



Haverford Civic Association

Lower Merion Township

September 2025 Newsletter

Greetings, Haverford neighbors!

Welcome back to another season of your monthly Haverford Civic Association newsletter. Hope you had a fine summer, a chance to take a break from the workaday world and rewind your wellsprings. But first, it's already been a busy start to the new season, so here's what's on tap this month and next.

PARTY IN THE PARK

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Rain Date: October 19

11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Live Music by 'Lincoln Drive'
Pumpkin Painting
Fortune Teller, Free Food, Raffle,
Narberth Ambulance,
Merion Fire Company



Sharpe Park
Montgomery Ave and Haverford Station Rd

Following up on last year's reprise of our popular family festival in Sharpe Park Bird Sanctuary, we're doing it again this year. Don't miss this chance to enjoy a convivial afternoon in our very own neighborhood nature preserve. Who says there's no such thing as a free lunch?

Township Commissioners' Updates

(Anthony Stevenson, Ray Courtney and Scott Zelov each represent a part of Haverford)

Road Report: Commissioner Scott Zelov has agreed to report monthly on traffic metrics compiled by the Lower Merion Police Department. Here's a comprehensive report covering June to early September when the newsletter was on hiatus:

- Week 1 – 14 citations for speeding at Bala Cynwyd Elementary School and the 1200 block of Montgomery Avenue in Penn Valley.
- Week 2 – 8 citations and 4 warnings for aggressive driving, 3 equipment notices, on Montgomery Avenue between Woodside Road and Airedale Road.
- Week 3 – 14 citations and 5 warnings for speeding, 6 equipment notices, on Lancaster Avenue and Llanalew Road in Haverford.
- Week 4 – 6 citations and 1 warning for speeding, 6 equipment notices, in the area of St. Asaph's Church and Cynwyd Road in Bala Cynwyd.
- Week 5 – 11 citations and 3 warnings for aggressive driving, 3 equipment notices, on Montgomery Avenue between Woodside Road and Airedale Road.
- Week 6 – 7 citations and 2 warnings for aggressive driving, 5 equipment notices, on Montgomery Avenue between Woodside Road and Airedale Road.
- Week 7 – 9 citations and 4 warnings issued while running a speed zone at Montgomery Avenue and Airedale Road in Bryn Mawr and another in the 1200 block of Montgomery Avenue in Penn Valley.
- Week 8 – 15 citations and 7 warnings for speeding, 20 equipment notices, at Bala Cynwyd Elementary School and the 1200 block of Montgomery Avenue in Penn Valley.

In a follow-up email, the commissioner reported that there have been 600 (!) violations since the stop-bar cameras on school buses went live at the end of August. He also confirmed that traffic counts for the Montgomery Avenue traffic safety study have been completed and preliminary findings will be presented "soon."

Silence of the Leaves: Commissioner Zelov announced that the text of a proposed ordinance regulating the use of leaf blowers has been posted to the township [website](#). Among other provisions, the new rules would prohibit the use of gas-powered blowers during certain months of the year. Commissioners will consider the ordinance at their October 22 meeting.

Historic Decision: Commissioner Zelov also said the Historical Architectural Review Board is expected to rule at its October 7 meeting whether to declare a Bryn Mawr home a historic property, with limits on how it might be modified. Advocates say the property at 17 Elliot Avenue is a significant example of Arts and Crafts architecture and a nationally significant women's history landmark. The owner of the property, however, opposes the designation. Haverford Civic Association is on record urging the

HARB to deny the historic classification, arguing that its historic bona fides are not sufficient to outweigh the owner's property rights. If approved, it would be the first such designation against an owner's wishes.

Budget Sessions: Commissioners met on September 3 for a budget workshop, the first in a series of meetings to hash out details of next year's township spending. The remaining sessions are set for November 7 and 12, with public hearings slated for November 19 and December 3. Adoption of the 2026 budget is set for December 17.

Federation of Civics

(Haverford is a member of the township-wide Lower Merion and Narberth Federation of Civics. We send a delegate to their meetings and report back on what's doing.)

From the minutes of the Federation's June 9 meeting:

- Speakers from Natural Lands, the conservation nonprofit, and its Stoneleigh property in Villanova reported on the planned joining of Stoneleigh and the Oakwell property, which Natural Lands is buying from Lower Merion School District. The 13-acre Oakwell acquisition will add 10 acres to Stoneleigh, while 3 acres will be sold to a private foundation. Stoneleigh is a former Haas family property and Oakwell was once a part of it, forming a single estate designed by the Olmsted brothers.
- A slate of officers for 2025–26 was approved:
 - Joan Hindin, president
 - Garrett Elwood, first vice president
 - Bruce Ludwig, second vice president
 - Ann Mezey, treasurer
 - Linda Sagman, secretary

Minutiae

(Highlights from the September 9 HCA Board Meeting.)

