



Plainsboro Reporter

A Quarterly Township Newsletter

Winter 2020-2021

Wicoff House Museum Happenings

Last year, the Wicoff House Museum was awarded a \$10,000 program grant from the Middlesex County Office of Arts and History to conduct a county-wide research project led by the museum's Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Although the project was delayed due to the pandemic, we were able to begin our museum site visits this summer. With masks and social distancing, the museum staff and small groups of YAC members have been visiting other museums in Middlesex County to analyze their engagement with local youth. After each visit, the YAC prepares a personalized report with recommendations and strategies for improving the museum's youth involvement. At the end of the year, we will create a final report with general recommendations which any museum can follow to reach more local youth and retain them as active volunteers and members.

This research project has led to a new, exciting project now in development by the museum staff and YAC members--the establishment of a group called the National Coalition of Museum Youth Advisory Councils (NCMYAC). By visiting other museums, we are creating guidelines and resources that other museums can use to organize their own youth groups, and will be sharing our reports on youth engagement in museums with preservation organizations on state and federal levels. The goal of this new project is to establish a network of museum youth advisory councils and to encourage the active participation of teens in historic preservation activities. We believe this will foster an increased access to local history and aid in the sustainability of history museums.

In addition to these projects, several YAC members and other local youth participated in the Wicoff House Museum's first summer internship program. The internships offered a hands-on experience in the following areas at the museum: archives, exhibits, marketing, research and projects. Each internship resulted in a project or new program benefiting the museum's mission of preserving and promoting the history of Plainsboro and the museum's overarching goal of utilizing the Wicoff House as a living historic resource.

Some of the projects begun or completed by the teen interns include:

- Research about the Plainsboro Rescue Squad and Police Department
- A new collaborative program called the Central Jersey Historic Sites Passport
- Then & Now photograph booklet of Plainsboro
- A bike/driving tour of historic Plainsboro--check it out at www.plainstournj.com

For a list of all the internship projects completed this summer, visit www.wicoffhouseplainsboro.com/internships

Keep up to date with the museum's events and programs by following us online:

- www.wicoffhouseplainsboro.com
- facebook.com/wicoffhousemuseum
- instagram.com/wicoffhouse

Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant award from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund.



Youth Advisory Council members visit the East Brunswick Museum

Did You Know?



Did you know that the township is always looking for ways to be more effective in our operations and better serve our residents at the lowest possible cost?

Getting your feedback is one way we can be responsive to your concerns and suggestions. While we cannot guarantee we can satisfy all of your requests, we would still like to hear from you. Tell us your suggestions, advice and what is important to you. Give us a shout at suggestions@plainsboronj.com

Did you know that masks are strongly recommended to be worn in all township parks and trails when social distancing is not possible? When enjoying Plainsboro's different parks, various trails and amenities, please be sure to wear a mask when you will be within 6' of other visitors.

Did you know that most roads in the township are contained within an area known as the right-of-way, sometimes referred to as ROW? The ROW contains not only the road, but can also include the curbs, areas between the curbs and sidewalks, the sidewalks, and utilities. Any type of work performed within the ROW like replacing a sidewalk or driveway apron, or working on utilities (gas, water, cable, or electric service) requires a Road Opening Permit. You can apply for a Road Opening Permit through the Department of Planning & Zoning. Forms are available on the Township's website

under Planning & Zoning, Forms and Applications. For more information call (609) 799-0909 x1502.

Did you know that the township has an ordinance requiring the removal of pet waste from private properties? The ordinance requires that a person who owns or is handling an animal that defecates on private property (common driveway, sidewalk, passageway, bypass, play area or any place where people congregate or walk, etc.) must remove the feces from the property and dispose of it properly. A party who violates this ordinance may receive a complaint from the property owner. The township also has a separate, similar ordinance requiring the removal and proper disposal of feces in township parks.

