THE TOWN OF NEWTON

"SUSSEX COUNTY'S DOWNTOWN"

The Newton News

Setting in

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2013

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DATES OF INTEREST:

- Memorial Day Town Hall Closed May 27th
- Miss Newton, Little Mr. & Miss Newton May 31st 5:30pm
 Project Self Sufficiency
- Primary Election Day June 4th
- Firehouse 5k Run June 8th
- Newton Day June 8th
- Pool Opens
 June 22nd
- Council Reorganization Mtg. July 1st, 6:00pm

A MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

The warmer spring and summer months usher in a busy time of year for all municipal departments as we wrap up winter activities and prepare for the variety of summer projects we have scheduled. Newton continues to be a small, vibrant and dynamic community of 8,000 residents with a proud history and brighter future. We are very fortunate to have many accomplishments to detail from the 2^{nd} half of 2012 and many goals to accomplish in 2013.

As you recall, the Town undertook a significant review and evaluation of the 2005 Urban Design Plan. Led by the Town Planner and Marketing Consultant, the effort included participation from residents, employees, volunteers, and business owners alike. The subsequent reports have provided me and the Council with guidance on the necessary improvements and projects needed to continue our momentum and seize additional economic opportunities. To that end, we will be spending dollars to review the feasibility of a Business Improvement District (BID/SID) for the downtown shopping district and surrounding areas, as well as implementing an aggressive marketing program for the entire Town. As the epicenter for economic activity in the county, staff members share my commitment to expand the tax base with new quality, commercial ratables in 2013 and beyond. We are confident that both the BID analysis and the marketing program will be important components to same.

This summer looks to be another busy one with many important capital projects on the slate including but not limited to: new hardware/software for the Clerk's office; refurbishing of the DPW Truck #2 Tandem; sidewalk improvements to Madison Street; road improvements to Hillside Terrace, Kelsey Avenue and Cedar Street; a new senior shuttle bus; purchase of various park/playground equipment; and upgrades to CENCOM.

In the Water/Sewer Utility, we will be looking to continue our RBC replacement schedule; upgrade chemical pumps, heaters and security cameras at the Water Treatment Plant; perform a study on our water allocation; and the upgrade of the watermain at Plainfield Avenue.

As you can see, a lot of thought goes into the planning of the wide variety of critical projects so we may preserve and protect the existing character of the community while enhancing areas that benefit the current and future quality of life for our residents.

Our Newton Town Council, staff, professionals and volunteers take great pride in their efforts to make Newton the special place that it is and are to be commended. **Together we will continue to make a difference.** Thank you once again for reading our publication and please accept my best wishes to you and yours for good health and happiness during the beautiful spring and summer months.

Yours for a Better Newton,

Thomas S. Russo, f.

Thomas S. Russo, Jr. Town Manager

NEW SUMMER HOURS

May 28th through August 30th

Monday - Wednesday 8:30am to 4:30pm Thursday 8:30am to 6:30pm Friday 8:30am to 1:30pm

STAFF DIRECTORY

The staff of the Town of Newton is here to assist the public whenever possible. Please use the following list of extensions when dialing 973-383-3521 to contact a municipal staff member or department.

221	Deputy Municipal Clerk
224	Manager's Office
225	Tax Assessor
226	Dep. Town Mgr./Q.P.A.
227	Planning/Zoning
228	Comm. Dev./Recreation
231	Construction Department
232	Municipal Clerk
233	Treasurer
236	Deputy Court Administrator
239	Tax Collector
240	Water/Sewer Collector
241	Finance Officer/CFO

242 Court Administrator

244 Recreation Supervisor

OTHER NUMBERS Public Works Garage 973-383-4160

Recycling Center	973-383-1521
Memory Park Pool	973-383-2810
Wastewater	
Treatment Plant	973-383-2090
Police Department	
(Non-emergency)	973-383-2525

THE 2012-2013 NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Sandra Lee Diglio, Mayor
Joseph A. Ricciardo, Deputy Mayor
E. Kevin Elvidge, Councilman
Kristen S. Becker, Councilwoman
Daniel G. Flynn, Councilman
Reorganization to be held July 1st

Thomas S. Russo, Jr., Manager Lorraine A. Read, Clerk

RECYCLING NEWS...

