Plainsboro Promotes Pedestrianism

The Township Committee agrees that promoting walking as a leisure activity and as a means to connect neighborhoods is worth the investment of public dollars. Two new crosswalk improvements on Plainsboro Road demonstrate that ongoing commitment.

The crosswalks are located on the eastern end of the township between Scotts Corner Road and the border with Cranbury Township between the Ravens Crest and Aspen developments. Committeeman Ed Yates said of the improvements, “The safety of pedestrians crossing Plainsboro Road at these locations is a paramount concern. Allocating the approximately $83,000 from the Township’s budget for both projects was an easy decision”, he went on to say.

The first crosswalk near the intersection of Scotts Corner Road and Plainsboro Road will be moved closer to the intersection with new pavement striping and a flashing yellow beacon that pedestrians can activate by pressing a button on the light pole. Moving the crossing closer to the intersection and adding the flashing beacons will alert drivers that someone will be crossing the roadway at a location they would usually be yielding to a pedestrian. The second crosswalk closer to the township’s border with Cranbury will consist of similar pavement restriping and adding the flashing yellow lights. This project will have the same effect, alerting drivers that a pedestrian wishes to cross the roadway.

It should also be noted that the flashing yellow lights will be solar powered to reduce operating and maintenance costs. An example of a similar crosswalk project can be found on Dey Road near the Queenship of Mary Church and the municipal building.

Existing crosswalk on Dey Road near township municipal building and Queenship of Mary Church. Similar improvements are under construction in two locations along Plainsboro Road.
Did You Know?

Did you know that home fires occur in the winter more than any other season? Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February. In fact, one in every seven home fires - and one in every five home fire-related deaths involves heating equipment. Following are some tips to keep your home safe this winter:

• Keep flammable items at least three feet away from any heat source such as a fireplace, wood stove, radiator or a space heater
• Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible
• Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms - and test them at least once per month
• Plug only one heat-producing appliance (such as a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time
• Have your chimney and vents cleaned and inspected each year by a qualified professional
• Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep the container outside at least 10 feet from your home and any other structures

Did you know that the Code Enforcement Department has opened up the SDL Portal? The Code Enforcement Department began using a new software program last October in the Building Division, and more recently in the Housing Division. The program is through Spatial Data Logic (SDL). There are many benefits to this web-based platform for the municipality and there are aspects of this software that can benefit other stakeholders. One of those features is SDL Portal. The SDL Portal is a convenient, web-based tool for residents and municipal staff alike. While municipal staff use it as a quick reference tool, it primarily serves as a convenient way for citizens, businesses and professionals to engage with their municipality online.

Bicycling and Rules of the Road

Bicycling has become a popular year-round activity as residents look for ways to spend time outdoors with family and friends while getting some exercise. With ever-rising gas prices, bicycling has become a popular alternative to driving when commuting short distances. There is, however, more to bike travel than hopping on a bike and going for a ride -- there are rules of the road. Some of the rules are simple measures to make sure the bicycle is in good working order. This would include things like checking for proper tire inflation and chain tension and making sure handlebars and other movable parts are secure.

The following are a few rules that apply to all cyclists:
• Cyclists are to ride with the direction of traffic, not against it
• Cyclists are prohibited from riding on sidewalks (unless young children are learning)
• While use of a properly fitting helmet is recommended for all, it is required for those 17 years old and younger
• Use a bell or horn on the handlebars (not a whistle) when overtaking cyclists on the road, or pedestrians if riding on a multi-use path

Make Life Easier Through Online or Electronic Tax Payments

To make an online tax payment, visit www.plainsboronj.com and click on the Online Payments icon (pictured left). Choose “Taxes” and follow the prompts. You can access your tax bill using your name, your address or your block and lot. Payments by credit card or e-check are accepted. A vendor service charge of $1.95 per transaction is included when paying by e-check. Payment by credit card includes a service charge, payable to the credit card company, of 2.95% of balance paid. You may also register with the Tax Collector’s office to have your preauthorized bank account debited each quarter for the amount due on your property. Email reminders are sent prior to payments being debited from the pre-authorized 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.
Township Hires New Human Resource Officer

In August, Jon Cochran joined the township as Human Resource Officer in the Administration Department. Jon replaces Ellen Shinn who retired at the end of September after serving the township for more than 15 years.

Jon has extensive public sector experience, having worked for nearly 10 years at the County of Somerset. Beginning as a Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) Analyst with the county, Jon was instrumental in upgrading the human resource and payroll systems. He was then promoted to the position of Compensation Specialist where he was responsible not only for directing the day-to-day operation of the HRIS system but was also accountable for labor contract negotiations, participating in all aspects of the negotiations process from the initial meeting through the final contract. Jon then went on to serve as Compensation and Employee Relations Manager with the county, overseeing all labor contracts for represented bargaining units, developing and managing the county’s extensive salary budget, handling staffing needs, employee relations and more.

