

July 27th, 2011

To the editor:

In considering the possible consolidation of Princeton Borough and Princeton Township, some people are making the mistake of thinking that there would be large savings. In fact, there would not be large savings. \$3.1 million sounds like a lot. But the projected \$3.1 may not materialize. And even if it does, the savings to the individual taxpayer would be negligible--just a few hundred dollars a year, approximately 2-3% of an individual's property taxes. In addition, the projected savings would not occur for three years. Moreover, almost \$2 million would have to be paid as the costs of consolidation unless the state of New Jersey decided to pay these costs; given the state's budget situation, that seems very unlikely.

So if you think consolidation would create large savings, think again. It wouldn't.

Think instead about the major disadvantages that would occur to yourself, if you live in the Borough, or to your Borough friends and neighbors, if you live in the Township. Borough voters would be outvoted because there are two Township voters for every Borough voter. Since all positions on the new Council would be at-large, it is likely that all or almost all of the positions would be filled by Township residents. Decisions about everything that affects Borough residents would be made by Township representatives. Ordinances could be kept the same for 5 years, but it is the new Council that would decide whether to keep them.

This truly would be what Americans dread, taxation without representation. It would not be consolidation. It would be a takeover of the Borough by the Township.

I have many friends who happen to live in the Township. I am certain that they would not want Borough residents to lose their representation. And I am sure that Borough residents would not want to lose their voting power, particularly when the claimed advantage of consolidation--tax savings--is negligible.

Yours,
Phyllis

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