The Town of Newton conducts monthly curbside collection of commingled recycling and newspaper. As a reminder containers placed curbside can be no larger than 35 gallons and must be at the curb no later than 7:30am on your designated pick up day.

Twice a year, in June and December the Town sends the "Newton Recycling News" to all its residents outlining recycling guidelines and the curbside collection schedule. This publication is also available on the Town's website at www.newtontownhall.com.

Recycling center hours are Thursday 8:00am to 4:00pm and Saturdays 8:00am to 1:00pm. Brush leaves and grass clippings are no longer accepted at the Recycling Center.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT IS NO LONGER BEING ACCEPTED AT THE RECYCLING CENTER

This includes but is not limited to Computers, Laptops, Monitors, Televisions, Desktop printers and printer/fax/copier/scanner combinations, Fax machines, DVD players, VCRs, and other video players (i.e. DVRs).

ACTION ALLIANCE

The Action Alliance is a group of concerned citizens, police officers, teachers and professionals working together to provide drug resistance education to the communities of Newton, Andover and Green. We are funded by GCADA (The Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse) and through cash and in-kind donations by local organizations.

2013 Needs Assessment: The Action Alliance Committee is currently conducting a survey in our communities to determine where we need to focus our energies for the next several years. The first and easiest way to assist us with combatting drug and alcohol use in your community is to complete the survey found at www.surveymonkey.com/s/Action_Municipal_Alliance_Survey. The survey is completely anonymous and takes only 5-7 minutes to complete. Please feel free to share this link with others in our community. The following programs are being sponsored by the Action Alliance in 2013. For more information on any of our programs or to volunteer your time to help make our community drug free please contact. Kerry Deckert at kdeckert@newtontownhall.com.

Spring Street Enterprise Adventure: April 23

In cooperation with Long Pond School, Green Hills School, Halsted Street School and the New Spring Street Group, youth will be given the opportunity to meet with local business leaders to discuss small business ownership, employability and community responsibility. The goal of the program is to build a connection between the students and the business owners and to help the students learn about the possibilities of entrepreneurship. The Center for Prevention and Counseling will also hold a brief discussion regarding the effects of personal choices on employability.

Family Night Out Series:

May 18—8:00pm Movie in the Park, Andover Township, Hillside Park

June 29—8:00pm Flick & Float at Newton Pool

June 27—5:00pm to 7:00pm Latino Community Outreach at the Newton Pool. This family event is designed to introduce the Latino Community to the resources available within our communities. Call Jose Rosario at the Center for Prevention and Counseling at 973-383-8611 for more information.

2013 BUDGET ANALYSIS

"On April 8, 2013, the Town Council approved the 2013 Municipal Budget and Capital Improvement Program, which totals \$11,600,000. With State Aid and grant funding continuing to diminish, coupled with a tax base that is over 35% exempt, it is an ever increasing challenge to maintain appropriate service levels and sound fiscal policies while mitigating any significant municipal tax increases.

The Town experienced a decrease in the Net Valuation Taxable (NVT) in the amount of \$3,596,080, down to \$687,090,410. This caused the average residential structure in Newton to slightly decrease in value from \$222,090 to \$221,256. However, with prudent, conservative budgeting, the Town's 2013 Budget shows a nominal overall increase of just \$51,207 in the amount to be raised for support of the municipal organization.

Therefore, the Municipal Tax necessary to support the Newton municipal organization, including the Reserve for Uncollected Taxes, is increasing for the 2013 year. The 2013 municipal tax rate will be 1.1514 vs. 1.1380 from 2012, or an increase of 1.34 tax points. The impact on the average assessed residential structure (\$221,256) is only \$20.00 per year or 5 ½ cents per day.

The Town maintains independent financial records for the Water and Sewer fund. Both functions are supported by customer billings and do not require property tax revenues to meet financial obligations.

