

Renaissance rushes in downtown Long Valley historic district

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WASHINGTON TWP. — Applications are coming in fast and furious from residents in the Long Valley center historic district and target area for most of the grants available under the state funded Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP).

The flurry of interest in Long Valley center is music to the ears of Susan Jung, local director of the state funded Neighborhood Preservation Program. "We've been very busy. The response is a lot better this year. We got six applications in one day," she said.

Work is being funded through the three-year, state-funded Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP), which was awarded for Long Valley Center in January 1985. Residents of the program's 1986 target area on East and West Mill Road can apply for matching rehabilitation grants. Paint and landscaping rebates are available to all residents of the Long Valley historic district.

Waiting List

And applications are coming in fast, which is a happy contrast to last year. "All five of the landscaping rebates are spoken for and we even have a waiting list (to apply)," Jung said. Of the five projects, two have been completed.

Last year, NPP didn't handle a lot of applications because most of the ground work for starting it was just being laid. Several surveys of the area

and priority problems to be addressed were conducted.

Competition is just as fierce for other grants. Jung said that four residents are vying for two \$1,200 exterior preservation grants. Awarding of the grants was decided by the NPP Residents Committee on Monday night.

Several commercial properties have also applied for a \$3,000 matching grants for commercial properties that have no housing units.

To sweeten the preservation pot, properties in the target area that have improvements made under the NPP program are eligible for tax abatement under an ordinance passed by the Township Committee. Repairs on buildings more than 20 years old in the target area with a value of up to \$10,000 assessed valuation will be exempt from taxation for five years.

Stores Return To 1900's

One property that has applied for several grants is the "Old Forge" building that has stood vacant for years on the corner of Schooley's Mountain and East Mill Road and was recently purchased by Peter Brooks of Chester. But even with the grants, Jung said private money will pay for the lion's share of restoration.

At the turn of the century, the Old Forge was a general store run by Lyman Kice. Before that, it was part of a wagon wheel forge that was located behind the building. Jung said the building will either be used for



(Photo by Gene Shenesky)

Long Valley Look

Only the vehicles give away the era as the Long Valley General Store is restored to its turn of the century appearance, complete with second story porches.

business or as a store.

Across the street, restoration work is wrapping up on an contemporary of the Old Forge, the Long Valley

General Store. Ironically, that building was originally Welsh's Garage in the 1900's.

Work on the general store, owned

by Township Committeeman E. Gilbert Taylor Jr., is being accomplished with a \$10,000 grant. The funds were awarded last year and matched with \$15,000 of Taylor's money.

Included in the work is construction of a second story front porch, the addition of third story windows and siding. Jung said that despite some of the snags inherent with an old building, the work is proceeding well.

Other NPP rehabilitation projects starting or in progress include reconstruction of stone stairs at five West Mill Road and a grant for major spetic system installation at another home on East Mill Road.

Various work using landscape and paint rebates are under way, with Richard Golman's shop on East Mill using paint and landscaping grants for an overall fix-up, according to Jung.

Although the application deadline for exterior rehabilitation has passed, Jung said there are no cut-offs for paint and landscape rebates. At least two more paint rebates are available for any resident in the historic district.

Color Contrast

To help residents choose appropriate paint for the building according to its architectural style and colors of surrounding structures, NPP is work-

ing with a color specialist. Foster of Acroterion, Inc. of Morristown is also working on the Chester Housing Survey, Jung said.

One home that Foster is working on is a Victorian. "You can't paint it high Victorian colors," Jung said, because it would clash with neighboring homes. But with Foster's help, she said a subtle color to bring out the architectural highlights could be used.

One historic district resident who is stripping off the aluminum siding to return his home to an accurate historic appearance got a pleasant surprise, according to Jung. The resident, Michael Haverson, found that the wood underneath his East Mill Road home was in excellent condition.

Aluminum siding has been an issue among historians and members of the residents committee, Jung said.

Although siding may enhance a building's appearance, sometimes the width of the siding varies from the original wooden siding. The result is an altered and historically incorrect appearance. Sometimes other items, such as ornamental "gingerbread" around porches and eaves is removed when siding is installed, Jung said.