Did you know that the township alters its winter operations to meet the needs of each storm? The township often pretreats the roads before a storm begins. In fact, the township does not begin plowing until roughly three inches of precipitation has accumulated on the pavement. During a snow storm, the township first plows the primary roads that provide access through town prior to plowing residential streets/neighborhoods. Please be reminded that residents/property owners are required to remove snow and ice from sidewalks abutting their property within 24 hours of the storm's completion. Also, snow cannot be placed in any portion of a street where it will hinder the passage of pedestrians, bicyclists or vehicles

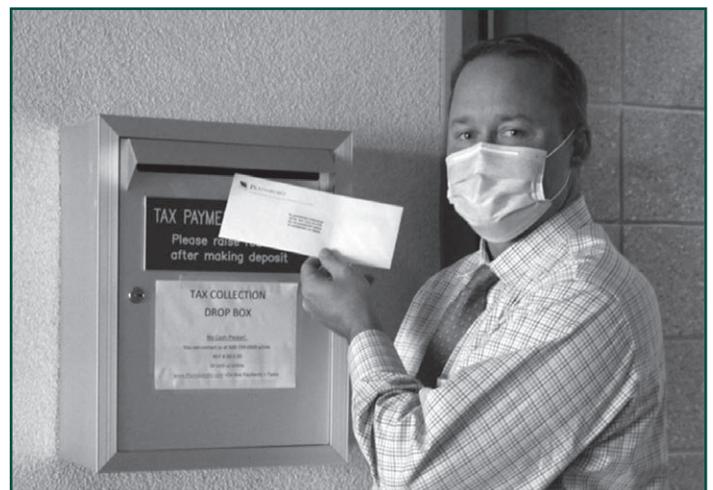
Convenient No-Contact Ways to Pay Your Property Taxes

In an effort to minimize personal contact and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, following are ways in which residents can make property tax payments:

- Tax Collection Drop Box - Located in the municipal building police department entrance, the drop box is accessible at all times. The contents are cleared twice each day, no stamp is necessary. Please do not put cash in the drop box!
- Online Payments - To pay by e-check or credit card/debit card, visit <https://wipp.edmundsassoc.com/Wipp/?wippid=1218> Payment by e-check costs only \$1.95 per transaction. Debit/credit cards are assessed a fee of 2.95% of the transaction.

For a no-cost electronic option, Automatic Clearing House (ACH) payment is also available. Visit <https://www.plainsboronj.com/DocumentCenter/View/55/Automatic-Debit-Authorization-Form-PDF?bidId=> and register to have your bank account debited each quarter for the amount due. Email reminders are sent prior to payments being debited from the preauthorized bank account.

For questions or if you need additional information, please call the Tax Collector's office at (609) 799-0909 extension 1408 or 1409.



Jesse Faasen, Plainsboro's Tax Collector, gathers payments from the tax drop box located in the municipal building police entrance.

Dey Road Redevelopment Plan Approved

At their October 14th meeting, the Township Committee approved the Dey Road Redevelopment Plan for the twenty acres of township land located between The Place apartment complex and the PSE&G substation. Approving the redevelopment plan is the first step to soliciting a developer to purchase the land and build age-restricted housing.

“Providing 55+ housing on this property is a wonderful opportunity for Plainsboro residents who wish to downsize to a smaller home while continuing to enjoy living in the township,” Mayor Cantu said after the plan was approved.

The twenty acre redevelopment area was originally part of a thirty acre parcel that was deeded to the township by Calton

Homes in late 2000 when they built the seventy home development known then as The Estates at Plainsboro. From the time the property was acquired by the township until early 2018 the land has been farmed through a lease arrangement with a local farmer. In 2018 the apartment complex known as The Place at Plainsboro was constructed on about ten acres at the western end of the property.

The vision for the remaining township land is a neighborhood comprised of a mix of town houses and single-family homes with amenities such as a clubhouse, pool, and walking paths. The development will complement the surrounding neighborhood with multi-use paths along Dey Road to access the Municipal Complex and Village Center as well as an intersection proposed at Woodland Drive to access Community Park.

Plainsboro Recreation’s Continued Partnership with New Jersey Audubon

Plainsboro Recreation Department is partnering with New Jersey Audubon for a second season at the Plainsboro Preserve. The township will be responsible for day-to-day operations at the Plainsboro Preserve, including oversight of the Rush Holt Environmental Education Center during the winter months, running from November 1st through March 31st. The winter hours of the center will be Thursday – Sunday; 11am – 4pm.

