asks Ms. Mezzanotte to have the list of questions approved by the Township attorney prior to the meeting.

Knowlton Fire and Rescue

Fire Chief Alex Weber thanked everyone who participated in their food truck festival event. There was a great turn out and he received positive feedback.

Chief Weber is in the process of crowd funding to replace the flag pole at tunnel field. Once the new flag pole is purchased, they would need final approval from the town for placement. Mayor Shipps requested that the flag pole meets all zoning requirements pertaining to its height.

ORDINANCES

INTRODUCTION

2024-07 An Ordinance Amending Various Provisions Of Chapter 11 Of The Township Code, Entitled “Land Development”

WHEREAS, the Township Land Use Board and Township Zoning Officer have recommended various amendments to the Township Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 11-282(B) of the Knowlton Township Code, entitled “Regulation of nonconforming uses,” is hereby amended as follows (additions noted in bold italic *thus* and deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~):

B. Regulation of nonconforming uses.

(1) No existing building or structure devoted to a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed, substituted or structurally altered except when changed to a conforming use or when required to do so by law and as follows:

(a) Restoration. Any nonconforming use or structure partially damaged by fire, casualty or act of God may be repaired, restored, reconstructed or used as before, provided that the area of such use, building or structure shall not exceed the area which existed prior to such damage. All repairs shall be commenced within one year after damage occurs and shall be completed within two years of such date, or such use shall not be rebuilt except as a conforming use.

(b) Repairs. Normal maintenance and repair of a structure containing a nonconforming use is permitted, provided that it does not extend the area or volume of space occupied by the nonconforming use and does not increase the number of dwelling units.

(c) Reconstruction. When a nonconforming structure or use is totally destroyed or damaged by fire or other casualty or an act of God, the nonconforming structure or use shall thereafter be terminated.

(d) A residential dwelling which is non-conforming by reason of its intrusion into any required front, side or rear yard setback areas may be enlarged, provided, however that the existing nonconforming setbacks are not further enlarged or further encroached upon.

(2) Nothing in this chapter shall prevent the strengthening or restoring to a safe or lawful condition any part of any building or structure declared unsafe or unlawful by the Construction Official or other authorized state or township official.

SECTION 2. Section 11-146.1, entitled “Resolution Compliance Review Fees,” is hereby added as follows:

Resolution compliance review fee.

A. As a condition of any approval granted by the Board, the applicant shall post an additional escrow fee deposit in an amount as follows:

- 1) For applications requiring site plan approval, a sum not to exceed the greater of \$500 or 175% of the estimate of the Engineer as authorized by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53.
- 2) For applications not requiring site plan approval, a sum not to exceed the greater of \$500 or 50% of the estimate of the Engineer as authorized by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53.

B. For those developments for which the reasonably anticipated fees are less than \$10,000, fees may, at the option of the applicant, be paid in two installments, and the initial payment deposited by the applicant shall be 50% of the reasonably anticipated fees. When the balance of deposit drops to 10% of the reasonably anticipated fees because the amount deposited by the applicant has been reduced by the amount paid to the Municipal Engineer for inspection, the applicant shall deposit the remaining 50% of the anticipated inspection fees.

C. For those developments for which the reasonably anticipated fees are \$10,000 or greater, fees may, at the option of the applicant, be paid in four installments. The initial amount deposited by the applicant shall be 25% of the reasonably anticipated fees. When the balance of deposit drops to 10% of the

reasonably anticipated fees because the amount deposited by the applicant has been reduced by the amount paid to the Municipal Engineer for inspection, the applicant shall make additional deposits of 25% of the reasonably anticipated fees. The Municipal Engineer shall not perform any inspections if sufficient funds to pay for those inspections are not on deposit.

- D. The resolution compliance fee shall be posted at the time that the plans, which have been revised in accordance with the resolution of approval, are submitted for compliance review. A certificate of occupancy shall not be issued until such fee is posted.

