THE MENDHAM MESSENGER

March 2024 The Borough of Mendham Community Newsletter mendhamnj.org

Dear Mendham Borough residents and business owners,

I can't remember the last time that the groundhog called for an early spring. I think we all know that an early spring doesn't mean that we won't see more snow, so don't put your shovel away just yet.

Time To Vote

The West Morris Regional High School District has a referendum regarding their budget on the ballot. The vote is set for Tuesday, March 12. If you are signed up to receive a Vote by Mail ballot you may have already received it. In Mendham Borough the polls will be open as they usually are on our Primary or General Election days. Just go to your regular voting location and vote in person the way you always do.

For questions on voting you can contact Lauren McBride in our Clerk's Office.

New State Legislation on Affordable Housing

On February 12, the State Assembly passed new affordable housing legislation by a 51 – 28 member vote. You can find the bill here: https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/A0500/4_R1.PDF.

The bill essentially dissolves COAH and gives the NJ Department of Consumer Affairs the authority to determine housing numbers for towns. The State Senate is expected to hear and vote on this bill by the end of February, which means by the time you are reading this newsletter a decision may have been made. The new law would give additional credits for supportive housing for people with special needs, along with some other opportunities to develop affordable housing while limiting dense development.

We will be posting a summary on our website for everyone's better understanding. I am also planning to host a Mayor's Roundtable to learn about what this new legislation could mean for Mendham Borough. The meeting will take place sometime in the month of March and details for the meeting will be posted and advertised for all interested parties to attend. Be prepared to register your attendance so we can arrange for a large enough room to accommodate all.

Thinking About a Major Home Project?

We have had some residents recently begin major yard projects, not realizing that there are approvals and permits that are required. Depending on the project, you may need both Borough, County and State approvals. One new factor that has increased the need for review and approval is the State stormwater regulations. These new regulations are complicated, so the best course of action is to reach out to our engineering department for a thorough review. Failure to file with all of the appropriate offices can result in a fine. Don't just believe a contractor if they tell you that you don't need any approvals, because you could end up having to pay twice: once to do the work and once to undo it. Here is an example of just some of the requirements when it comes to moving soil:

For Mendham Borough the following require a lot grading permit from the Engineer:

- Any increase in lot coverage of 1,000 square feet or more
- Any soil disturbance of 2,500 square feet or more
- All new driveways require Engineer review
- Road openings require permits through Engineering department.

For the County:

- Any soil disturbance of 5,000 square feet or more requires a permit from Morris County Soil Conservation.

Remember, doing work on your own yard can have a big impact on stormwater flow or your neighbor's property. Get a review up front!

Phoenix House Restoration

We have officially moved out of the Phoenix House building and into the Bowers Building for at least the next 4 – 6 months. As a reminder, this is necessary to make room for the structural work that needs to be completed. Our staff is working in tight quarters, and they don't have immediate access to records, so patience would be appreciated. We are asking residents to schedule appointments if you need an in-person meeting. You can still drop off payments to the Bowers Building mailbox. During this process we know there will be some growing pains, so please don't hesitate to reach out if you need something.

Coming Up…

It's budget time of the year again. We will be posting important meetings and deadlines so you can follow the process.

Friendly reminder: if you are new to town, please visit our website and make sure you sign up for our social media and Nixle, which can be found to the left of the home page.

That's it for this month. Happy St Paddy's Day! Wishing you tender corned beef.

Sincerely,
Christine Serrano Glassner, Mayor