TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS

Morris Township was first incorporated on March 1st 1740. It originally included nearly half of Morris County, when the county was made up of only four municipalities. Since that time the county has evolved into thirty-nine distinct municipalities.   Portions of the township were taken on December 24, 1740, to form Roxbury Township, and on March 29, 1749, to form Mendham Township. Morris Township was incorporated as a township by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature on February 21, 1798. Portions of the township were taken to create Chatham Township (February 12, 1806), Passaic Township (now Long Hill Township, on March 23, 1866) and Morristown (April 6, 1865)
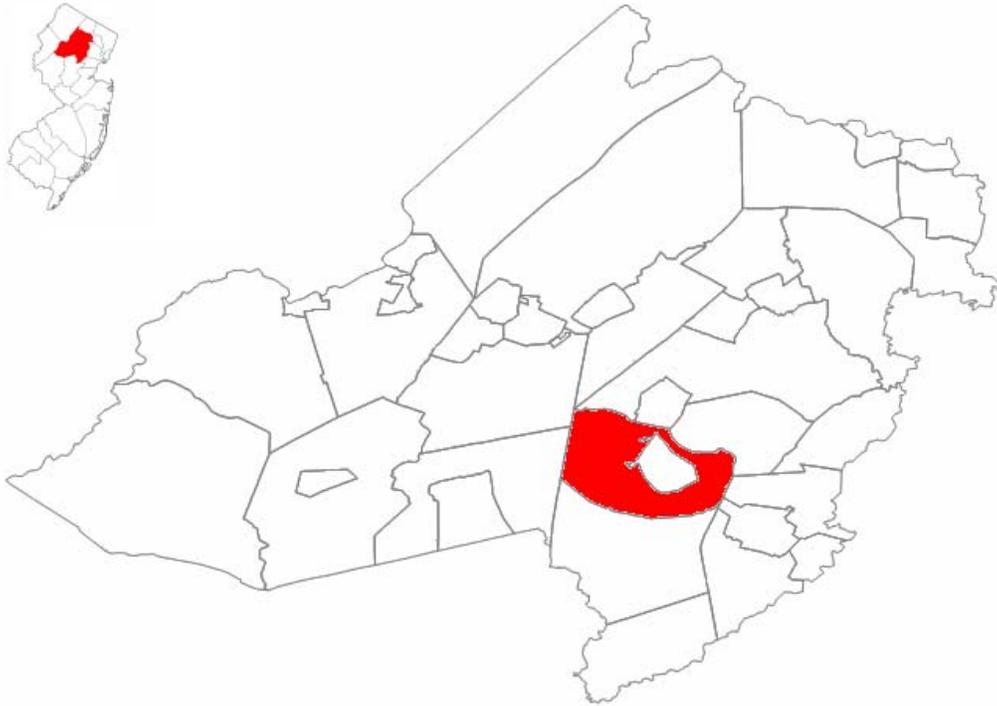
For 115 years, from 1740 to 1865, Morristown and Morris Township were joined together. The Township was the farming area, while the Town was the commercial and spiritual center with stores, businesses, and churches. Then in April 1865, the New Jersey Legislature carved about 1,000 acres out of the middle of Morris Township to make Morristown a separate municipality.

The years between 1880 and 1929 are often called the Gilded Age, because several millionaires with large fortunes built their estates throughout the Township. By 1896, an estimated 54 millionaires lived in the Morristown area, with a total wealth of $289,000,000, which today would be worth billions of dollars. Six years later in 1902, there were at least 91 millionaires. In Morris Township, they built mansions along Madison Avenue, on Normandy Heights Road and Normandy Parkway, and along Mendham Road and Sussex Avenue.

The high cost of maintaining the estates, increasing income taxes, and the stock market crash of 1929 caused the end of The Gilded Age. The Township's millionaires were badly hurt by the stock market collapse of October 1929 and the Great Depression followed. Many of the mansions were closed or sold, and some burned. As a result of the depression there were not many significant changes taking place within Morris Township until the end of World War II.

In recent years there have been significant changes in the makeup of the Township which has steadily grown in last 50 years. At first, people moved to the Township from surrounding cities, such as New York and Newark, to live in the suburbs. As various corporations and other commercial businesses established their headquarters in Morris Township, people were moving into the Township from all over the country. The greatest influx of population growth took place between 1960 and 1970. In 2009, there are a little more than 21,000 residents, about three times as many people who lived in the Township in 1940.

Today, Morris Township has an area of 15.45 square miles surrounding the town of Morristown in an irregular circle. Because of Morris Township's distinctive geographic configuration, most of its chief arteries lead through urban Morristown at one end and out into more suburban or rural environments at the other. The Township is about 58 percent residential, 29 percent commercial, and 13 percent parks and open space.

Morris Township is among the most typically suburban municipalities in Morris County. Its houses consist of mostly entirely single-family detached dwellings attractive to middle-class and upper-middle-class buyers. Although the mansions of its Gilded Age are mostly gone, having been replaced by housing developments and office complexes, several large estates still survive, contributing to the feeling of openness that is one of the Township's greatest assets.

Its industrial/office development is confined to several areas along major roads. Among the larger corporations and commercial industrial complexes that have made Morris Township their home are such names as; Honeywell Corporation, Mennen-Colgate Company, Bayer Corporation, Schindler Elevator, and numerous AT&T Office Complexes and telephone related subsidiaries. Morris Township is also headquarters to *The Seeing Eye.* Visually impaired people from all parts of the globe come to Morris Township to train with their new set of "eyes" with a seeing eye dog.

In contrast to the residential housing developments and the corporate office complexes, there is also park land and undeveloped acreage. There are several recreational facilities and public parks within the community. The Township maintains numerous parks, two large swimming pool complexes, 16 ballfields, and two outdoor tennis complexes. The William G. Mennen Sports Arena (E. Hanover Avenue) was built by the Morris County Park Commission on land donated by the Mennen Company. The Morris County Park Commission also manages five other large parks within the Township, and a network of bicycle paths that wind their way throughout the community.

Other County facilities include the Morris County Correctional Facility, Morris County Juvenile Detention Center, Morris County Youth Shelter, Morris View, Homeless Solutions, Morris County Park Police Hqts., Lewis Morris Park, Loantaka Brook Reservation and Patriots Path.

Approximately 90 percent of the Township has been developed. Attached units, described as "townhouses", continues to be a very popular form of residential construction during the last decade. The Township has approved many single home housing developments as well.

Morris Township by the numbers: Square miles 15.8
Population 21,796
Households 8,116
Median Income: $116,866
Zip Codes:07950,07960,07961,07962

Morris Township borders: Borough of Morris Plains, Parsippany Troy Hills, Hanover Township, Randolph Township, Mendham Township, Harding Township, Florham Park and the Borough of Madison

MORRIS TOWNSHIP IN YELLOW SURROUNDS MORRISTOWN