SECTION 3. Section 11-44 of the Code, entitled “Zoning Permits,” is hereby amended by adding the following subsections (D) and (E) as follows:

(D) Requirements for Permit. Any person requesting a zoning permit shall complete a written application on a form prescribed by the municipality. For purposes of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-18, a person shall be deemed to have requested a zoning permit only when each of the following have occurred: (a) the applicant for a zoning permit has completed a written application for a zoning permit on a form prescribed by the municipality, and the said application has been deemed complete by the Zoning Officer or his or her designee; (b) the fee for the zoning permit has been paid to the municipality, (c) the applicant has submitted a Certification from Tax Collector that all taxes and assessments are paid to date, (d) if required, submission of all information set forth in subsection (B) hereunder, and (e) the applicant has supplied the Zoning Officer with all supporting data reasonably requested by the Zoning Officer.

(E) Application Deemed Complete. Upon the applicant's satisfaction of the requirements of Subsection (D) hereof, the application for a zoning permit shall be deemed complete, and the Zoning Officer shall affix a stamp or other marking on the application indicating: (a) that the application is complete; and (b) the date on which the application was deemed complete.

SECTION 4. Section 11-144, entitled “Fee Schedule,” is hereby amended to delete the table entitled “Other Fees and Charges” in its entirety and replace with the following:

Other Fees and Charges	Filing Fee
Copies of minutes of resolutions	\$0.75 per page
Driveway Permit	\$150
Driveway Bond (refundable)	\$1,500
Certified list of property owners	\$10
Subdivision approval certificate	\$25 per certificate
On-site inspections	5% of estimated cost of improvements, \$500 minimum
Zoning Permit – Residential renovations, additions, and accessory structures	\$50.00
Zoning Permit – new residential structures	\$100.00
Zoning Permit – Commercial change of use or new business	\$50.00
Zoning Permit – Commercial renovations, additions, and accessory structures	\$100.00
Zoning Permit – new commercial structure	\$100.00

SECTION 5. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with any part of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent that they are in conflict or inconsistent.

SECTION 6. If any section, provision, or part of provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be unenforceable or invalid by any court, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance, or any part thereof, other than the part so held unenforceable or invalid.

SECTION 7. This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION

2024-04 An Ordinance Adding Chapter 170 to the Knowlton Township Code, Entitled “Tree Removal and Replacement”

WHEREAS, in order to prevent pollutants from being transported to local water bodies from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), federal stormwater regulations require MS4 operators to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and implement a stormwater management program; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to NJPDES Master General Permit No. NJ0141852, as of January 1, 2023, all 101 New Jersey municipalities previously assigned to Tier B, such as Knowlton Township, have now been assigned to Tier A, in order to help better manage stormwater discharges and resulting pollutant and nutrient impacts to waterways; and

WHEREAS, this reassignment requires Knowlton (and all former Tier B municipalities) to update their ordinances to be consistent with Tier A standards; and

WHEREAS, trees play a critical, often overlooked, role in the water cycle and in the mitigation of stormwater runoff issues such as soil erosion, pollutant reduction, infiltration, quantity reduction, and thermal effects; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Tier A MS4 permit renewal requires permittees (such as the Township) to, at a minimum, adopt and enforce a community-wide ordinance to control tree removal and replacement for all types of properties where the municipality has jurisdiction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 170, of the Code of the Township of Knowlton, entitled “Tree Removal and Replacement” is hereby added as follows:

§170-1. **Purpose.** This ordinance establishes requirements for tree removal and replacement in Knowlton Township to reduce soil erosion and pollutant runoff, promote infiltration of rainwater into the soil, and protect the environment, public health, safety, and welfare.

§170-2. **Definitions.** For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words, and their derivations shall have the meanings stated herein unless their use in the text of this ordinance clearly demonstrates a different meaning. When consistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words used in the plural number include the singular number, and words used in the singular number include the plural number. The use of the word "shall" means the requirement is always mandatory and not merely directory.

