

## Do You Know Where This Historical Monument Is Located?

By Sarah Harris, Commission Member,

Morris Township Historic Preservation Commission

The inscription on the Heritage Commission historic marker at this site states:

“ARTILLERY BRIGADE CANTONMENT, COMMANDED BY GENERAL HENRY KNOX, HUTTED NEAR THIS SITE DURING THE SECOND WINTER ENCAMPMENT OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY IN 1779-1780”.

This monument was erected by Morristown Post Number 59 – American Legion in 1932.

Using the information above, e-mail your answer to [sarahfh57@aol.com](mailto:sarahfh57@aol.com). Look in the next issue of the Municipal Messenger for the correct answer.



## Open Space and Active Recreation Sports Fields

By Rick Watson, Deputy Mayor and Open Space Committee Chair

Our new Director of Parks and Recreation, Bill Foelsch, recently contributed a report about the Township's recreational needs to the Planning Board as part of its Master Plan reexamination process. The report confirmed and detailed what those of us involved in the search for open space have known for years – the explosive growth in sports that require large flat fields such as soccer and lacrosse has overrun our current inventory of suitable fields.

Our Open Space Committee, charged with identifying suitable parcels to buy, has looked for over a decade at virtually every vacant parcel in the Township. Unfortunately, most are too small or too hilly to accommodate active recreation needs. The situation presents a real challenge to Morris Township because the impediment to building new sports fields is not lack of public support or even lack of funding, but simply that there's often no clear answer to the question "Where?"

Of the parcels the Township has purchased through the Open Space Fund, several serve mainly to prevent development (like Jones Woods) or to protect the environment by preventing erosion (like the Mt. Kemble hillside purchases). Of course, there are opportunities for passive uses such as hiking trails on these parcels. Our new Trails Plan committee, working with our Open Space consultants at the Morris Land Conservancy, will be developing a Township-wide trails plan to optimize passive use opportunities.

However, some Open Space parcels could support more active recreation. Here are the specific sites we are working on:

- The Jean Street property where a brand new, full-sized soccer field will soon be opened.
- The Blue Gate Farm property where environmental analysis will soon tell us the extent of our opportunities.
- The property near the intersection of Ketch Road and West Hanover Avenue, bought from the State a few years ago primarily to thwart further development in the area, where a field development evaluation is underway. Though apparently free of wetlands, the property would require some grading to create flat field areas.
- The Mt. Kemble property – between the existing office park and Route 287 – where there are about 15 acres of usable, flat land that could be the home to at least two full-sized soccer fields. We're actively negotiating to purchase this property and an access easement to enter it, as well as use of the existing parking lot. Morris County has granted us over \$1 million for this project and we'll be asking them for more this year. Such a complex, when developed, would be well removed and buffered from its neighbors and could even be lighted to enable more hours of use on the fields.

"What about artificial turf?" some people ask. The Township recognizes that the technology of turf has come a long way and that it's clearly the way to go to

## Your Township Committee

Robert E. Nace, Mayor  
Richard A. Watson, Deputy Mayor  
Jeff Grayzel  
Kathleen G. Hyland  
H. Scott Rosenbush  
Check our website at:  
[www.morristwp.com](http://www.morristwp.com) or refer to your  
Municipal Calendar for more  
information on key dates for Morris  
Township meetings & other activities.

develop fields that can be played on year-round in all weather. Again, however, the critical question is "Where?" We have an engineering study underway to determine if turf can responsibly be put on the existing football field at Cornine Field on Sussex Avenue. If it can be, this field along with two other possibilities – the Mt Kemble and Ketch Road/West Hanover Avenue sites – will be considered for turf development.

Morris Township is serious about its efforts to find and develop more fields for our youth. We acknowledge there are critics who complain that we haven't done more. But when our citizens ask for more sports fields, there are no locations suggested beyond those we are already considering.

We all need to ask and answer the critical question "Where?" when thinking about open space & active recreation possibilities.

Constructive input from our citizens is always appreciated, and we will be pleased to answer any questions you have.