



May 3, 2022 Town Council Reports

*Council President Jeanne Kingsley*

**Planning Board:**

Met on April 20th and heard an application for a proposed minor subdivision at 162 Kline Blvd, Block 1902 lot 1. The existing parcel would be subdivided to create two new lots. Several residents from the surrounding neighborhood participated in the meeting and voiced their concerns with this proposed project and the application was voted down unanimously by the Board.

The Planning Board will hold a hearing and vote on the Master Plan tomorrow evening at 7:30 pm with their first in person meeting in the Berkeley Room at the Municipal Building. The meeting will be available on livestream but only to listen. This document has been in the works for several years, as members of the planning board and various committee and commission members worked with our planners from Phillips Preiss on this comprehensive land use policy document that will guide the physical development of the community for the next 10-15 years. The Master Plan outlines the community's vision of its future and provides a roadmap to achieve it. At its core, the Master Plan provides the policy foundation to inform the Planning and Zoning Boards, Mayor and Township Council's decision-making on land use and development matters. It also serves as a guide for business owners, community groups, potential investors, residents and other stakeholders to understand how land use, transportation, natural resources and other factors will shape the build environment and quality of life of the community.

The Master Plan is available for review on the home page of the township website and I encourage residents to review the plan and to attend the meeting tomorrow night.

**Downtown Beautification Committee:**

The committee is looking for residents help make Berkeley Heights bloom this spring and summer with their Adopt-a-Sign program. Residents, Neighborhoods, businesses, Scout Troops and other organizations can "adopt" one of 20 Welcome and Park signs in town. That means cleaning the signs and planting flowers and maintaining the beds from May through early fall. It's a fun and flexible program that allows people to volunteer on a schedule that suits them best. Interested? Email us at [DBC@bhtwp.com](mailto:DBC@bhtwp.com)

BHWalks returns on Saturday, May 21, after a two-year pandemic hiatus! BHWalks brings together community members of all ages to walk in Downtown Berkeley Heights. As we walk

together, we pick up litter and look for any issues that could impact pedestrian and student safety. Berkeley Heights becomes cleaner, prettier, and safer as a result. We will meet at Veterans Memorial Park at 9 am. All participants will be given a garbage bag and gloves to collect litter along the route. The event will conclude by 11 am. Representatives of the DBC will be present to organize and supervise the event. (Children under 11 must be accompanied by a parent.) Email us at [DBC@bhtwp.com](mailto:DBC@bhtwp.com) and we'll send you the link to the event sign-up. Capacity limit is 50 people. Come help clean up our downtown so that is sparkles for the Memorial Day Parade!

Their next meeting is Tuesday May 10th.

### **Memorial Day Parade:**

Gentle reminder that the Memorial Day Parade is back and will take place on Monday May 30th – it kicks off at 9:30am at the VFW and ends with a ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park. Mark your calendars and plan to come out and celebrate those that served from our community.

### ***Council Vice President Manny Couto***

#### **Economic Development Committee**

The committee met on April 29th and discussed the following:

Continuing work on the BH video, with Heather O'Roarke's voice over, distribution and uses to be discussed as the video progresses.

- Update on the Building Department with Robin's retirement
- Cherri on the DBC Fill-A-Basket program on how it is now open to businesses and citizens
- Discussion on the County purchasing the old Berkeley Plaza and that soil testing was taking place so that the county can hopefully complete the purchase with the Green Acres funding
- Pepper Town park is on hold awaiting the updated drainage study and the completion of the master plan to match Sherman Avenue vision.
- the master plan has Sherman Avenue changes with proposals for creating a walkable-bike path, and neighborhood friendly street that can be cross utilized for neighborhood events.

### ***Councilwoman Gentiana Brahimaj***

No official committee report.

### ***Councilman Paul Donnelly***

No official committee report.

### ***Councilman John Foster***

#### **Historic Preservation Committee**

Next committee meeting is Thursday May 5th at 7:30 in town hall. Liza Viana will be our special guest to help committee move towards its next goal and to help answer some questions from the committee. Fundraiser at Lavender and Sage in New Providence went well and more details will be forthcoming at meeting.

## **Truth, Community Healing & Inclusion Committee**

The committee met on April 25th:

- Pride month was discussed and banner as well as flag raising to be on 6/1/22 at 5:30 at town hall. SAGA club from GL and Columbia schools invited to take part. Pride event also taking place at YMCA on 6/16/22.
- June 5<sup>th</sup> is the town block party and a drop off point for food is going to be the Asian Indian Christian Church on Springfield Ave. Pastor Kamalesh will be handling it for church.
- Discussion on a food and security event for residents who may need services and looking into county services to help families in town.
- Rob Nixon, principal of GL and Tara Oliveira, Assistant principal at GL will be attending the next meeting. GL had a multicultural walk at the school on April 21<sup>st</sup> and they will come to talk about this and see how they can work to help with the multicultural street fair which is being planned now.

May is Military Appreciation month and GL is collecting items for Operation Shoebox.

Collection runs from May 2-June 3. Operation Shoebox helps active personal as well as veterans here at home. Operation Shoebox embraces a practical mission of providing hands-on support for our troops deployed overseas and returning home. It is the mission of Operation Shoebox to meet the needs of every hero with dignity and appreciation.

<https://www.operationshoobox.com/>

Bins for dropoff are in main lobby of GL but items can also be dropped off at Town hall and will be brought to GL to be sent. Thank you all in advance for your help with this. Our troops greatly appreciate it.

*Councilman Jeff Varnerin*

### **Board of Health:**

The Board is still looking for an addition member. If interested, please see the Township website for a committee/board application. The next meeting will be in person May 18th at 7:30pm at the municipal building.

## **Truth, Community Healing & Inclusion Committee**

This Friday May 6th we will celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month at the Municipal building at 6pm. Please take a few moments to come be an ally to our AAPI neighbors and share in the celebration.

### **Waste Water Treatment Plant(WWTP):**

Reviewed the RFQ responses from 4 service providers for WWTP consulting engineer and have conducted interviews with the Mayor, Administrator, Council President Kingsley of two. Rest of council will be meeting with finalist. Hope to make an appointment at the next council meeting.

**Municipal Complex:**

Resolution this evening is to authorize the township to work with the Cannon Group. This service provider is a building envelope expert that we are bringing in to help advise us on all aspects of water intrusion issues. In just a short period of time they have already been able to give us answers that nobody else has been able to do. We hope to move with speed to meaningful solutions.