- A. “Applicant” means any “person”, as defined below, who applies for approval to remove trees regulated under this ordinance.
- B. “Critical Root Radius (CRR)” – means the zone around the base of a tree where the majority of the root system is found. This zone is calculated by multiplying the diameter (**in inches**) at breast height (DBH) of the tree by 1.5 feet/**inch**. For example: a tree with a 6” DBH would have a CRR = 6 **inches** x1.5 feet/**inch** = 9 feet.
- C. “Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)” means the diameter of the trunk of a mature tree generally measured at a point four and a half feet above ground level from the uphill side of the tree. For species of trees where the main trunk divides below the 4 ½ foot height, the DBH shall be measured at the highest point before any division.
- D. “Hazard Tree” means a tree or limbs thereof that meet one or more of the criteria below. Trees that do not meet any of the criteria below and are proposed to be removed solely for development purposes are not hazard trees.
1. Has an infectious disease or insect infestation;
 2. Is dead or dying;
 3. Obstructs the view of traffic signs or the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles, where pruning attempts have not been effective;
 4. Is causing obvious damage to structures (such as building foundations, sidewalks, etc.); or
 5. Is an obvious threat to public health, safety, and/or welfare OR certified as such by an arborist.
- E. “Invasive Species” An alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.
- F. “Person” means any individual, resident, corporation, utility, company, partnership, firm, or association.
- G. “Planting strip” means the part of a street right-of-way between the public right-of-way and the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic or between the abutting property line and the curb or traveled portion of the street, exclusive of any sidewalk.
- H. “Resident” means an individual who resides on the residential property or contractor hired by the individual who resides on the residential property where a tree(s) regulated by this ordinance is removed or proposed to be removed.
- I. “Street Tree” means a tree planted in the sidewalk, planting strip, and/or in the public right-of-way adjacent to the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic. This also includes trees planted in planting strips within the roadway right-of-way, i.e., islands, medians, pedestrian refuges.
- J. “Tree” means a woody perennial plant, typically having a single stem or trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing lateral branches at some distance from the ground.

- K. “Tree Caliper” means the diameter of the trunk of a young tree, measured six (6) inches from the soil line. For young trees whose caliper exceeds four (4) inches, the measurement is taken twelve (12) inches above the soil line.
- L. “Tree removal” means to kill or to cause irreparable damage that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive pruning, application of substances that are toxic to the tree, over-mulching or improper mulching, and improper grading and/or soil compaction within the critical root radius around the base of the tree that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. Removal does not include responsible pruning and maintenance of a tree, or the application of treatments intended to manage invasive species.
- M. “Tree Survey” means an aerial photograph or survey at a minimum scale of one inch equals 200 feet or a drawing to scale, which provides the following information: location of all trees or forested areas, the common name of all trees, the average diameter breast height, and indication of trees proposed to be removed, and the location of any proposed tree replacements.

§170-3. **Regulated Activities**

A. Application. Any person planning to remove a street tree, as defined by the term “Tree removal” in §170-2 above, with DBH of 2.5” or more, or any non-street tree with DBH of 6” or more on their property shall submit a Tree Removal Application, to the Township Clerk. For the removal of five or more trees, a tree survey, as defined in §170-2 above, shall be submitted as part of the application. No tree shall be removed until the Township Committee has reviewed and approved the removal. **Does the TC really want to make this determination?**

B. Development Applications before the Land Use Board. In the case of an application for development for major or minor site plan, major or minor subdivision, or a variance that may involve tree removal regulated by this ordinance, no separate application shall be filed and no separate fee shall be required in addition to the fees charged for the application for development. The application for development shall include the following information at a scale sufficient to enable the determination of matters required under these regulations:

- a. The shape and dimensions of the lot or parcel, together with the existing and proposed locations of structures and improvements, if any.
- b. Locations of all forest trees which are subject to this chapter, identified by common or botanical name. (Trees proposed to remain, to be transplanted or to be removed shall be identified.)
- c. A statement showing how trees not proposed for removal are to be protected during land clearing and construction, i.e., a protective barrier as defined herein.
- d. Locations and dimensions of all setbacks and easements required by the Zoning Ordinance^[1] of the Township.
- e. Statements as to grade changes proposed for the lot or parcel and how such changes will affect these regulations.
- f. Any proposed tree replacement.
- g. All trees to be retained shall also be identified by some method, such as painting, flagging, etc., prior to field inspection. (Where protective barriers are necessary to prevent damage to a tree that is not to be removed, such barriers shall be erected before work starts.)