“During the pandemic, the Plainsboro Preserve has served as a woodland oasis for many seeking a way to escape the stress of everyday virtual life”, stated Township Committeeman Nuran Nabi. For this reason, we will be offering a wide array of out-

door programs this winter, including such things as weekday walking clubs, weekend family nature walks and programs, outdoor kids’ classes and a few small indoor art classes.

We hope people will continue to visit the Plainsboro Preserve and explore the different trails as a way to find solace throughout the winter months. Masks should be worn when social distancing is not possible.

Information about the winter programming at the Plainsboro Preserve is included as an insert within this newsletter and updates will be posted on the Recreation and Community Services page of the township website at www.plainsboronj.com

COVID-19 Visitor Requirements to Enter Municipal Building*

- Visitors must wear a mask in municipal buildings
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet between employees and visitors
- Only one visitor is allowed at office counters at any time
- When possible, interactions with employees should be done via phone, email, or by other virtual means
- If you are feeling ill, caring for an acutely sick family member, come into contact with an acutely sick individual, or have COVID symptoms, PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE BUILDING

**Modifications may occur if circumstances change*

Home Fire Safety Tips

“The Plainsboro Fire Prevention Division is dedicated to keeping the township safe from the devastation of fire”, stated Township Committeeman Ed Yates. Read the fire safety tips below to keep your family and friends safe this winter. Also, remember to test your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms regularly and change the batteries at least twice per year.

Heating Safety:

Fact - Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January and February.

- Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from heating equipment.
- Never use an oven to heat your home.
- Have your chimney and heating equipment cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Always turn off space heaters before going to bed or when leaving the room.

Cooking Safety:

Fact – Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment.

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop.

- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey or other dish and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove and oven by at least 3 feet.

Winter Holiday Safety:

Fact – More than two of every five decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Blow out candles when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving the home or going to bed.
- Do not use broken or frayed power cords or light strings.
- All fresh cut vegetation such as trees should be kept watered.
- Promptly remove dry vegetation such as trees, wreaths and garland from your home and dispose of them properly.

Always be sure to keep your clothes dryer free of lint. The accumulation of excess lint can lead to a fire. In addition, it is never wise to leave your dryer running when you are not at home.

Tree Maintenance and Responsibilities

Proper tree maintenance performed by a trained professional at the correct time of year promotes healthy growth. Improper maintenance may stifle growth, allow unwanted insects and disease and ultimately shorten the life of your tree.

Plainsboro Public Works staff considers themselves stewards of municipally owned trees and proper tree maintenance is an extremely important responsibility. This philosophy helped Plainsboro receive the Tree City USA designation and multiple growth awards from the Arbor Day Foundation for the past 35 years. Proper tree maintenance, however, goes farther than just municipally owned trees.

“The number one question staff receives regarding trees is ownership and responsibility,” according to Township Committeeman David Bander. If a tree is located behind a sidewalk, it’s typically owned by a homeowner. If it’s located directly adjacent to the street, it’s most likely owned by the Township. A definitive answer is obtained by checking the property survey.

Any privately-owned tree that abuts a sidewalk or street must adhere to certain standards. Overhanging limbs and branches that interfere with the pedestrian use of a sidewalk or vehicular use of a roadway must be removed to provide safe passage.

“Best management practices” recommend that to provide safe pedestrian passage on a sidewalk the lowest extending branch should be no less than eight (8) feet from the ground.

Plainsboro’s Tree Preservation Ordinance provides a permit exemption for residents when pruning and trimming is conducted within industry standards to promote the tree’s growth. The township recommends utilizing a certified tree expert or arborist to determine proper maintenance.

The most common tree maintenance mistake involves mulching. According to the state Division of Parks and Forestry, never pile mulch against a tree’s trunk in the shape of a volcano. It deprives the tree’s roots of water and softens the trunk, making the tree more susceptible to fungus, insects and rodents. Install the mulch in a donut shape; keeping the mulch six (6) inches from the trunk and as far out as the above branches extend. Keep the mulch 2-4” thick. At least every other year, remove the hard crust and add new mulch to maintain a 2-4” layer.

