



**The Mayors Corner**

- Official Newsletter of Mayor Carol Bianchi



Spring 2019

Dear Bernards Township Residents,

Welcome Spring! Good things are happening and Charter Day is right around the corner on May 18. Think sunshine.

The Township has been busy during the first quarter of 2019. Here are some of the things we've been doing.

**Task Forces:**

-Vision 2020/Planning for the Future: Strategic planning has begun with resident feedback into the formation of a survey that will be distributed and available at Charter Day at our Vision 2020 booth. Please stop by. Public meetings spearheaded by our resident members have been advertised. The first was March 21 9:30-10:30 at which many residents provided good feedback; the next is March 27 at 7 pm at the Warren Craft meeting room at town hall. The Task Force is also visiting Ridge Oak and Fellowship Village on scheduled dates for the residents' convenience.

-Communications Task Force: The Communications team is working with staff to identify improvements in township communications and to establish useful protocols for the future. Our IT staff, headed by Chris Kyriacou, is first rate and has been working closely with our resident members. A survey will be sent out to households to gather input from residents. Also, the team will be sending out useful township information with the logo below.



-Affordable Housing Task Force: Affordable Housing Task Force: The AH Task Force is working with our Township Planners and Engineer to create a summary of information to educate and engage Township residents and explore ways for Bernards Township to meet potential obligations in 2025. To that end, the team is strategizing to support legislative change.

-Quarry Advisory Task Force: The QATF issued its first Report, posted on its webpage, advising on the Quarry's compliance with the (last approved) Rehabilitation Plan. Acting on one of the QATF's recommendations, the Township Committee challenged the Zoning Board's jurisdiction on an application by the Quarry seeking to subdivide the 180 acre quarry site. The proposed subdivision would split the proposed 50-acre lake (which appears to have shrunk in the latest application) and carve out the contaminated areas, thereby interfering with the Township Committee and Planning



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Board’s jurisdiction over the Rehabilitation Plan and a 2014 Settlement Agreement. Further, as the QATF report noted, the Township Committee advised that the Quarry failed to bring a revised Rehabilitation Plan after it ceased mining, as required by the Settlement Agreement and Ordinances.

The Zoning Board postponed the Quarry subdivision hearing. The Quarry responded by serving the Township with a burdensome OPRA request and filed a motion in court to dissolve the QATF. The Township has responded and filed a cross motion to require the Quarry to comply with our Ordinances and Settlement Agreement. The QATF will continue to meet unless directed otherwise by the court. For more information, the litigation papers are available on the QATF webpage.

**Other matters discussed at new Public Work Sessions:**

Uber/Lyft situation: The Township worked quickly in 2019 to resolve an ongoing, disruptive situation on North Maple and a residential side street, as the streets were lined with commercial drivers waiting for calls from Verizon employees. The residents, Verizon security officials, and the Township Committee and police worked together on a multipronged approach: Police enforced a no loitering ordinance; Verizon reopened a parking lot and provided accommodations for commercial drivers; and the Township banned parking on portions of North Maple and the side street. Problem solved, we hope for good. Verizon has promised to continue to explore options as needed.

Minebrook/Canterbury intersection: The Township Committee began addressing this intersection following resident concerns and several accidents. Engineer Tom Timko gathered feedback from the Township officials and residents and proposed various supplemental traffic calming measures. The Township will roll out the final proposal for bid soon. In the meantime, flashing beacons have been ordered and will be placed on top of the stop signs.

United States Golf Association: The USGA has discussed its proposal to rezone 118 acres of land it purchased, known as “the Pyne property,” from residential R-1 to “the Golf Heritage zone,” created in 2015. The discussion will continue on 3/26 when the USGA will provide a more detailed public presentation.

Shared Court? On 3/26, The Township Committee will discuss whether it wishes to investigate a shared court to explore savings and assess the pros and cons of such a move.



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**Budget:**

The budget was rolled out at the Township’s 2/26 meeting. The Introduction is scheduled for 3/26 and adoption on 4/23. Residents may attend the meetings and ask questions and comment.

<http://www.bernards.org/Township%20Committee/Document/2019/2019BudgetIntroductionWSupplementalData-Presentation.pdf>

**Pedestrian Bridges:**

Township Engineer Tom Timko successfully advocated to keep Valley Road open during upcoming construction, thereby avoiding a potential proposal to divert traffic through residential neighborhoods in Bernards. The long awaited pedestrian bridges on Lyons and Stonehouse Roads are open and a bid for the boarded up Lafayette Bridge has been awarded. We anticipate construction late spring/early summer.

**Congratulations to our Mayor’s Arts Awards Recipients:**

Thank you to all who participated in and attended the Mayor’s Arts Awards on March 16 and for all our artists’ contributions to our township. Congratulations to the winners: Linda Arnold, the Friends of Boudinot-Southard Ross Farm, and Ridge High Senior Melissa Johnson.

**In Solidarity:**

Our prayers go out to all those harmed in the New Zealand tragedy and their loved ones. For all acts of hatred and terrorism, we stand with the victims against these heinous crimes. Our police department has increased its presence where needed for the protection of all of our residents. Our community came together at Congregation B’Nai Israel to mourn the tragedy and show support for the victims and their families. Thank you to the Bernards and Long Hill PD for your presence and support at the service.

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Best wishes to all for a wonderful spring,

Carol Bianchi  
Mayor 2019  
Bernards Township