C. Fee. Applicants will be subject to an application fee as per the Table below.

One (1) to Five (5) Trees	\$50.00
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Six (6) trees or more	\$10.00 per tree
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D. Tree Replacement Requirements

1. Any person who removes one or more street tree(s) with a DBH of 2.5” or more, unless exempt under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table below.
2. Any person who removes one or more trees per acre having a DNBH of 6” or more, unless otherwise exempt under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table.
3. Replacement tree(s) shall:
 - a. Be replaced in kind with a tree that has an equal or greater DBH than tree removed **or** meets the Tree Replacement Requirements in the table below;
 - b. Be replaced in kind with a tree species noted on the list of trees native to Warren County created by the Native Plant Society of NJ.
 - c. Be planted in accordance with the Planting standards noted in the table below.
 - d. Be planted within twelve (12) months of the date of removal of the original tree(s) or at an alternative date specified by the municipality;
 - e. Be monitored by the applicant for a period of two (2) years to ensure their survival and shall be replaced as needed within twelve (12) months; and
 - f. Shall not be planted in temporary containers or pots, as these do not count towards tree replacement requirements.

4. Table of Tree Replacement Requirements

Category	Tree Removed (DBH)	Tree Replacement Criteria
1	DBH of 2.5” (for street trees) or 6” (for non-street trees) to 12.99”	Replant 1 tree with a minimum tree caliper of 1.5” for each tree removed
2	DBH of 13” to 22.99”	Replant 2 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5” for each tree removed
3	DBH of 23” to 32.99”	Replant 3 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5” for each tree removed
4	DBH of 33” or greater	Replant 4 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5” for each tree removed

5. Table of Permitted Replacement Tree Species and Planting Standards

Tree Species	Planting Season	Planting Procedure
		Trees must have a healthy root system and be well-shaped, healthy, vigorous

<p>From the Native Plant Society of NJ. See list for Warren County. https://npsnj.org/native-plants/plant-lists/</p>	<p>Spring Planting: Mid-March to End of April;</p> <p>Fall Planting: Mid-September to Early November;</p> <p>Or as directed by an arborist.</p>	<p>stock free of disease, insects, eggs, larvae, and defects such as knots, sunscald, injuries, abrasion, and disfigurement. Trees must be maintained for a period of 18 months from planting by pruning, cultivating, watering, weeding, fertilizing, resotring, planting saucers, tightening and repairing stakes and guy supports and resetting to proper grades or vertical position, as required to establish healthy, viable plantings. Damaged tree wrappings must be restored or replaced as needed.</p>
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E. Replacement Alternatives:

1. If the Township Committee determines that some or all required replacement trees cannot be planted on the property where the tree removal activity occurred, then the applicant shall do one of the following:
 - a. Plant replacement trees in a separate area(s) approved by the Township Committee.
 - b. Pay a fee of \$100 per tree removed. This fee shall be placed into a fund dedicated to tree planting and continued maintenance of the trees.

§170-4. Exemptions. All persons shall comply with the tree replacement standard outlined above, except in the cases detailed below.

- A. Residents who remove less than four (4) trees per acre that fall into category 1, 2, or 3 of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table within a five-year period. The number of trees removed is a rolling count across a five-year period. For example, if 3 trees from category 1 are removed in July 2023, the ‘count’ resets to zero in July 2028. However, if 1 tree from category 1 is removed in July 2023 and another in July of 2025 the first tree will come off the count in July 2028 and the second in July 2030.
- B. Trees removed as part of the active operation of tree farms, nurseries, fruit orchards, and / or garden centers; provided that such operations are operated in compliance with applicable Township zoning laws);
- C. Trees removed as part of ongoing timber stand improvement work in compliance with a state-approved woodland or forest management plan.
- D. Trees removed as part of farming operations conducted on Farms with documented protection under the Right to Farm Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-1 et seq.
- E. Trees removed as part of a municipal or state decommissioning plan. This exemption only includes trees planted as part of the construction and predetermined to be removed in the decommissioning plan.

- F. Trees removed pursuant to a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved environmental clean-up, or NJDEP approved habitat enhancement plan;
- G. Trees removed as part of approved game management practices, as recommended by the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife;
- H. Trees removed that qualify as Hazard Trees.
- I. Trees removed consistent with a development application reviewed and approved by the Township Land Use Board.
- J. Trees removed that qualify as Invasive Species**

SECTION 2. Attachments 2-9 to Chapter 11, which are checklists to minor and major site plan, minor and major subdivision, variances, general development plans are here amended to add the following requirement:

If tree removal is proposed, the site plans just reflect all requirements set forth in the Township’s Tree Removal Ordinance, specifically §170-3(B).

