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## **Berkeley Heights Newsletter - January 2019**

Welcome to the Berkeley Heights Newsletter, created by the Berkeley Heights Communications Committee to provide residents with an easy way to learn about what's happening in town. Watch for it in your inbox ([sign up here](#)) or pick up a paper copy at Town Hall, the Library or at Senior meetings.

Comments? Suggestions? Please send them to: [BHCommunications@bhtwp.com](mailto:BHCommunications@bhtwp.com)

## **Township Updates**

### **Municipal Complex**

Construction continues on the new Municipal Complex. The new Salt Dome is complete and is loaded with salt for the upcoming winter! The former Recreation Center was demolished and cement is being poured for the foundation and footers.

Make sure to follow construction progress of the construction and see what will be happening in upcoming weeks via the [Weekly Construction Updates](#) on the Township website.

### **Township Reorganization/Meeting Summaries**

The annual Township Reorganization meeting was held on Tuesday, January 1, at 2:30pm. Our new Mayor, Angie Devaney, was sworn in along with newly elected Township Council members Alvaro Medeiros and Stephen Yellin.

At that meeting, the Town Council made a number of important decision and appointments, including:

- Newly elected Council member Medeiros was elected Council President and Council member Poage was elected Vice President
- Kraig Dowd, Esq. of Weber Dowd Law LLC was appointed Municipal Attorney. He replaces Joe Sordillo of McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP;
- Liza Viana as Township Administrator, who replaces John Bussiculo;
- Suplee Clooney & Co. as Township Auditor, replacing Samuel Klein and Company (the incumbent company did not respond to the RFQ request)
- Susan Poage will be the Council's representative to the Planning Board, replacing Jeanne Kingsley.
- Shared Services Agreement by and between Union County and Berkeley Heights for the temporary sharing of a Certified Public Works Manager.
- Phillips Preiss was named Township Planner for new projects. Harbor Consultant and principal Mike Mistretta will finish most projects currently underway and

consult on others as needed.

Full coverage of the [January 1](#) and [January 15](#) Town Council meetings can be found in TAPinto Berkeley Heights.

### **Warren Proposed Development**

In December, the Township formally filed a written objection to Warren's proposed housing developments (both the K. Hovnanian and Premier sites) that border Berkeley Heights.

Those objections include feedback from residents, elected and appointed officials, and professionals regarding the impacts of these proposed development projects on Berkeley Heights residents and infrastructure. Those concerns, among others filed, must be addressed by Warren Township and the developers.

Please read the a [summary of the recent filings, issues raised and court decisions](#).

Background on this issue can be found on the [Berkeley Heights Township website](#).

### **Recycling Schedule - Please note schedule changes**

Giordano, our recycling contractor, has made big changes to the recycling schedule. Please note:

***The Township is now divided into two sections for recycling pickup.*** Snyder Avenue/Horseshoe Road is the dividing line between the East and West sides of Berkeley Heights.

**Pickup will occur every other Wednesday for streets East of Snyder Ave (toward Summit) and every other Thursday for streets West of Snyder Avenue (toward Warren).** Both sides of Snyder and Horseshoe will be picked up on Wednesdays.

[Full 2019 schedule with East & West dates is online.](#)

Specific questions can be sent directly to Giordano at ([service@gogreengiordano.com](mailto:service@gogreengiordano.com) or call 1-800-216-2250) for the most up-to-date information. Read a summary of [Recycling "Do's and Don'ts"](#).

#### ***February 2019 Recycling Dates:***

- EAST: February 6, 20
- WEST: February 7, 21

### **Township Council Meeting Schedule**

Township Council meetings take place at Town Hall (29 Park Avenue) at 7 pm.

#### ***Upcoming Township Council meetings:***

- February 5, 19
- March 5, 19

#### ***Township Council Budget meetings:***

- February 25
- March 4, 18

***Upcoming Planning Board meetings:***

- February 6, 20
- March 6, 20

**Welcome Letter from Mayor Devanney**

As your new Mayor, I am excited to be working with all residents to write the next chapter of our town's history. That new chapter began on January 1st, when I was ceremonially sworn in as Mayor by a large group of young Berkeley Heights girls who supported my election. As Berkeley Heights' first elected woman Mayor, it was a historic moment that I was proud to be part of!