If you’re interested in learning more about tree maintenance, Plainsboro’s Shade Tree Advisory Committee posted at www.plainsboronj.com.

Summer Camp Jobs Available

Summer employment applications and job descriptions for the 2021 season will be available on the Township website (www.plainsboronj.com) or for pick-up at the Recreation and Cultural Center starting December 15th. A variety of positions are available including: summer camp assistants, teachers, counselors, and volunteers for full and half day commitments. The minimum age for paid employment is 16 and the minimum age for a volunteer position is 14.

Interviews will be scheduled with qualified applicants until all positions are filled. The eight week summer camp season operates from June 21st through August 13th. Applicants should be available for the full duration of the camp. For additional information, contact the Program Coordinator, Cheryl Buonavolonta at cbuonavolonta@plainsboronj.com or 609-799-0909 x1703.

Plainsboro Recreation Announces Holiday Wishes Program

With the holiday season rapidly approaching, staff from the Department of Recreation and Community Services is working on the annual Holiday Wishes program to bring cheer to our families in need. Following are some important changes we have made this year in an effort to keep everyone safe and healthy:

- No baked goods will be accepted. Please contact us for alternate options.
- No gift tags will be put out on the giving trees this year. Instead, we are asking that those who would like to contribute a gift please consider buying gift cards for holiday shopping (minimum \$5.00 – maximum \$50.00). These gift cards would need to be submitted by December 14, 2020 (read below for drop off details).

- Cash donations will be used to buy gift cards, if needed. Any unused cash donations will benefit the food pantry.

Drop off locations for gift cards are as follows:

- Plainsboro Food Pantry drop box located outside of the food pantry. Outside of regular office hours, use the police station entrance to access the box.
- Recreation reception desk (please check building hours before visiting).

For further information, please contact Erum Ladak at (609) 799-0909 x 1711 or eladak@plainsboronj.com

Plainsboro's Sixth Annual Family Ski Trip

Ski Shawnee... here we come again! Plainsboro Recreation and Community Services Department's seventh Annual Family Ski Trip is scheduled for Sunday, February 7th.

Families are encouraged to register early, as this trip will surely fill up quickly. Our trip begins with a Coach Bus ride up to the beautiful Pocono Mountains for a day of skiing, snowboarding, snow tubing, and spending time with family and friends. What a perfect opportunity to enjoy a winter adventure.

Ski lessons and ski equipment rentals are available but feel free to bring your own equipment if you prefer.

Please look for more information as it becomes available on our website or call the Department of Recreation & Community Services office at 609-799-0909 x1719.

We hope to see you there!



Smiles all around in this photo from a prior family ski trip to Shawnee

Plainsboro Police Promote Five Officers to Corporal

Chief Fred Tavener is proud to announce the promotion of five officers to the rank of Corporal.

Chief Tavener stated, "All of these officers exemplify the department's motto of Commitment to Excellence and will become invaluable parts of the department's leadership team."

Joe Breyta joined the department in 2008 after graduating from the Union County Police Academy. He began his career in the Patrol Division where he established himself as a versatile officer with an excellent work ethic. In 2010, Joe became a Detective where he served for 2 years before returning to the Patrol Division. Joe has been instrumental in building our agency's presence on social media platforms. Joe prides himself on community engagement. He has been a DARE Officer, a bike patrol officer, and a *Not Even Once* Instructor. Joe also leads major fundraisers such as The Police Unity Tour and Breast Cancer Awareness. Earlier this year, he was awarded the Dr. Martin Luther King, Uniformed Service Award in recognition of his commitment to service and community. Joe also holds a Master's Degree.

Tim McMahon joined the department in 2009 after graduating from the Mercer County Police Academy. He began his career in the Patrol Division where, in addition to excelling in his daily patrol duties, he showed an interest and aptitude in follow up investigations. In 2012, he was assigned to the Detective Bureau and for the past 8 years he has been a lead investigator on several major cases. Tim has been at the forefront of several department community outreach programs and serves in departmental roles such as Evidence Custodian, Firearms Instructor and *Not Even Once* Instructor. Tim was named Officer of the Year in 2019 and holds a Master's Degree.