SECTION 3. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with any part of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent that they are in conflict or inconsistent.

SECTION 4. If any section, provision, or part of provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be unenforceable or invalid by any court, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance, or any part thereof, other than the part so held unenforceable or invalid.

SECTION 5. This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

**Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to open public hearing.
Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to close public hearing.**

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

2024-06 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 11 Land Development – Other Fees And Charges To Include Cell Tower Review Escrow

WHEREAS, the Knowlton Township Mayor and Committee desire to add a Cell Tower Review Escrow Requirement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. Table IV-1 Fee Schedule of Knowlton Township Code Section 11-144, entitled “Fee Schedule,” is hereby amended to add the following:

Other Fees and Charges	Filing Fee	Additional Late Filing Fee
Cell Tower Review Escrow	\$500.00	None

SECTION 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with any part of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent that they are in conflict or inconsistent.

SECTION 3. If any section, provision, or part of provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be unenforceable or invalid by any court, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance, or any part thereof, other than the part so held unenforceable or invalid.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to open public hearing.

Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to close public hearing.

Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:

Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes

RESOLUTIONS

2024-85 Resolution To Join (Renew) The Fund

WHEREAS, a number of local units have joined together to form the Statewide Insurance Fund ("FUND"), a joint insurance fund, as permitted by N.J.S.A. 40A:10-36, *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP ("LOCAL UNIT") has complied with relevant law with regard to the acquisition of insurance; and

WHEREAS, the statutes and regulations governing the creation and operation of joint insurance funds contain elaborate restrictions and safeguards concerning the safe and efficient administration of such funds; and

WHEREAS, the LOCAL UNIT has determined that membership in the FUND is in the best interest of the LOCAL UNIT.

WHEREAS, the LOCAL UNIT agrees to be a member of the FUND for a period of three (3) years, effective from **January 1, 2024** terminating on **January 1, 2027** at 12:01 a.m. standard time; and

WHEREAS, the LOCAL UNIT has never defaulted on claims, if self-insured, and has not been canceled for non-payment of insurance premiums for two (2) years prior to the date of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the LOCAL UNIT does hereby agree to join the Statewide Insurance Fund; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to the extent required by law, the Local Unit shall provide notice of the Indemnity and Trust Agreement to the Office of the State Comptroller; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LOCAL UNIT's Fund Commissioner is

authorized and directed to execute the Indemnity and Trust Agreement and such other documents signifying the membership in the FUND as required by the FUND's Bylaws and to deliver same to the Administrator of the FUND with the express reservation that said documents shall become effective only upon the LOCAL UNIT's admissions to the FUND following approval of the FUND by the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

2024-86 Resolution Authorizing Department Of Public Works To Maintain Curbed Township Roadways

WHEREAS, the Township maintains the following roadways with curbing: (can we get a list?)

WHEREAS, from time to time, the Township receives complaints from residents that the area between the curb line and roadway becomes overgrown with brush, creating an eyesore and obstructing views of the roadway; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee has determined that it is in the best interests of the Township and its residents to utilize the Township Department of Public Works to remove such overgrown brush on curbed roadways.

NOW THEREFORE, as follows:

1. Upon request of the Mayor or Department of Public Works liaison, the Department of Public Works shall be authorized to remove brush from such curbed roadways.
2. The DPW Supervisor shall also be authorized to order their staff to remove such brush on curbed Township roadways if in their discretion it has become a hazard.
3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

2024-88 Resolution Approving The NJDOT To Temporarily Close A Portion
Of The Paulins Kill Trail

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Transportation ("NJDOT") plans to replace the Route 46 Bridge over the Paulins Kill in or about the summer of 2025; and

WHEREAS, the construction project requires the closure of a portion of the Liberty Water Gap Trail that runs under the bridge; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Debra Shipps and Clerk Kailene Molion participated in a meeting on July 18, 2024 with representatives of NJDOT and the Nature Conservancy to discuss the need for the trail closure; and

WHEREAS, during the meeting it was made clear that NJDOT had explored all options to keep the trail open during construction or otherwise relocate the trail; and

