



Upper Merion Township

Annual Report

1960

UPPER MERION
PENNSYLVANIA

JOHNSON

IMPORTANT ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance Number 1, the Zoning Ordinance, set up to have a controlled land use pattern for the township.
2. Ordinance Number 13, requiring the owner or occupant of premises to cut and destroy weeds or objectionable vegetation.
3. Ordinance Number 16, regulating subdivisions of land.
4. Ordinance Number 31, regulating use of septic tanks, cesspools or seepage pits.
5. Ordinance Number 35, requiring owners of dogs to prevent them from running at large, providing for the seizure and detention of dogs running at large and penalties for violation.
6. Ordinance Number 47, creating the Office of Township Manager.
7. Ordinance Number 62, approving plans and specifications for the construction of a new sewerage plant and system.
8. Ordinance Number 65, regulating signs and outdoor advertising structures.
9. Ordinance Number 76, making it unlawful to hunt for, catch, take, wound or kill game of any kind through use of a gun, pistol, shotgun, carbine, revolver, air rifle, bow and arrow, or to discharge a projectile propelling device in the township within 150 yards of any dwelling house.
10. Ordinance Number 91, establishing sidewalks and widths of the sidewalks in the township.

The Report:

Compiled by
WILLIAM R. SCHMIDT
Samuel Fels Scholar in Governmental Administration
Under the direction of
PAUL A. FLYNN, Township Manager

INTRODUCTION

Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, is a township of the Second Class presently operating under the statutes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The early history of the township began over 300 years ago when trappers came up the Schuylkill River in their canoes and invaded the Indian wilderness to engage in fishing, hunting, and trapping. These men received a land grant from William Penn to establish a colony along the Schuylkill River. Other settlers followed. By 1798, the tax records of the township showed that there were 33 log cabins, 15 story and a half, 57 stone dwellings, and 42 two story dwellings in the area. In 1800, the Federal census showed 993 persons living in the township; by 1840 the figure had risen to 2,804 and by 1880 the total was 3,275.

Upper Merion Township has an interesting history, not the least of which were the events which happened at Valley Forge during the Revolutionary War. For an entire century or more after the Revolutionary War, the township and Montgomery County remained rural farming districts. With the ending of the Civil War, industrial growth, including iron furnaces and marble quarrying began. Also, at this time, railroads began to be built but because Upper Merion did not have frontage on these railroads, land was bypassed until the mode of travel changed to the automobile. Through all of the major events of the twentieth century, the township remained rural in character.

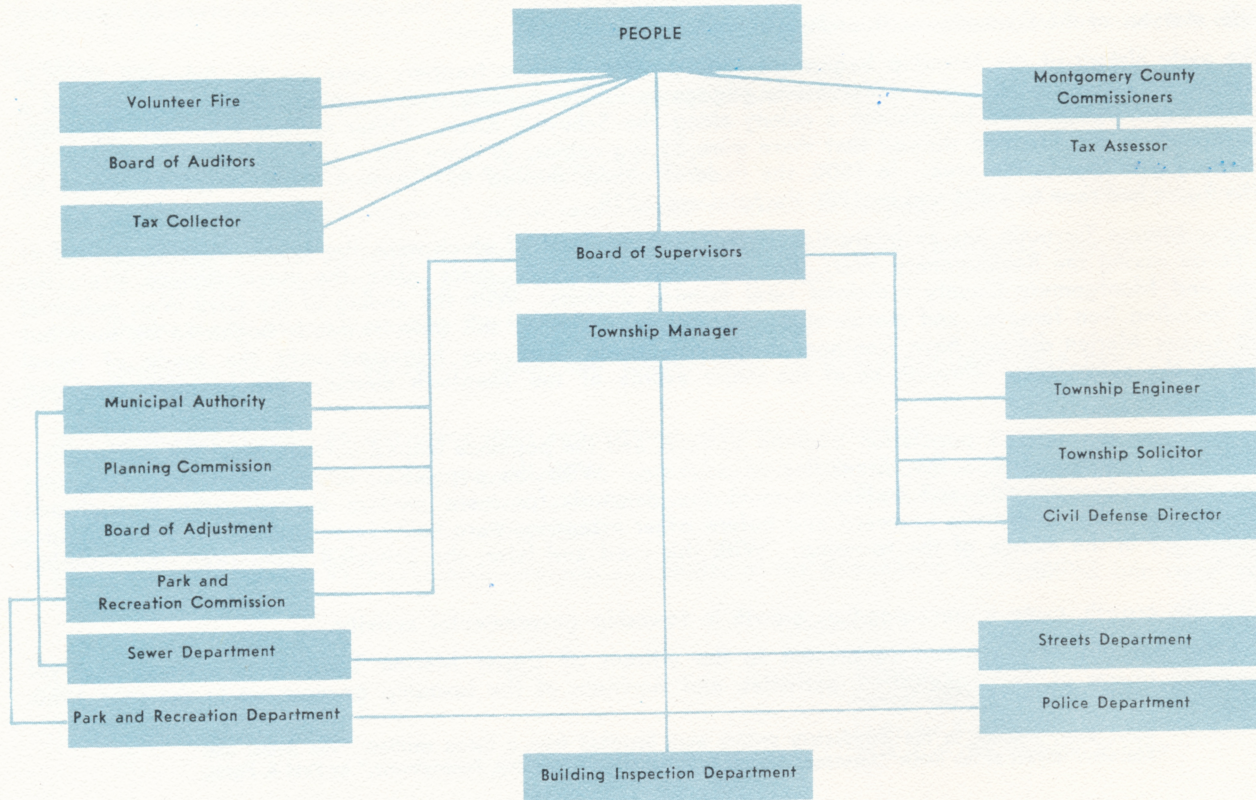
However, as the nation's population boomed upward, and the populace leaped outward from the major cities, Upper Merion Township was in the direct line of advance. With the population boom came a corresponding boom in automobile ownership and traffic; to meet the demands for more modern highways the Pennsylvania Turnpike was extended from Irwin eastward and before other extensions were built, terminated in the heart of King of Prussia, right in the middle of the township. With this road and later, the Schuylkill Expressway, the township grew by leaps and bounds.