The Water and Sewer budget is proposed at \$4,223,250 for the 2013 year. The Water and Sewer budget provides service to 2,638 accounts. The current rate structure continues to allow the Town to reserve funds for future capital upgrades and the retirement of existing debt. Most importantly, it allows the Town to intelligently use a fiscally conservative approach to budgeting as it relates to necessary infrastructure improvements.

Now that we have concluded the 2013 budget process, I want to thank all department heads and staff for their invaluable assistance in putting together these important documents. In closing, it is my belief that the budget appropriations and revenue projections, as contained in the 2013 budget for Newton, will enable the Town to meet the public's demand and need for critical services. Furthermore, the budget is structured as a fiscally responsible document to ensure that the financial well-being of our municipal government is preserved."



Thomas S. Russo, Jr., Town Manager

COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENT

The Town of Newton will be hosting its third annual town-wide Neighbors Helping Neighbors Community Service Clean-Up event on **Saturday, May 4, 2013 from 8:30am to Noon**, commencing at the Town of Newton Municipal Building located at 39 Trinity Street, Newton, NJ. One of the goals of the day is for residents, businesses, and groups to join the community as volunteers to help clean up the parks, schools, streets, and parking lots of litter and recyclables. Volunteers will also go to the homes of seniors citizens, veterans, or disabled residents, to assist with various property maintenance and clean-up issues including, but not limited to, grass mowing and clipping, planting, weeding, recycling, painting, garbage pickup and removal.

The day starts at the Municipal Building at 8:30am with an appreciation continental breakfast (bagels, juice, coffee) and free t-shirt distribution for the first 100 participants, followed by assignments and instructions. Assignments are given according to age and safety. Garbage bags, rakes, and gloves will be provided. The Town will also be providing, from 9:30am to 12:30pm at the Recycling Center on South Park Drive, a Mobile Paper Shredding Unit from IntelliShred of Frenchtown, NJ, so that residents can bring unwanted documents (no business documents) to be properly shredded and destroyed.

Following the conclusion of volunteer activities at Noon, there will be a social event with pizza and refreshments at Memory Park in Newton. Groups and organizations that have confirmed their participation thus far are: The Town of Newton, Christ Community Church of

Newton, and The Sparta Evangelical Free Church. New groups are welcomed to join this important effort.

If you are a group or individual interested in volunteering for the May 4th event, or if you are a resident who needs assistance (senior citizen, disabled resident, or veteran), please contact the Town Manager's Office at 973-383-3521 x224 or via email at manager@newtontownhall.com. Requests for home assistance will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the final determination as to the appropriateness and feasibility of same shall remain with the Town Manager or his designee.

TAX ASSESSMENT

The Assessment Department continues to monitor current market activity through the recording of deeds with the Sussex County Clerk's office. Sale transactions are verified to make sure they are suitable for inclusion into the State's Sales Ratio analysis. A sale must be an arms-length transaction with neither party under duress; on a property that has been

adequately exposed to the open market for its intended use. Sales that don't meet those criteria are considered "non-usable", and are not included in the ratio analysis. Those sales are also not considered as viable "comparables" in establishing property value with regard to tax appeal defense at the County Tax Board.

Property improvements requiring a building permit are reviewed by the Assessor's Office. Not all improvements are subject to a change in assessment. Please refer to the document entitled "The Assessment of New Construction" found on the Town's website at www.newtontownhall.com/assessor. Inspections for added assessments occur during the summer months on properties that have had recent qualifying new construction and/or renovations. Billings for added assessments are mailed by October 15th and payment is due by November 1st.



There will be a general REASSESSMENT occurring in Newton of all real property. This reassessment will be conducted by Appraisal Systems, Inc. of Whippany, and will involve a "re-visit" of all ratable properties. If no one is home during the initial inspection attempt by the company – they will simply rely on the information currently contained on the Property Record Card. If there has been a material change to your property since the last full-scale Revaluation was conducted in 2007 (which was implemented for Tax Year 2008), and no one is available during the initial visit by the field inspector – then there will be a provision available to contact Appraisal Systems directly and set up an inspection. Inspections should commence in June, and will run through the summer. All property owners will be notified by mail of the results of the Reassessment, and be afforded an opportunity to meet with Appraisal Systems to discuss the final assessment.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REMINDERS

Winter is behind us and Spring is here. Below is a guide to help you in keeping your property well maintained.

