

Chatham Borough Mayor and Council Bulletin

January 2020

Happy 2020 to all Chatham Borough residents! This is the first of six bulletins that will be sent to Borough residents in 2020 to ensure that you are informed about important issues in the community. An electronic version will also be posted on the Borough web site.

Communications

If you would like to report a concern regarding Borough infrastructure or other non-emergency issues that can be addressed by our staff, please use our “Report a Concern” function on the Borough website. This will ensure the concern is passed on to the right individual at Borough Hall and will allow you to track how the issue is resolved. **Emergencies should be reported by calling 911.**

For services not provided by the Borough, please contact the service provider directly.

- Power Outages must be reported to JCPL (800-662-3115).
- Missed Recycling must be reported to the MCMUA (973-285-8390).
- Missed Garbage and Bulk pickup should be reported to Suburban Disposal (973-227-7020).

Starting in 2020, Chatham Borough will have an official Facebook page, where we will share important news and remind people about Borough Services such as leaf pickup and snow plowing. We will also livestream some important events, such as the swearing in of our new Mayor and Council Members, commemorations and awards, and promotions.

To reach the Mayor and Council, please e-mail:

mayor@chathamborough.org and **council@chathamborough.org**

Revaluation

Morris County has ordered Chatham Borough to conduct a revaluation of assessed property values, which will be conducted over the next 3 years. It is important to note that **revaluation does not increase revenues to the Borough**. Generally, in any revaluation a home’s “assessed value” will go up but the tax rate applied to that value will go down. Changes do occur for those homes whose values have increased either less than or greater than average. Typically, about 1/3 of properties see a decrease in taxes paid, 1/3 see no change, and 1/3 see an increase.

As part of the process, the revaluation firm that is hired will inspect all buildings in the Borough, including their interiors. This is a routine element of the revaluation process. If owners refuse entry to the inspectors, the inspectors may assume the interiors have been renovated and value the property with that assumption. Inspections are not expected to begin for several months, and all homeowners will be given advanced notice of inspections. Please watch this space for more information (which will also be posted on our web site).

Redevelopment

Two major redevelopments are currently being considered by the Borough: Post Office Plaza and River Road. There is no set timeline for decisions about these projects. Detailed information about both projects can be found on the Borough web site under “Redevelopment.”

Over the course of 2018 to 2019, the Planning Board and Borough Council declared the two project zones “areas in need of redevelopment”; approved general plans related to use, density, public benefits, other items, and selected developers. The plans for each redevelopment project can be viewed at the link described above.

Each of these projects raises important and complex questions regarding traffic, schools, taxes, infrastructure, and land use. The Council has not yet seen any detailed designs or site plans, and there is still no set timeline for decisions. Additional public sessions will be held over the next several months. Any questions or input you may have should be emailed to:

postofficeplaza@chathamborough.org or riverroadredevelopment@chathamborough.org

Some residents have asked about potential “tax relief” for the developers of these projects. Whether to grant the developers “Payment in Lieu of Taxes” (PILOT) is a separate consideration from whether to approve the projects themselves. There are potential advantages and disadvantages to the PILOT approach, all of which will be carefully weighed by the Council in consultation with the Board of Education and the Borough’s financial advisors. Because the negotiations involve sensitive financial information, some of this cannot be publicly disclosed while the negotiations are taking place. However, residents interested in better understanding the financial implications of the developments (including potential PILOT agreements) should e-mail council, who will set up a meeting with staff.

Stanley Donation

The Stanley Church congregation is disbanding and is considering donating their historic building to Chatham Borough, along with a financial donation to cover maintenance and operating costs. The Borough Council will be examining this option and will also be conducting a public process to determine how to best use the property. This process will include an online and paper survey as well as the establishment of an advisory committee consisting of Borough residents. If you are interested in serving on the advisory committee or have questions about the process, please email Borough Administrator Steve Williams at swilliams@chathamborough.org.

Volunteering

We are able to do so much for the Borough with so little in terms of revenue and resources thanks to the numerous volunteers who serve on our Fire Department, Emergency Squad, Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Committees. In addition, there are specific projects that could use your help – from our Spring Clean-Up to operating cameras for our meetings. Please visit our web page for more information:

<https://www.chathamborough.org/chatham/Volunteer/>

Thank you for helping to make Chatham Borough such a special community, and have a happy, healthy, and joyous 2020!