With this growth, came a corresponding growth in township governmental activity.

It is the purpose of this report to present to the citizens of Upper Merion Township a concise and yet comprehensive review of the organization, activities, and functions of the township government in the year 1960.

Note: Many remarks in the introductory section were borrowed from a thesis entitled: "The Social and Economic Impact of the Major Expressway System in Upper Merion Township, Pennsylvania," by Paul A. Flynn.

ORGANIZATION



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Blaine Scott, III, Chairman
William F. Ross
J. Howard Walker

The governing or policy-formulating body of the township is the Board of Supervisors and is composed of three members, as is stated in law under the Second Class Township Code. The supervisors are elected on a township wide basis, for a six-year term. The supervisors are responsible for determining policy, approving the annual budget, establishing tax rates, establishing municipal services, and enacting ordinances. To assist it with its work, the Board appoints a Township Manager who is responsible for carrying out Board policies, a Solicitor whose duty is to advise the Board on matters of law and to represent the township in court, and an Engineer who advises the Board on matters relating to streets and other engineering assistance. The Board also appoints members of the advisory Boards and Commissions.

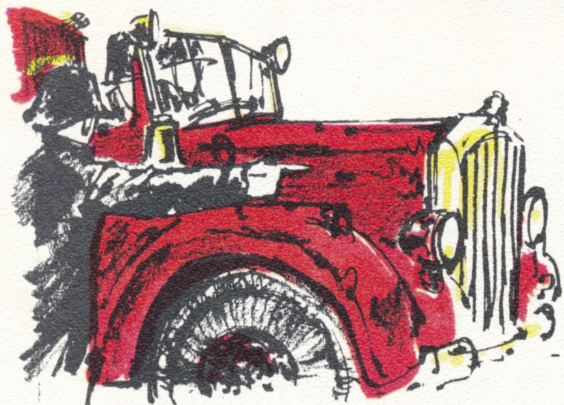
During 1960, the Board met in twelve regular meetings in addition to the numerous special and committee meetings required to study proposed legislation.

ADMINISTRATION

Full Time Personnel: 4

Expended 1960: \$12,250.67

The Township Manager is selected by and holds his office at the will of the Board. It is the Manager's responsibility to implement and carry out the policies adopted by the Board and see that the business of the township is executed in an efficient and economical manner. As Chief Administrative Officer, the Manager appoints department heads, co-ordinates their activities, and periodically summarizes their work for the Board. The Manager also prepares the annual budget and is responsible for its administration after it is adopted by the Board. He keeps the Board informed of the financial condition of the township and makes recommendations as needed to keep the budget balanced. The Manager's staff purchases all materials and supplies required by the various township departments, serves as secretariat to the Board of Commissioners and the Municipal Authority. The Manager's office also conducts surveys or studies on township problems.



