

Bernards Township is in great shape!

It is one of the safest and most beautiful places to live in the United States of America. The quality of life here is outstanding...

1. Our parks are tremendous.
2. We have plentiful open space.
3. Our roads are solid.
4. Our police department is extraordinary.
5. Our reserves are high.
6. Municipal taxes are low.

None of this is due to chance.

This Township Committee has built upon the vision of our predecessors from the 90's. Those leaders of more than 20 years ago decided to reject debt as part of Standard Operation Procedure for Bernards Township. They chose instead a *Pay As You Go* philosophy. Ever since, your Township Committee has embraced with fervor, the principle of *Pay As You Go*; and just this past fall, Bernards Township reaped the reward of that quarter-century-old decision and the commitment that followed.

I am delighted to tell you that Bernards Township is now 100% debt free! Now every tax dollar goes towards maintaining and improving our quality of life and safety here in Bernards; instead of into a bondholder's pocket.

We have some important matters to address in 2018.

### **Affordable Housing**

The first is affordable housing. Bernards is not alone. Hundreds of other municipalities are seeking their own path through this maze. Our future affordable housing obligation is currently unknown.

Whatever the final result, I'm certain that Bernards will be home to more residents in the future. Our challenge will be to accommodate this Supreme-Court-mandated and unavoidable growth as seamlessly as possible.

### **Redevelopment**

I know by now many of you are asking yourselves : "What about Redevelopment at the Millington Quarry?"

It is my intent to put before the committee, the question of whether we should continue to work towards redevelopment of the Millington Quarry site or not.

There will be ample notice and opportunity for comment when that happens.

### **Finally**

I was chatting with my daughter Sarah recently about some technology ( perhaps it was instantaneous Amazon Prime delivery ) when she joked that it is an incredible time to be alive.

But the fact is that, in the history of mankind, there has been no better time to be alive; and I can imagine no better place to live than in Bernards Township.

We've built an incredible place here in Bernards, *...together*. We've faced and met our share of challenges as well *...together*.

I know that the future for Bernards is bright; and that there's nothing we can't accomplish... *together!*

Thank you very much.