

Standards and Strategies for Harrison Township Neighborhood Associations

A Neighborhood Association Reference Guide and Registration Document

Introduction

Harrison Township has traditionally been a very proactive partner with community groups. Township staff has worked closely with various organizations over the years to ensure positive and productive partnerships in promoting Harrison Township and all that is positive about our community as a whole as well as our neighborhoods in general. Harrison Township is not able to independently organize associations for every neighborhood; however township staff is present to help assist any and all who feel their neighborhood would benefit from such an organization. The Assistant Development Director acts as the township liaison between neighborhood groups and the township to ensure a positive relationship is fostered in order to address any and all concerns which may develop over the life of an association. Township staff is present to assist the neighborhood associations in various projects and endeavors where the association is working to promote Harrison Township in a positive and productive manner. Working together as partners has proved to be a positive mechanism for the township as a whole as well as the residents in the specific neighborhoods where an association may exist.

Neighborhood associations are present in Harrison Township to facilitate neighborhood involvement and provide citizens a voice in decision making as it affects their specific neighborhood. The association is also a format to better equip the residents of Harrison Township with an understanding of township rules and regulations and how township staff and the residents can work together to produce benefits for the general health, welfare and pride of the total community.

Some of the tools township staff will assist new as well as established neighborhood associations with include the following:

- Attendance by various staff from the Development Department and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office at regular Neighborhood Association meetings for those groups who are recognized as established associations by the standards set forth in this document and registration form.
- Providing staff support for various activities and projects initiated by those neighborhood associations.
- Provide partnership opportunities with the Montgomery County Sheriff's office and the proactive deputies who target the "hot spots" of the township as their specific job description.
- Providing "Neighborhood Watch" signs for registered neighborhood associations with established boundaries and who meet the standards set forth in this document for a minimum period of 1 year.
- Providing staff support and the ability to create a web page on the Harrison Township website specific for your registered neighborhood association after meeting the standards set forth in this document for a minimum of 3 years.

Neighborhood Association Standards and Recognition

A neighborhood association is a group of residents who meet regularly to accomplish neighborhood goals, specifically to improve their neighborhood. The association may include homeowners, renters, apartment residents and business owners located in the boundaries of the association, as well as school and church officials located in the group's boundaries. Neighborhood associations facilitate positive communication between township residents and the various local government entities in a number of endeavors.

The residents and property owners of any township neighborhood may form such an organization and seek formal township recognition after the standards of this document have been met. The standards listed on the registration will serve as a tool to ensure the township's neighborhood association program is accountable and transparent along with the goal of building neighborhood associations which are accessible to residents who want to contribute to improving the livability of their communities.

Neighborhood associations which meet the following requirements will be officially recognized by Harrison Township and will be eligible for the range of tools previously mentioned. The Development Department will send a "Letter of Recognition" to the neighborhood association at the time it is determined the group is officially recognized by the township as a neighborhood association. This determination will be made after the group meets the requirements set forth in this document after a minimum of 1 year. Township staff also reserves the ability to review and change any and all requirements on an annual basis.

Standards which must be met in order to be recognized by Harrison Township are included with the registration document attached to this form.

Please complete the attached document fully and submit back to the Assistant Development Director for final processing. If there are any questions regarding the attached document please contact the Assistant Development Director at 890-5611.

Harrison Township Neighborhood Association Registration

Officers

- Each Neighborhood Association shall have two township residents or property owners of township property within the recognized boundaries of the association who serve as the President and Vice-President of each association. These individuals will serve as the contact between township staff and the neighborhood association. Additional officers can be elected to additional positions if so desired by the group. Terms shall be determined by the Neighborhood Association and shall be submitted to the Development Office to keep on file.

Please list the name of the Neighborhood Association and the individuals who will serve as the President and Vice-President of the neighborhood association as well as their township address and phone number. Also include the terms of each position.

Neighborhood Association Name: _____

Meeting Location and Dates of Meetings: _____

President: _____

Vice President: _____

Other Officers as Designated by Neighborhood Association if so desired. Please include name, township address, title and term of position:

Name and Address and Officer Title

Name and Address and Officer Title

Meetings and Membership

- In order to continue to attract active participation and feedback from member residents in addition to keeping members motivated to continue partnering with the township Neighborhood Association, a minimum of four meetings must be held by all township Neighborhood Associations on an annual basis in order to continue to be recognized as an active township Neighborhood Association. ***All Neighborhood Associations which are older than ten years when documentation of such group occurs is exempt from this requirement. Block parties and such social gatherings sponsored for that specific township Neighborhood Association also will count towards the minimum meeting requirement. Neighborhood Associations which are an extension of an existing condo association must only meet as required by the by-laws of said condo association.***
- Neighborhood Associations shall maintain membership which is open to any person who lives and/or owns real property within the recognized boundaries of the township Neighborhood Association. Other individuals or organizations such as schools or churches may be members as well if they are located within the recognized boundaries of the Neighborhood Association. Each Neighborhood Association will reserve the right to permanently remove any resident from said Association who does not consistently participate in a positive and productive manner with the rest of the Association and/or township. Neighborhood Associations shall set forth their own meeting schedule. Membership will be calculated based on the names on the sign in sheet provided by either staff or the Neighborhood Association President at the beginning of each meeting. Membership must demonstrate an active role in the Neighborhood Association on a consistent basis for the association to continue to be considered a recognized Neighborhood Association of Harrison Township. A minimum of six members, including the President or Vice President, must attend meetings consistently for a one year time period for the township to continue to recognize such association as an active township Neighborhood Association. Township staff will also aid new associations by attending scheduled meetings for those new groups who have not been in existence longer than 3 years. Township staff must be given a minimum of one month notice prior to any scheduled meeting in order for staff to attend. If such notice is not given, the meeting will not be considered as a regularly scheduled meeting at the annual review. At such time that membership does not meet the before mentioned requirements, the township holds the right to no longer recognize the association until such time when membership again meets the before-mentioned standards. The sign in sheet at each meeting will serve as the measuring tool for active participation in a township recognized Neighborhood Association and will be kept on file in the Development Department.
- An annual review of all current recognized Neighborhood Associations will be conducted in December of each year. A completed compliance form, provided by the Assistant Development Director, must be submitted to the Development Department by the President or Vice President of each association by November 30th of each year. The completed compliance form will be reviewed by the Assistant Development Director. If the completed compliance form indicates non-compliance, the association will be asked to take corrective action. If corrective action is found necessary and such action is not taken within 60 days of notification by the Development Department, the Neighborhood Association will no longer be recognized by Harrison Township as an active group.
- At such time when membership is determined to be no longer supporting an active Neighborhood Association, township staff can continue to work with the group in an attempt to increase member participation moving towards the future. Another alternative is for the defunct group to combine with an existing, neighboring and recognized Neighborhood Association which is being supported with an active membership. ***Harrison Township reserves the right to continue to recognize a group as a Neighborhood Association if it is so determined by township staff that said group is working towards active compliance with the Neighborhood Association's "Standards and Registration" requirements set forth in this document.***