

## Millstone's master plan revisions set to begin

### *Township adopts greenway plan for trail project*

**BY JANE MEGGITT Staff Writer**

MILLSTONE - The township's Planning Board unanimously voted to adopt the Crosswicks Creek/Doctors Creek (CCDC) Watershed Greenway Plan as an amendment to the master plan.

Township Planner Richard Coppola said that based on a presentation of the greenway plan in 2006 he had been instructed to prepare a supplemental modification amendment to the open space and farmland preservation elements of the township's master plan. He said the greenway amendment is totally consistent with the master plan and actually augments it with additional basis for conservation.

The greenway plan suggests the creation of the Doctors Creek to Assunpink Trail as a portion of the Capital to the Coast Trail network, which connects the Delaware Valley to the Jersey Shore.

The CCDC Greenway Group consists of appointed members from 12 towns in Monmouth, Mercer and Ocean counties including Millstone, Upper Freehold, Allentown, Washington Township, Hamilton and Plumsted, which are all part of the Crosswicks Watershed. The group has been meeting since 2001 and in October 2004 received the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) Environmental Achievement Award.

Mayor Nancy Grbelja said she did not know why the township had not adopted the amendment earlier and that it may have been postponed because she had been hospitalized at the time.

She called the amendment "really important," saying it is consistent with what the township wants because of its history of trails and greenways.

"It's a shame we haven't adopted it earlier than now," she said. "We are the last of the group, and we should have been the first."

Grbelja did not know that Upper Freehold has not yet adopted the plan. Upper Freehold CCDC Group representative Marc Covitz said he hopes his town's Planning Board puts it on the agenda in the near future.

Coppola said Millstone's Planning Board will undertake a re-examination of its master plan this year. He said the last re-examination took place in 2002 and that state statute requires one every six years.

He said Millstone must complete its reexamination by the end of September. Coppola said the scope of the re-examination could range from a short review of the various plan elements and how they are still valid today to a recommendation for a totally new master plan.

"Quite frankly, I think your plan is quite solid," he said, noting that the township just updated its farmland preservation element and will update its open space element of the plan.

Coppola said he would work with Township Engineer Matt Shafai on new environmental data and that the board would put together a group of three members for the re-examination report.

Planning Board Attorney Michael Steib said the number of members in the re-examination group must amount to less than a quorum.

Prior to the meeting, the board reorganized and re-elected longtime Planning Board Chairman Mitchell Newman and Vice Chairman Christopher Pepe to the same positions for 2008.