My first month has been very busy, and I am pleased to report that progress has already been made on several fronts. Township officials who bring excellent experience and capabilities were appointed, including our new Township Administrator, Liza Viana. I made appointments to Township Committees following an open and transparent application process in which interested residents' experience and skillsets were matched with openings.

The Township has adopted contracts for services under a professional standard known as an RFQ (request for qualifications). We have placed caps on how much can be spent on professional services without prior Township approval, and installed a "trigger" when a certain percentage of that contract has been spent. Both measures will help keep costs down while making the process much more transparent.

In addition, we:

- Continue to work with our Municipal Complex team to ensure the project continues to run smoothly and cost effectively
- Are in the process of putting in measures to train our staff and professionalize government.
- Are working to create a Recycling Task Force, Economic Development Committee and a Recreation Team to examine passive and active recreation.

In closing, "thank you" to the wonderful staff and workers that help this town run day to day, and to all of the volunteers who spend their time helping to make our town a better place. I look forward to continuing the progress being made in town with you!

***Mayor Angie Devanney***

**Committee & Board Updates**

**Communications Committee Update**

The Communications Committee is working to upgrade the Township website. The new website will be easier to use for residents (on phone and tablet too) and easier for Township employees to update. The Committee is planning to give a project update at a Township Council meeting and expect to roll out the new website in early 2019.

Please send questions or comments about the website project or other communications issues and ideas to [BHCommunications@bhtwp.com](mailto:BHCommunications@bhtwp.com).

## Peppertown Park Renewal Committee Update

**Save the Date February 23rd, 2019**

Peppertown Park Renewal Committee will be hosting our **First Texas Hold 'Em Fundraiser** at Mt. Carmel Society at 56 River Road.

Peppertown Park Committee is a non-profit organization (501 (c) (3) dedicated to raising funds to be used for the much needed renovation and redesign of the park located in the center of Berkeley Heights. Please visit our website at [Peppertownpark.com](http://Peppertownpark.com).

## Downtown Beautification Committee (DBC)

### ***210th Anniversary of Berkeley Heights:***

To celebrate the 210th anniversary of Berkeley Heights, we are selling decorative wood signs featuring the 'Established 1809' line. Offered in two finishes, each \$40 sign is custom-made locally. You can buy signs now at Berkeley Hardware. This lovely item warms your home decor and showcases your community pride. All proceeds support Downtown Beautification initiatives such as the hanging flower baskets along Springfield Avenue.

## Environmental Commission

### **Sustainable Jersey Learning**

Several members of the Environmental Commission recently attended a meeting of the Sustainable Jersey Union County Hub. Among other things, they learned that:

- The NJ Clean Energy program is still providing rebates for commercial and residential energy; there may also be grants available.
- The Township can obtain Sustainable Jersey points for particular actions we take in the areas of commercial and residential energy efficiency.

Commission members will follow up to see if the Township can take advantage of any financial benefits that may be available for energy efficiencies that will be included in our new municipal complex. The Commission plans to discuss the Sustainable Jersey point system for Energy at its next meeting on Monday, February 4.

### **Applications Still Being Accepted for Learning Community Garden**

The mission of the Berkeley Heights Learning Community Garden at Littell-Lord Farmstead on Horseshoe Road is to give residents the opportunity to grow organic vegetables, fruits, and herbs to promote healthy eating. Union County master gardeners will advise gardeners on how to grow vegetables and share advice on organic gardening techniques. The Garden has operating rules all gardeners must agree to follow. If there are more applicants than there are plots available, the plots will be assigned by lottery.

Interested residents can apply using the [online application](#).

Proposed plot rental fees will be \$65 for the first year, plus a \$50 refundable security deposit.

## Berkeley Heights Recreation Commission

- In December of 2018 the Commission approved the creation of a sub-committee, Friends of Berkeley Heights Recreation Commission, that will focus on fundraising efforts. The sub-committee had their first meeting and is in the process of forming a 501c3.
- The Commission has launched their first annual survey. Please complete the [survey online](#) or pick up a hardcopy available at the Library and at the Tax Office at Town Hall.
- The Commission elected Steve Lesnewich as Chairperson. Mike Tomich will remain as Vice Chair and PAL Liaison.

## **Community Updates & Events**

### **Berkeley Heights Community Pool - Berkeley Heights YMCA**

The new Berkeley Heights YMCA pool will not be ready to open this summer. The lease agreement we have with the Y, signed April 2017, actually gives the Y six years to finish the pool. It was the Y's hope to be finished with the pool this summer, but unfortunately that is not the case.