More recently, Jon worked for The College of New Jersey where he continued his work in the field of Human Resources with broad responsibilities ranging from HRIS system management, compensation and classification, recruiting, employee and labor relations; even coordinating employee and labor responses to the ongoing COVID pandemic.

“The Township Committee is pleased to add a seasoned human resources professional to the township’s management team”, stated Mayor Peter Cantu.

Scout Projects Benefit Plainsboro Preserve

The area boy and girl scouts have been busy at the Preserve this past summer. Several great projects have been completed and still more are underway. Scouts often inquire about our needs and plan projects at the Preserve. We would like to thank the following scouts and those supporting them as they make these projects a reality:

Shrinithi Seenivasan - Girl Scout Troop #70051 – Shrinithi has worked these past two years to remove Japanese Barberry bushes from the Green and Yellow Trails. In addition, Shrinithi constructed four study plots, complete with native plants, that we are now able to use as educational tools when leading walks along those trails.

Vikram Krishna - Boy Scout Troop #10 - Vikram has been working to create a native wildflower meadow in an old field at the rear of the Preserve near the intersection of the Blue and White Trails. He and his volunteers have made over 700 seed balls and then dispersed them throughout the entire area.

Alex Ho - Boy Scout Troop #68 – Alex created an inviting shady picnic area in the backyard of the nature center next to the deck.

Manidhar Yeluri and Ethan Perrine - Boy Scout Troop #66 - Manidhar built custom-sized shelving for the existing greenhouse at the preserve and Ethan built an incredible potting table that includes a sink and an awning. These two additions will be very helpful during the next growing season.

Kaushal Jha - Boy Scout Troop #759 - Kaushal built much needed raised beds and a fence around the area.

Carlton Cummings - Boy Scout Troop #759 - Carlton constructed “Bog-walks” in areas that tend to get wet and become impassible along the Orange Trail and the Blue Shortcut Trail.

Nina Kapoor and Harshita Shah worked together on their Silver Award, opting to teach journaling classes at the Preserve on the weekends. For their final project they donated a mailbox to be installed at the Preserve that will include journaling materials.

“Thank you to all of the scouts for their incredible work. We are very fortunate to have these young men and women in our community”, stated Township Committeeman Nuran Nabi. “These projects were time intensive and very hard work.”
Pet First Aid & CPR

Beginning this fall, the Plainsboro Department of Recreation and Community Services in collaboration with Penn Medicine Community Wellness, will begin providing first aid and CPR classes focused on your furry family members. Instructors trained by The American and Safety Health Institute will teach participants basic techniques in life-saving skills. The course primarily deals with cat and dog emergencies. Teaching methods incorporate modules and the use of real-life scenarios through video, class skill practice, lecture, and instructor-led discussion.

Register at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pet-first-aid-cpr-registration-428083217427 and for more information contact Penn Medicine Community Wellness at 1-888-897-8979.

Events and Programs at the Wicoff House Museum

Over the past three years, staff at the Wicoff House Museum have been developing many events and programs to appeal to a diverse audience and to create an inclusive, welcoming environment at the museum. The museum is a living historic resource where we hope everyone in our community can see themselves represented.

Some of this year’s programs include:

**Adult Game Nights** - This year we started a new monthly adult game night program at the museum. All events are detailed in the Recreation Department’s new Meetup group. Join the group by downloading Meetup or accessing it on a computer, and searching for “Plainsboro Social Activities.” Some of our game night themes have included a murder mystery interactive game, which was a combination of Clue and Among Us; and a puzzle contest mixed with history trivia.

**Junior Historians Club** - The Junior Historians Club (JHC) began as an in-person program in March of 2020 but didn’t last long because of the pandemic. After some development, a virtual version was launched in 2021. We are excited to finally offer the JHC program in-person again at the museum for children ages 6-10! From September to December, the JHC will meet at the Wicoff House Museum, where they will solve museum mysteries and learn about topics related to public history and historic preservation. These topics include architecture, archaeology, oral history, genealogy/family history, etc. They will utilize the museum collections and the museum grounds to complete fun activities. Each club member receives a JHC t-shirt, a JHC membership card and a JHC log book to record all of their activities. This program will run twice a year, with the next session starting in February of 2023.

**SnowFest** - In December of this year, the museum will host its 3rd annual SnowFest event. This is one of our favorite community events each year—there’s something magical about snow even if it’s fake! Unless we are lucky enough to have snow on the ground during our event this year, we will create snow ourselves using our snow machine. We will have snow-themed crafts and refreshments, and a new museum scavenger hunt. Bring your kids or just come check out the museum decorated for the season with hundreds of lights! A librarian from the Plainsboro Public Library will read a winter-themed book by the fire. The Plainsboro Fire Department will help us light the tall tree in front of the museum, while the Plainsboro Police Department greets our visitors with hot cocoa and smores. Several special guests will make an appearance at the event, including Santa, the Grinch and Olaf. This museum event is free and everyone is welcome to celebrate. Visit www.plainsboronj.com for more information as December approaches.