General

The owner of the premises shall maintain the structures and exterior property in compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code 2006.

Rubbish & Garbage

All exterior property and premises, and the interior of every structure, shall be free from any accumulation of rubbish or garbage.

Weeds

All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of 10 inches. All noxious weeds shall be prohibited.

Property

The exterior of a structure shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and sanitary so as not to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare. All exterior surfaces, including but not limited to, doors, door and window frames, cornices, porches, trim, balconies, decks and fences shall be maintained in good condition. Exterior wood surfaces, other than decay resistant woods, shall be protected from the elements and decay by painting or other protective covering or treatment. Peeling, flaking and chipped paint shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted. Buildings shall have address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property.

Contact the Code Enforcement Officer, Kathy Citterbart, at kcitterbart@newtontownhall.com, with any questions or concerns or call 973-383-3521, ext. 227.

POLICE DESK

The Police Department has been quite busy responding to calls for service and conducting criminal investigations as we begin 2013. Understanding that our effectiveness is often proportionate to the amount of involvement, cooperation and assistance that we receive from our residents, business owners and visitors to the Town of Newton; we encourage you to stay alert and call the Police Department if you see anything suspicious or have any questions or concerns.

Also, please check out the Newton Police Department website at www.newtonpolice.org for information on the latest activities, initiatives and services provided by the Police Department. You can sign up to receive our press releases related to arrests, investigations, road closures and other public safety information. You can also choose to "follow" us on Twitter and "Like" us on the Department Facebook page.

The Department has been receiving great results from its recent implementation of the anonymous tip service. Citizens can report suspicious activity or provide information about a crime via text message, via a link on our website and Facebook page as well as



through iPhone and Android apps. In an emergency or to report a crime in progress, always call **9-1-1**.

Many also find it interesting to view our activity - from traffic stops to medical calls as well as thefts and other criminal activity as it is published on a daily basis to the Department's crime reports page that is complete with a map to show where the activity is occurring. Residents can sign up to receive alerts when something happens near where they live or work.

In our continuing effort to empower citizens to act in partnership with the police on crime and quality of life issues, the department will soon be unveiling a community safety survey. This survey will be an important tool that the department can use to measure our effectiveness, to evaluate the perception of the department and the community as well as to help improve our responsiveness and increase understanding. We'll be promoting it on our website in the coming weeks.

With springtime here, it's important to be mindful of certain safety issues that also occur with warmer weather, such as an increase in motorcyclists and pedestrians. Look twice to be safe before entering a roadway since a motorcycle may be difficult to see and drivers can have difficulty estimating their speed.

And watch out for pedestrians as you drive through Town too. Pedestrian safety is paramount and drivers should remember that many of our pedestrians are also children walking to and from school. Motorists who observe a pedestrian within a crosswalk must stop and *stay* stopped until the pedestrian has finished crossing the roadway. No operator of a vehicle shall fail to give the right-of-way to a pedestrian at a crosswalk. Watch for pedestrians when turning right on red, where allowed and be sure to obey the speed limit. Officers will be conducting heightened enforcement for pedestrian safety.

Unfortunately, we've also found that pedestrians have been at fault when involved in vehicular crashes. Please remember that where traffic is not controlled and directed either by a police officer or a traffic signal, pedestrians should cross the roadway within a crosswalk, or in the absence of a crosswalk and where not otherwise prohibited, at right angles to the roadway. However, no pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield. Additionally, where sidewalks are provided it shall be unlawful for any pedestrian to walk along and upon an adjacent roadway.

With warmer weather, the Police Department expects that we'll begin receiving reports of black bear sightings; though in 2012 we saw a significant decrease in bear complaints compared to previous years. It is imperative that residents and businesses properly secure their trash and other refuse containers to help reduce the chances for any problems. Police Officers have received specialized training and equipment to deal with black bears. Learn more about being bear aware by visiting http://www.njfishandwildlife.com.

