



The Hammonton Democratic Club would like to take the opportunity to commend the Mayor and Council on their action on the potential gypsy moth problem. Action on this issue will benefit all of Hammonton. We also would like to thank the Mayor and Council for their “tri-partisan” approach to this problem. The Mayor and Town Council, composed of Republicans and Hammonton First, carefully reviewed the letter that the Democratic Club had sent to them to urge action. Their action shows that there is no Republican, Democratic or Hammonton First way of gypsy moth removal.

We also commend movement on the “Little Italy Project.” We look forward to hearing the results from the Dec. 20 training. However, we do urge caution as the Town proceeds on this project. The mandate for a full-time program director creates the potential for moral hazard in this effort.

The grant is for \$525,000 over five years. Additionally, if this grant is part of the NJ Neighborhood Preservation Program, then funding after the initial year is based upon meeting performance requirements. The amount and nature of the funding indicates that potentially most of the grant money may go to hiring the program director and not towards the actual neighborhood revitalization. Thus, town will have the choice of an ineffective program or will have to provide local taxpayer dollars to the project.

We want the project to be successful as with all revitalization projects. However, we also want our taxes not to be raised, our debt not to be increased and for the town to provide high-quality services. Therefore, with the Town Hall Project still underway and a Bellevue Avenue Historical District Project just beginning, we ask the Mayor and Council to proceed with caution to avoid a budget crunch.

Hammonton Democratic Club