Dan Kanaley joined the department in 2011 after graduating from the Somerset County Police Academy. He began his career in the Patrol Division where he excelled in DWI enforcement, earning him 3 consecutive MADD Awards. Dan was awarded Officer of the Year in 2013 and his skill set led him to a position within the Traffic Safety Bureau in 2014. Dan became a certified Drug Recognition Expert and continued to excel in traffic enforcement. In 2015, he was assigned to the Detective Bureau where he served as an Adult and Juvenile Detective. He later became a DARE Instructor & Coordinator, *Not Even Once* Instructor, and Defensive Tactics Instructor. Dan recently attained his Bachelor's

Degree and is pursuing his Master's Degree.

Dan Reichard joined the department in 2011 after serving as a United States Marine. He graduated from the Atlantic County Police Academy and began his career in the Patrol Division where he was a self-starter in both proactive and community policing. In 2015, he was assigned as the Plainsboro Deputy Office of Emergency Management Coordinator, where he oversaw the revision and implementation of the township's emergency operations plan. In 2016, he was assigned to the Traffic Safety Bureau. Dan is a Firearms Instructor, *Not Even Once* Instructor, and the lead Community Emergency Response Team Coordinator. He serves as liaison to both Plainsboro EMS and Fire Department and in his current role in the Administrative Division, he has been an integral part of the township's COVID-19 response. He is working towards a Bachelor's Degree.

Rob Urie joined the department in 2012 after graduating from the Monmouth County Police Academy. He began his career in the Patrol Division establishing himself as a well-rounded, hardworking officer and utilized his position as a physical training instructor to create and propose the *Physical Training on Duty Program*. Rob was reassigned to the Traffic Safety Bureau in 2017 where he helped implement and oversee community outreach programs as well as the research and purchasing of the police lobby kiosk. In 2018, Rob was reassigned to the Detective Bureau. Rob created and maintained the *Eyes on Plainsboro Camera Program* and the *Ring Doorbell Partnership*, which assists detectives with investigations. Rob was also the 2018 Officer of the Year, served as a DARE instructor and *Not Even Once* Instructor.

Deputy Mayor Neil Lewis stated, "These officers have served the township in a distinguished and selfless manner. The Township Committee joins me in congratulating each of them on their recent promotion."



Pictured with Chief Fred Tavener (third from right) are recently promoted corporals Dan Kanaley, Tim McMahon, Rob Urie, Dan Reichard and Joe Breyta.

At your service . . .

Township Clerk's Office 799-0909, extension 2547

Elections

Voter Registration forms are now available in the following languages: Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, Korean and Gujarati. Please visit our website www.plainsboronj.com for the latest election updates.

Pet Licenses

NJ State Law mandates that all dogs six months and older must be licensed annually by the Township. Licenses are due for renewal by January 31st with penalty charges beginning on February 1st. Applications for dogs and cats are available from the Township Clerk's Office and the township website. Failure to license pets is in violation of Plainsboro Township's Ordinance 59-1 and can result in a summons. **According to state regulation N.J.A.C. 8:23A, when licensing, the rabies vaccination immunity must extend through at least ten (10) months of the 12-month licensing period. Licenses cannot be issued if the rabies vaccination expires before November 1st of each year. If for any medical reason the animal cannot be vaccinated in the required time, form VPH-28 must be completed by the veterinarian and submitted with the renewal form.

Vital Records

The local registrar is responsible for maintaining vital records of births, marriages/civil unions, domestic partnerships and deaths that occurred in Plainsboro Township. The municipality that holds the original record is the only registrar, besides the State Registrar, that can issue a certified copy.

A Certified Copy of a vital record is issued to those individuals who have a direct link to the individual(s) named on the vital record, as identified in the Governor's Executive Order 18, and provided that the requestor is able to identify the vital record and can provide proof of his identity and relationship.

For more information regarding requirements and fees, call the office or visit the township website.