Once again, please visit the Police Department on the web to see the services we offer; from conducting property checks while you're away on vacation, to safely disposing of medications at our Project Medicine Drop location and to helping you to install a child safety seat. We're here to help keep the Town of Newton safe and we can only be successful with your assistance. So please call or stop in at the Newton Police Department if we can be of any assistance to you and to report any possible suspicious activity.

EMERGENCY: DIAL 9-1-1

Telephone (973) 383-2525 39 Trinity Street Newton, NJ 07860 www.NewtonPolice.org

RECREATION

The Recreation Department and the Recreation Commission want to recognize the invaluable contributions of our many volunteers. Each sport is successful due to the efforts of parents and dedicated community members. THANK YOU for you dedication and hard work.

The Recreation Commission would also like to extend a huge thank you to the Christ Community Church youth group for their help with the Easter Egg Hunt.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS:

Miss Newton, Little Miss Newton and Little Mr. Newton: Applications will be available beginning April 22nd at Town Hall, through Merriam Avenue School and at Newton High School. The event will be held May 31st at Project Self Sufficiency beginning at 5:30pm.

Newton Day Festival: Plans are underway for *Newton Day* to take place on Saturday, June 8th. The day will start with the annual **Firehouse 5k** hosted by the Newton Fire Department. The Newton Day Festival hosted by the Greater Newton Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Newton will be held on Spring Street from 11:00am to 4:30pm, then move to Memory Park for some evening activities including fireworks. More information can be found at **www.greaternewtoncc.com**.

Battle of the Bands: The Newton Recreation Commission is proud to announce our first annual Battle of the Bands to be held June 1st, from 6:00pm—9:00pm at the Sussex County Community College Pavilion on the Green.

Newton Pool Registration: We have extended our hours for 2013 to help you make the most of your summer. We will be open June 22nd and 23rd and then June 28th through Sept. 2nd.

Youth Lacrosse Camp: The Newton Recreation Department in collaboration with the Sussex County YMCA, Newton High School Boys Lacrosse and Newton Youth Lacrosse will be offering a lacrosse camp for 2nd through 8th graders. Please contact the Sussex County YMCA at 973-209-9622 for more information.

Guard Start: Mondays and Wednesdays July 1st—August 7th, 11:00am-2:00pm - Free to residents of Newton, Andover and Green! Guard Start is a Red Cross program designed to introduce young teens to basic water safety training. For more information or to register, please contact the Newton pool at **pool@newtontownhall.com**. This event is sponsored by the Action Alliance Committee.

More information on any of the above events can be found at **www.newtontownhall.com/recreation** or by calling the Recreation Department at 973-383-3521 ext. 228.

TAX COLLECTION

TAX BILLS

Tax bills for the Final 2013/Preliminary 2014 will be mailed in late July 2013. Bills are mailed to <u>all homeowners</u> at this time each year. This bill will include payment stubs for the 3^{rd} and 4^{th} quarters of 2013 (August and November) as well as the 1^{st} and 2^{nd} quarters of 2014 (February and May). The annual mailing of bills follows the certification of the tax rate by the Sussex County Board of Taxation.

Any homeowner who has had a change to their mailing address should notify the tax office, in writing, prior to July 15th to ensure your bill is mailed to you in a timely fashion. Any questions regarding the tax bill mailing or to change your mailing address may be directed to the Tax Collector, Linda A. Roth at 973-383-3521 extension 239.

HOMESTEAD BENEFIT PROGRAM UPDATE

Most eligible homeowners will receive their 2011 Homestead Benefit as a credit applied to their property tax bill for the August 2013 quarter. Those homeowners who either sold their home prior to filing the homestead benefit application, or whose principal residence was a unit in a co-op or continuing care retirement community will be issued a benefit in the form of a check or direct deposit in August 2013. Tenants will not receive a 2011 rebate. The deadline for filing 2011 applications was December 14, 2012. Any question regarding the Homestead Benefit may be directed to 1-888-238-1233.