Y President Paul Kieltyka appeared before the Town Council on January 15 to explain what has brought us here; the main explanation is that the site plan was changed. In addition, the current pool will be in a different location on the property than originally planned; it was initially supposed to be in the same place as the previous pool. The proximity of the pool to the rest of the construction site where a new Y facility is being built and the safety of residents is paramount. As a result, the YMCA has decided to open the pool in the Summer of 2020.

The Y has been working to reach agreements with the following neighboring pools to ensure all Berkeley Heights residents who are looking for a home pool this summer have one:

1. [New Providence Community Pool](#) – Waiting to hear back on some more details. As of now: Family membership for 2019 is \$650 If paid by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Individual membership for 2019 is \$440.

1378 Springfield Ave  
New Providence, NJ 07974  
908-464-4141

2. [Summit Family Aquatics Center](#) - BHCP members can join at the non-member fee.

100 Ashwood Ave.  
Summit, NJ 07901  
908-273-6777

3. [Berkeley Swim Club](#) – We're waiting to hear if they will waive the bond fee for BHCP members. Will know more in February.

200 Hamilton Ave  
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922  
908-464-2125

4. [Mountainside Community Pool](#) - All BHCP membership will be given the resident rates at the pool and there will be no joining fee for the summer of 2019. More

information available February 1, 2019.

1005 Mountain Ave  
Mountainside, NJ 07092  
908-232-0015

The Township understands the frustration of many residents who were looking forward to the pool opening this summer. The YMCA emphasizes their commitment to our community. They took over the pool on Locust two years ago so our Town would continue to be able to enjoy it.

We are extremely excited to see the world-class Y building that will open in early 2020, and the pool which will open in the summer of 2020. We look forward to helping the Y see this project through to completion as quickly as possible. Please contact the Y directly with any additional questions.

### **"Snow Buddies" - New Community Program**

Snow Buddies is a new group of volunteers who assist their senior citizen neighbors with snow shoveling when they have no alternatives.

If you are interested in getting involved and/or know of neighborhood seniors who might need such assistance, please send Donna Aflalo a private message through Facebook or call her at 908-347-5062.

### **Berkeley Heights Diversity Council Events (BHDC)**

**Lunar New Year in partnership with Berkeley Heights YMCA** February 2, 4:30 - 6:30pm at the Berkeley Heights YMCA at 550 Springfield Avenue

Celebrate the Lunar New Year - "Year of the Pig" - with food, fun, performances and crafts. The Y is also holding a Lunar New Year Art Contest open to all HS students in the surrounding area.

**Women's History Month - March 2019:** In Celebration of Women's History Month, the BHDC will continue their W.O.W. series recognizing wonderful achievements and unsung Sheroes of Berkeley Heights. Please nominate your favorite Shero via email: [BHdiversity@gmail.com](mailto:BHdiversity@gmail.com).

### **Seniors Club Update (Ages 55+)**

Please join the "Seniors" at their weekly meetings - Tuesdays at 10:30am at Mount Carmel (56 River Road). All welcome, working or retired. Everyone 55 and over is invited and encouraged to attend our meetings, 2019 trips and loads of parties.

Berkeley Heights has a 22-passenger senior bus equipped with a wheelchair lift. Three days a week it picks up seniors who want to run errands along Springfield Avenue or attend Senior Club meetings and other social events run by the Senior Club each month. Here is the link to where you can find the online schedule ([January schedule](#)).

For information on senior activities, trips or clubs, please contact Joan Luciano at 908.665.9604 or email [grandmaluciano@gmail.com](mailto:grandmaluciano@gmail.com).

### **Girl Scouts participate in Trex Challenge**

The Girl Scouts are helping to collect over 500 pounds of thin film plastics as part of the Berkeley Heights Trex Thin Film Plastics Challenge. Please read more about the [Girls Scout's participation in the challenge](#).

### **February**

#### **BH Ed Foundation Fundraiser - American Ninja Warrior**

**February 24, 1:00 - 3:00 pm**

Spend time competing and learning with Berkeley Height's own Anthony DeFranco. [Registration available online](#).

### **March**

#### **BH Ed Foundation Fundraiser - Faculty Basketball Game**

**March 12, 6:15 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Governor Livingston HS**

Comments? Suggestions? Please send them to: [BHCommunications@bhtwp.com](mailto:BHCommunications@bhtwp.com)

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