FIRE

Expended 1960: \$18,000.00

The township is protected for fire purposes by three volunteer fire companies. These are: Swedesburg, Swedeland, and the King of Prussia companies.

Each company is an independent unit but in case of extreme emergency, the companies work together.

To protect the property of the citizens of Upper Merion Township, the combined departments maintain eight pieces of major equipment.

During 1960, the companies answered the following number of calls: Swedesburg, 75; Swedeland, 91, and King of Prussia, approximately 80 calls.

From time to time, the companies are called upon to pump out flooded cellars, free entrapped pets, and carry on other related functions.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Full Time Personnel: 18

Expended 1960: \$120,990.44

Throughout the past year, the Police Department, consisting of a chief, 4 sergeants, 9 patrolmen, 4 deskmen, and 8 crossing guards, was busy protecting persons and property by enforcing local and state laws. In 1960, the four patrol cars of Upper Merion traveled 152,404 miles. The police force worked a total of 23,120 hours on Criminal, Traffic, Special and Station assignments. The police operated 4,930 patrols and made 92 criminal, 166 accident, and 541 other investigations. The department recovered \$56,270.50 in property stolen in past years. Approximately \$44,000.00 of property was stolen in 1960. The police answered 5,335 phone calls. The township had 2 fatal accidents and approximately 150 persons were injured due to automobile accidents. The police department arrested 885 persons for traffic violations and 67 persons for criminal violations.



STREET DEPARTMENT

Full Time Personnel: 7

Expended 1960: \$116,365.72

The Street Department, in a constant effort to maintain good road conditions in a rapidly growing community, sealed approximately eight miles of streets, using 25,378 gallons of oil and 100 tons of stone. The department resurfaced 1,500 feet of Ross Road using 2,000 tons of black top. It placed 2,000 tons of patching material. The department purchased and spread 55 tons of rock salt for snow and ice control.

The department cut and cleared three miles of brush and weeds along roadsides and the whole township was afforded weed control protection during the summer months.

The department installed numerous street signs and traffic control signs.

The department, in 1960, purchased an Elgin Model 81 Street Sweeper to allow for better road maintenance and cleanliness. This department also operates the fogging machine for the control of flies and mosquitoes.

SEWER DEPARTMENT

Full Time Personnel: 9

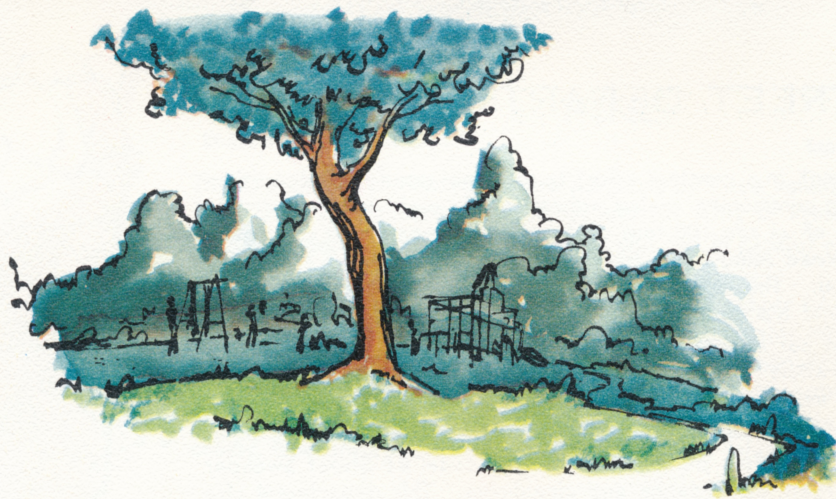
The Sewer Department was created by the Municipal Authority to oversee the total construction of the sewerage system, to supervise the inspections in the department, to oversee the sewerage plant, the five pumping stations, and the 148,000 lineal feet of new pipe.

With the completion of the sewer system, which is now 99% completed, the Sewer Department will be responsible for any further installation of sewers, to oversee the plant facilities and any further extension of the sewer system.

The monies for the operation of this department are paid for out of funds collected as sewer rentals and is not paid for by general township monies.

(For more information about sewers, see summary of the sewer authority found on page 11.)





PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Full Time Personnel: 3

Expended 1960: \$30,833.85

The Park and Recreation Department is jointly operated and administered by the Township Board of Supervisors and the local school district. The Upper Merion Park and Recreation Board is a legally established Board consisting of five members and a Superintendent of Recreation. The Board is charged with the development of long range acquisition and development plans. It maintains three recreation areas of a total of 66 acres. It also maintains two public areas.

The program operated by the department included, last year, nine public playgrounds, operated for a nine-week period in the summer, which had a total attendance of 52,744. Other program facilities included a junior leader training program, a teen-age canteen during the summer, a men's softball program, a county-wide training institute for recreation leaders, an adult recreation program, which included a men's basketball league, golf training, courses in oil painting, a bridge course, a women's slimnastics course and a youth program during the winter months.

BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

Full Time Personnel: 2

Expended 1960:

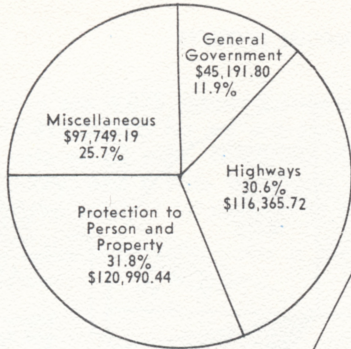
The Building Inspection Department is responsible for protecting homes and property through the interpretation and enforcement of the Building and Plumbing Codes and the Zoning Ordinance. All plans for new building construction, remodeling, and plumbing installations must be submitted to the department for its approval. After the plan has been approved, a permit is issued and the department makes regular inspections of the work until it is completed.

In 1960, the total number of permits was 372. The estimated cost of construction of these projects is \$12,359,472.00. The fees involved for these permits totaled \$32,864.00.

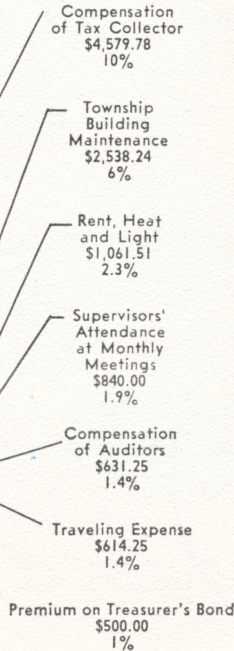
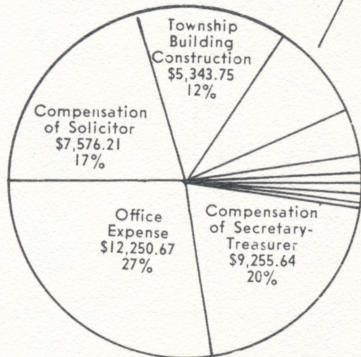
Included in these permits were 163 single homes with an estimated cost of \$2,688,909.00; 4 apartments with an estimated cost of \$500,000.00; 13 commercial establishments, with an estimated cost of \$4,761,500.00, and 14 individual buildings with an estimated cost of \$2,956,962.00.



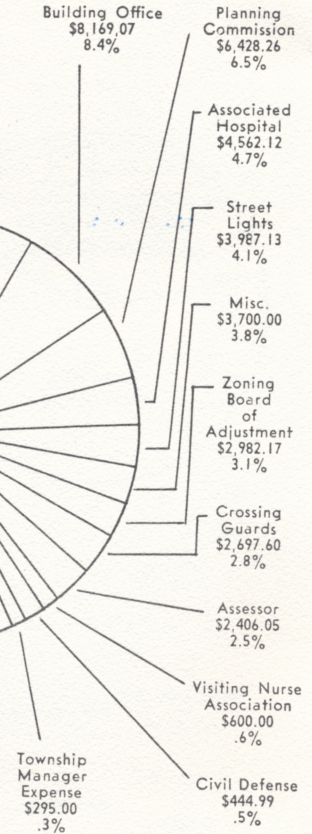
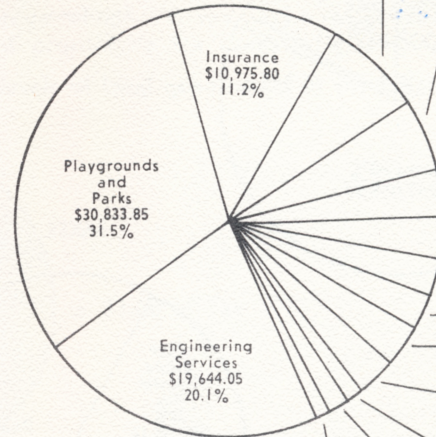
EXPENDITURES



GENERAL GOVERNMENT



MISCELLANEOUS



MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Members: 5

Appointed by: Board of Supervisors

The five member authority was established by the Board of Supervisors to set up plans and specifications for a sewerage plant and a sewer system. Two bonds were issued for the project. The first was a \$2,700,500.00 forty year bond to set up a sewer construction account. The monies to pay this bond off will come through connection fees and quarterly service charges. The second bond issue was a \$500,000.00 bond to finance sewer trunk lines, interceptors and laterals in the street. The money for this bond will be recovered by a front footage assessment.