Diggin' in the Dirt: HCA vice president Catherine Abrams, the moving force behind our "Party in the Park" at Sharpe Bird Sanctuary, put out a call for all available green thumbs to come out to help The Garden Workers with the park's fall maintenance and spruce up the area for the party. Get your boots on the ground any or all of these days. Don't forget to bring your tools and work gloves!

Sharpe Park Community Work Days

Saturday, September 27, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 11, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The Garden Workers Work Days

Tuesday, September 30, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, October 22, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Sharpe Bird Sanctuary is at the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Haverford Station Road.

Traffic Calming: HCA board member Barbara Cohen's report :

- School buses in the Lower Merion School District were outfitted over the summer with cameras to identify drivers who fail to stop when the red stop-bar

lights are flashing. A \$300 penalty for first-time offenders went into effect August 1.

- The Automated Red-Light Enforcement program was approved by the township commissioners in July. Three intersections have been identified for installation of red-light cameras to document violators. Signage at affected cross streets will warn drivers of an initial 60-day grace period with no fines, followed by a 30-day warning period. Fines will be capped at \$100.
- The ARLE cameras are expected to cut down on dangerous T-bone collisions that often result in serious injury or death. But (no pun intended) rear-enders will likely increase, at least initially, as drivers get used to actually stopping before the light turns red.
- The HCA's resolution in support of bills allowing local police to use radar for speed limit enforcement resulted in State Senator Amanda Cappelletti signing on to one of them as a co-sponsor.
- A three-car crash on Montgomery Avenue near Woodside Road on August 26 sent one person to the hospital in critical condition. Police believe one of the drivers suffered a medical emergency resulting in the collision. It was the third crash in roughly three years at this curving stretch of Montgomery Avenue.

Magical History Tour: Officials of the Lower Merion Historical Society hosted a group of HCA board members Wednesday evening, September 17, at the Society's headquarters, the Lower Merion Academy building in Bala Cynwyd. Built in 1812 and now on the National Register of Historic Places, it was the area's first free public school. Today it's flanked by the Bala Cynwyd Elementary and Middle schools and houses a rich collection of books, maps, property records, photographs and historical artefacts. It's open to the public Wednesday evenings, 7 to 9 p.m., Sunday afternoons, 2 to 4 p.m., or by appointment. You can find the Historical Society website [here](#). Also, watch your inbox for an upcoming Haverford Bulletin illustrated article exploring the Society's history and collections.

Bits & Pieces

(A miscellany of factoids from various sources.)



- Although Gov. Shapiro got SEPTA back on track by authorizing the one-time use of funds set aside for maintenance and capital projects, the embattled public transit agency still has no permanent source of sustainable funding to operate its trains, busses and trolleys. SEPTA had announced plans for draconian service cuts – including eliminating the Paoli-Thorndale regional rail line – if the State Legislature failed to come up with more money. SEPTA has resumed a full schedule of service, but a 21.5 percent fare increase went into effect after a court ruling September 14.
- Main Line Health Systems presented its plans for senior living at its St. Charles Borromeo campus at a public meeting on September 12. The master plan for the 73-acre property envisions a full spectrum of care for seniors in a 500-unit facility and an additional 23 single-story villas. Also on tap is a 350-unit apartment development, a boutique hotel of 125 rooms, 210,000 square feet of medical space and 10,000 square feet of “supporting retail.”
- The following week, on September 18, there was a community discussion of the Piazza development in Ardmore. Piazza Auto Group has partnered with Radnor Property Group to raze 3.5 acres along the south side of Lancaster Avenue from Ardmore Avenue to Greenwood Avenue and erect a five-story structure with ground-floor retail and 270 apartments above. The project is effectively exempted from the current three-story height limit because it had been approved before the current ordinance was adopted. Piazza had originally partnered with Toll Brothers, but that ended due to uncertain market conditions. Groundbreaking is expected after Thanksgiving, with a two-year construction timetable.

Subscribers Wanted: The Association’s monthly newsletter is a project of the Membership Committee to reach out to the broader community and foster greater engagement with our membership. We encourage subscribers to our email list to share the newsletter with their friends and neighbors. Subscription requests can be sent to haverfordcivicasociation@gmail.com.

Get out and enjoy the beautiful fall weather while you can!

But don’t miss our next meeting on October 10 to stay informed and involved. Remember, your voice matters in making Haverford a better place for all.

Tuesday, October 10, 7:00 p.m.
Wine Cellar of the Merion Cricket Club
325 Montgomery Avenue
Haverford PA 19041

Warm regards,
The Haverford Civic Association Board

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