	Spayed/Neutered	Non-Spayed/ Non-Neutered
January	\$13.20	\$16.20
February	\$18.20	\$21.20
March	\$23.20	\$26.20
April	\$28.20	\$31.20
May	\$33.20	\$36.20
June	\$38.20	\$41.20
July	\$43.20	\$46.20
August	\$48.20	\$51.20
September	\$53.20	\$56.20
October	\$58.20	\$61.20
November	\$63.20	\$66.20
December	\$68.20	\$71.20

If you missed the Township's Rabies Clinic in November please contact the Middlesex County Public Health Department at (732) 745-3100 for a listing of the county scheduled clinics held in the surrounding municipalities.

Public Works Department 799-0099

Recycling & Conservation Center

Hours of Operation

Through December 5th, the center will be open Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm. From December 6, 2020 through March 31, 2021 the center will be open only on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

Curbside Recycling

Scheduled pickup dates are December 7th and 21st; January 4th and 18th; February 1st and 15th

Christmas Tree Pickup

Christmas trees will be collected curbside throughout the Township each Monday in January. Apartment and condo residents must contact their management office for disposal instructions.

Trees may also be taken to the Conservation Center for drop-off during regular hours.

For safety reasons, trees containing ornaments, wire, metal or nails will not be accepted.

Next Bulk Waste Day – April 3rd from 8:00am-5:00pm at the conservation center

Middlesex County Programs

Paint, household hazardous waste and consumer electronics disposal services are provided by the county. For more information, please visit the township's website at www.plainsboronj.com under Departments/Public Works for schedules and information or contact *Middlesex County Solid Waste* at 732-745-4170.

Visit the Public Works page of the township website at <https://www.plainsboronj.com/225/Public-Works> for the most recent information on a variety of services and events



PLAINSBORO

Township of Plainsboro
641 Plainsboro Road
Plainsboro, NJ 08536-2094

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TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

- Peter A. Cantu, Mayor
- Neil J. Lewis, Deputy Mayor
- David Bander
- Nuran Nabi
- Edmund C. Yates

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

Anthony Cancro

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Teresa Carson

**ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER
PLAINSBORO, NJ 08536**

Township Directory and Information

Plainsboro Township Municipal Offices

Location: 641 Plainsboro Road
Phone: General 609-799-0909
 Court 609-799-0863
Hours of Operation:
 Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
Website: www.plainsboronj.com

Like us on Facebook at
Facebook.com/PlainsboroTwpNJ

Register at: <http://www.plainsboronj.com> to receive notifications from township officials and to request services online.

Plainsboro Public Library

Location: 9 Van Doren Street
Phone: 609-275-2897
Hours of Operation:
 Monday – Thursday 10:00am-8:30pm
 Friday – Sunday 10:00am-5:00pm
Website: www.lmxac.org/plainsboro

Plainsboro Police Department

Location: 641 Plainsboro Road
Phone: Non-Emergency 609-799-2333
Emergencies 9 1 1
Website: www.plainsboropolice.com

Plainsboro Recreation and Community Services

Location: 641 Plainsboro Road
Phone: General 609-799-0909, press 6
 Email recdept@plainsboronj.com

Plainsboro Public Works Department

Location: Scotts Corner Road at
20 Woodland Drive
Phone: 609-799-0099
 Recycling Center, Bulk Waste
 See Page 7 for details or visit website

Other Useful Numbers

- School District Information
609-716-5000
- Report Street Light Out to
PSE&G 1-800-436-7734
- Report Potholes to
Public Works 799-0099
- New Jersey American Water
1-800-272-1325
- Poison Hotline
1-800-222-1222

Township Meetings

All meetings are held virtually, unless otherwise noted.

Environmental Advisory Committee

4th Monday, 6:00pm or as needed
Call 609-799-0909, x1502
for more information

Fire Commissioners

2nd Tuesday, 7:00pm
at firehouse

Shade Tree Advisory Committee

2nd Monday

Township Committee

Regular Mtg. 2nd Wednesday
at 7:00pm (In-person)
Agenda Mtg. 4th Wednesday
at 5:30pm

Planning Board

3rd Monday at 6:00pm

Zoning Board

1st Wednesday at 6:00pm