The contract was given in 1959 for new sewer construction. The project should have been completed in 1960, but due to weather conditions, highway permits coming late from the state and a variety of problems, the project was slowed down. Presently, the project is 99% completed.

The authority purchased the Crow Creek plant serving 500 homes. The new plant is designed to handle two and one-half million gallons of sewage a day, which should be sufficient to handle 25,000 persons.

To supervise and maintain the sewer equipment, a sewer department has been set up. (For details of this department, see page 5.)

PLANNING COMMISSION

Members: 5

Appointed by: Board of Supervisors

The Planning Commission serves the Board of Commissioners in an advisory capacity on all subjects relating to zoning, street patterns, land subdivision, and all other matters concerned with the proper growth and development of the township.

During the year, eighteen formal meetings were held. Forty-four subdivisions were reviewed, many of these requiring two or more meetings for review and development. Four zoning changes and recommendations were forwarded to the Supervisors, two were approved and two were not.

Comprehensive Plan, Report No. 2, was completed and delivered to the Supervisors as well as to adjoining municipalities, libraries, schools, civic associations, and interested commercial enterprises.

A Cut and Fill Ordinance and a Shade Tree Ordinance were drafted and forwarded to the Supervisors.

Slides were prepared from charts, graphs, and maps contained in the Comprehensive Plan, Reports 1 and 2. These slides, with a running commentary, have been presented by Planning Commission members to four local civic associations.

The proposed Township Library, Township Building and Sweetbriar Park have been reviewed.

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Members: 5

Appointed by: Board of Supervisors, 3; School Board, 2

For a discussion of the commission, see the description of the Park and Recreation Department on page 6.

BOARD OF AUDITORS

Members: 3

Elected by the People

This Board is charged with the responsibility of auditing the township financial accounts annually. This usually entails several weeks and upon completion, the audit is filed with the Board of Supervisors and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Internal Affairs.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Members: 3

Appointed by: Board of Commissioners

The Zoning Board of Adjustment is a quasi-judicial body which hears appeals from persons and corporations denied building permits by the Building Inspection Department for the proposed construction of buildings not in compliance with the Township Zoning Ordinance. The Board is authorized to grant variances to the Zoning Ordinance when, because of circumstances peculiar to the property in question, a literal enforcement of the ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship. During the last year, the Board heard 17 appeals and granted 8 variances. Three special exceptions were granted.

SPECIAL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND AUTHORITIES

MUNICIPAL SEWER AUTHORITY

Joseph Missimer, Chairman
John J. Parsons, Jr.
Harry Rosen
Ralph Falconiero
Hugh H. Hackett

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Rev. W. R. Phillippe, Chairman
Mrs. J. Russell Myers
Robert T. Jordan
H. Emerson Sparks
Franklin R. Tyson

PLANNING COMMISSION

John T. Brugger, Chairman
Chester R. Hoenstine
Frank Osinski
Raymond Wanger, Jr.
Dr. Russell V. McLaughlin

BOARD OF AUDITORS

Robert G. Weierbach, Chairman
Wilford Horrocks
Charles C. Stiles

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Charles McCracken, Chairman
Arthur R. Cummins
John Morrell

PLANS FOR 1961

1. Construction of Missile Boulevard as proposed.
2. Commencement of work on the new township building.
3. Rebuilding and resurfacing:
 - a. Keebler Road;
 - b. Allendale Road;
 - c. Ross-Boro Line Road.
4. Construction of main cross streets in Rebel Hill.
5. Surface treatment of approximately 15 miles of streets.
6. Commencement of construction of Walker Tract Recreation Area.
7. Enactment of ordinances concerning:
 - a. Air pollution;
 - b. Shade trees;
 - c. Plumbing Code;
 - d. Revisions to Sign Ordinance.
8. Installation of sanitary sewers in the entire Swedesburg area.
9. A feasibility report and a tentative schedule of progress in the general Swedeland area for sewer construction.