

My parents moved to Harrison Township twenty years ago, and have experienced many changes in our fast growing community. When I first started Harrison Township elementary school in 1997 there were 500 students from kindergarten to sixth grade, now that number has tripled to 1500 students. In a very short time our township has grown from a quiet farming community to a town with many sprawling developments, the county library and even new strip malls. As these changes occurred so did our municipal government. In the past farmers and families who have always lived in Mullica Hill ran our local government, but recently new members of our community have become involved. Men and women who moved to Mullica Hill because of our great school system, our close proximity to Philadelphia and major highways, and our “all around hometown” feel. They have a vision for the township based on the reasons why they chose to move to Harrison and it is these ideas that are helping our township move in a positive direction.

Our township government’s forte is allowing the change needed in a growing community yet still keeping our small, “old-fashioned” feel. For example, working with our historical society helps maintain the distinguished flavor that Mullica Hill is known for through their notable homes and antique shops. Moreover, the committee has worked tirelessly to continue to provide recreation for the youth of Harrison through activities like the Halloween Parade and the Annual Easter Egg Hunt; by continuing these traditions our township maintains a close-knit community. Although the committee strives to maintain the homegrown feel of our town, they are also working to ensure that we continue to progress. An example of their work developing our town is the recent opening of the William Wilt Soccer complex. Many years of hard work including extra environmental studies and land management to make sure all the fields were safe, and convincing our older members of the community that green fields was the right thing to do, resulted in a ten-field complex with lighted fields that would be the envy of many communities. Finally, one of the biggest challenges the municipality has faced is our growing traffic problem. For at least twenty years ideas have been put out to the voters to alleviate the Route 322 traffic especially difficult during the summer months as people travel to the shore, and all were voted down. Although not popular with some of the community, this committee has worked with the county to create a by-pass that will redirect the flow of traffic around the historic district while protecting the integrity of our town. What does my government do best? They work hard to ensure that the small town feel that many of the residents moved here for does not fade away, while continuing to progress our town forward so it is able to compete with the other municipalities. In other words, they keep their eyes on the future and protect our past.

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