NEWTON FIRST AID SQUAD

For 56 years the Newton Volunteer First Aid Squad has been providing free emergency medical care and ambulance transport to the Newton community.

In 2012, the squad responded to 1,276 calls thanks to the members who dedicate themselves to serving the community. We are currently in <u>need</u> of members! Can you find 12 hours a week to help your community? We have a number of positions available: EMT's, 1st Responders or CPR-qualified drivers. With your commitment the squad will cover all your training costs. You can fill out an application on the squad's website at <u>www.newtonfirstaidsquad.org</u> or call 973-383-3377.

WATER AND SEWER UTILITY

Did you know that a running toilet uses a gallon and a half of water a *minute?* A toilet that continuously runs after being flushed is the most common reason for elevated usage on a water bill and should be the first thing to consider if your bill is high.



Did you know that you can have a water leak and not actually *see or hear* water leaking? Sometimes leaks go unnoticed between meter readings. If your usage seems unusually high when you receive your bill, take a look at the actual meter *inside the premises*. If no water is running, the red dial on the meter should be still. If it is moving, even slightly, it

could indicate a leak and you should call a plumber.

Fishing

Fishing at Morris Lake has been suspended until further notice due to insurance concerns.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The following roads are tentatively scheduled for resurfacing in 2013: Maple Avenue, Howard Street, Kelsey Avenue, Hillside Terrace, Madison Street (from Spring Street to Halsted Street) and Lower Spring Street.



Lower Spring Street Beautification project will begin this Spring which will include light poles, new sidewalks, and a rain garden within

this area of Town. This project is being funded through the NJDOT Centers of Place Grant.

New sidewalks will be constructed along Madison Street from Spring Street to Halsted Street through grant money received from Safe Routes to School .

Please note that this list is current as of April 9, 2013 and may be changed without notice.

ZONING CORNER

Prohibited Signs

Portable signs for use as permanent signage. Fluorescent-lit signage or signage with glowing paint, flashing signs, rooftop mounted advertising signage, signage above the second floor. Feather flags.

Temporary Banners or Signs

Temporary signs or banners that do not exceed the number and size as previously noted may be displayed with a zoning permit for a maximum of 30 days provided that the temporary sign does not interfere with pedestrian or traffic safety.

Temporary signs for events such as elections and community events such as tricky trays, yard sales, etc., with a maximum size of three square feet may be placed in a residential zone with consent of the property owner up to 30 days prior to the event and must be removed within 48 hours after the event.

Temporary signs for events such as elections and community events, with a maximum size of 16 square feet may be placed in a missed-use, commercial or light industrial zone with consent of the property owner up to 30 days prior to the event and must be removed within 48 hours after the event.

For any questions contact the Zoning Officer, Kathy Citterbart, at kcitterbart@newtontownhall.com or call 973-383-3521, ext. 227.

Town of Newton 39 Trinity Street Newton, NJ 07860 PRST STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 194 SPARTA, NJ 07871

NEWTON: SUSSEX COUNTY'S DOWNTOWN

The Newton News is printed and distributed twice a year to keep all residents informed of the many programs and services offered by the Town. Please take a few moments to update your calendars on upcoming events and keep this edition of our newsletter handy for convenient reference in the future. For more timely updates, please visit our Town website at www.newtontownhall.com.



NEWTON POLICE HONOR GUARD: LEFT TO RIGHT: Ptl. Kyle Phlegar, Sgt. Frank Philhower, Ptl. Kenneth Teets, Sgt. Michael Monoco, Ptl. Shawn Burke.

BRUSH PICK-UP

The Town of Newton announces that it will combine a brush pick-up with the annual leaf collection program in November. More details will follow in the July Recycling Newsletter and on the Town website. We look forward to serving you in the fall.

NEW SUMMER HOURS

May 28th through August 30th Monday - Wednesday 8:30am to 4:30pm Thursday 8:30am to 6:30pm Friday 8:30am to 1:30pm

The Newton News
Editors - Terri Oswin & Thomas S. Russo, Jr.