WHEREAS, NJDOT requires the consent of Knowlton Township to temporarily close the trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. Knowlton Township hereby consents to the temporary closure of a portion of the Liberty Water Gap Trail to facilitate the replacement of the Route 46 Bridge over the Paulins Kill.
2. Such consent is conditioned upon NJDOT providing advanced notice of the closure in writing to the Township so that the Township may post information regarding the closure to its website and otherwise advise residents.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

2024-89 Payment of Vouchers

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, New Jersey, that all claims attached are hereby approved as reasonable and proper claims against the Township of Knowlton.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that approval for payment is hereby given to the Chief Financial Officer to pay said claims, subject to the availability of funds.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

2024-90 Resolution To Approve Matching Funds For A Grant Request To The Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Of Warren County

WHEREAS, resolution 32024-50 dated May 13, 2024 authorized submission of a grant application by the Knowlton Township Historic Commission to the Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund of Warren County for the purpose of funding the continued restoration and rehabilitation of the Ramsaysburg Homestead buildings.

WHEREAS, the grant application was submitted to the Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund , requesting County MCCT funds in the amount of \$365,725.

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Historic Trust and the Federal Highway Transportation Enhancement are also providing funds grant for the purpose of the continued restoration and rehabilitation of the Ramsaysburg Homestead buildings.

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township's 2024 budget includes a \$5,000 allowance to be used for the purpose of grant request matching funds.

WHEREAS, it is intended that Knowlton Township's 2025 budget will also include an allowance for grant request matching funds in an amount of \$5,000 or greater.

NOW, THEREFORE , BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of Knowlton formally approves providing a commitment to provide Township matching funds in the amount of \$10,000 towards the above stated project.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

NEW BUSINESS

Employee Salary Increases

Mayor Shipps suggested a 1.8% salary increase for Township employees. The committee agreed on an increase of 1.8% and will be memorialized at October's meeting.

Employee Handbook Revisions

Attorney Tara St. Angelo provided the committee with the requested revisions to the employee handbook which include employee discipline policy, overtime policy, and Township vehicle policy.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes approved employee handbook revisions.**

Updated OPRA form

Mayor Shipps advised the Township is required by the state to update the Open Public Records Act form.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

Green Acres Procedural Letter

Mayor Shipps advised that Open Space has recently been approved for a Green Acres funding. Mr. Rene Mathez will be working on Pre-Appraisal Submissions. Mayor Shipps thanks Mr. Mathez for his dedicated work to this project.

Station Road Crosswalk

Mayor Shipps states a local resident painted a crosswalk on Station Road without permission. Attorney Tara St. Angelo advised that it could be a costly fix depending on the paint that has been used. Ms. St. Angelo suggests the Township engineer do an inspection to get an estimate of repairs.

Rt 46 Storm Water Catch Basins

Mayor Shipps states a resident reached out with concerns of scupper basins being closed on Rt. 46. There are concerns if there is flooding, there will be nowhere for the water to go. Committeeman Van Horn will do a site visit and report back to the committee of his findings.

MCCT Grant Request

Mr. Bob McNinch is requesting matching funds from the Township for the continued restoration of the Ramsaysburg Homestead. \$5,000 would be allotted from the 2024 budget and \$5,000 from the 2025 budget. Matching funds approved in resolution 2024-90.

Gypsy Moth Egg Mass Survey

Mayor Shipps advised that a Gypsy Moth Egg Mass Survey was conducted within the Township by the Department of Agriculture. There were little to no findings of Gypsy Moths that would require spraying. Mr. Rene Mathez advised that the webs that are seen in the trees may be Army worms or tent caterpillars. Mayor Shipps will reach out to the Department of Agriculture to see if there is anything that can be done for tent Caterpillars.

Mayor Shipps advised there is a property on Ramsayburg Road that was sold in a Sheriffs sale which had Municipal Liens. This property was purchased with the liens being taken off. The new property owner is requested these liens be discharged. Attorney Tara St. Angelo states by law, the Township cannot discharge municipal liens due to a Sheriffs sale.

Mayor Shipps discusses a property on 10 Summer Lane. The buyer is trying to close but there are tax sale certificates on the property but there are no records on file. Tara St. Angelo will assist our tax collector with rectifying this situation.

MEETING MINUTES

August 12th Public Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:

Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes

August 12th Executive Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:

Bates-absent, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-absent, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes

PUBLIC COMMENT- AGENDA ITEMS

No Public Comment

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's meeting at 8:30 pm.