Meet Jamie Dunlap – Intern at the Plainsboro Preserve

We are excited that we had our first college intern, Jamie Dunlap, at the Preserve this fall. Jamie attended Penn State University and worked at the Preserve over the summer running the Summer Adventure programs. She worked on updating and expanding the Discovery Trail as her “project”, but also learned many different aspects of the Preserve including trail work, working with our Teen Stewardship Committee, teaching programs, learning the registration system, and much more.

Jamie graduated from the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District before earning her degree in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Management from Penn State. Jamie is looking forward to continuing her work in the environmental education field.
Why Wasn’t My Recycling Collected?

Every other week, typically on a Monday, Plainsboro’s residents put their recyclables in a municipally approved bin and place them curbside for collection. At the end of the day, the resident expects their bin(s) to be empty, but sometimes that doesn’t happen. Your recycling isn’t collected for primarily two reasons: 1. You’re recycling the wrong items, and/or 2. The hauler is experiencing internal problems.

Placing the wrong items in your recycling bin is the primary reason residents don’t have their recycling collected. In Middlesex County the only items collected through the curbside recycling program are clean #1 and #2 plastic bottles, mixed paper, cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, and glass bottles and jars. Your recyclables are collected by a hauler contracted through the Middlesex County Improvement Authority (MCIA) and the hauler will not collect recycling bins that contain plastic bags, #3 - #7 plastic containers, Styrofoam, shredded paper, greasy or food-contaminated items and any other item not on the approved list. These bins are left uncollected and become the responsibility of the homeowner to properly discard.

Second, the recycling industry is experiencing a severe labor shortage, including drivers possessing a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), laborers and mechanics. Our hauler is no exception and is currently experiencing extensive labor issues. In an attempt to rectify this issue, MCIA’s hauler enacted signing bonuses for new CDL drivers, monthly bonuses for employees with perfect attendance, overtime incentives and the ability to work weekends.

MCIA and municipal staff are increasing recycling inspections and notifying the hauler of contaminated materials in recycling bins. As a result of incorrect or contaminated materials in bins, the hauler will skip these locations and collect from residents that are recycling correctly. “It’s now more important than ever to recycle properly. The complete recycling guidelines are available on the municipal website, along with the ability to download the Recycle Coach app,” states Township Committee member David Bander. The website address is https://www.plainsboronj.com/235/Household-Recycling.

Winter at the Plainsboro Preserve

Winter is a magical time of the year at the Preserve. It is quiet and peaceful and a great place to walk the trails and discover the winter birds at the feeders and on the lake, not to mention the animal tracks in the snow. Our trails are a great place to not only hike but also to snowshoe or cross-country ski on snowy days. We have a variety of programs happening during the winter months. There are programs for everyone and for every interest - Yoga, Pilates, nature classes for kids and adults, not to mention weekend family programs. This winter season, stop in for our coffee and birdfeeder watching or volunteer for the Feeder Watch program. We will be offering some indoor as well as outdoor programs so be sure to check out the list of winter programs that we are offering here at the Preserve.

Give Us A Shout With Your Suggestions

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 admin@plainsboronj.com
Plainsboro Police Promote Two Officers

The Plainsboro Police Department recently promoted two police officers. Eamon Blanchard, a 22-year veteran of the department, was promoted to Lieutenant and Tim McMahon, a 13-year veteran of the Department, was promoted to Sergeant. Both promotions took effect this past May.

Lt. Eamon Blanchard joined the department in August 2000. He attended the Cape May Police Academy and graduated in January, 2001. He was assigned to the Patrol Division, and showed an aptitude for following up on cases. In January 2005, he was assigned to the Detective Bureau and worked on several cases including an armed robbery. He was also assigned to the Middlesex County Drug Task Force for six months in 2007. In August 2009, he was promoted to the rank of Corporal in the Patrol Division and promoted in May 2013 to the rank of Sergeant. He was then assigned to the Traffic Bureau in 2019 where he oversaw all traffic investigations, road studies and community policing programs. He will be taking over command of the Patrol Division and Training in his new role. He earned a Master’s Degree from Boston University.

Sgt. Tim McMahon joined the department in 2009 after graduating from the Mercer County Police Academy. He began his career in the Patrol Division where he showed an interest in following up on cases and was assigned to the Detective Bureau in 2012, where he worked on several major cases. During his time in the Detective Bureau he started the Residential Security Survey Program. He was promoted to Corporal in 2020 and assigned to the Patrol Division. Sgt. McMahone is also a Firearms Instructor, a Not Even Once Instructor and holds a Master’s Degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

“On behalf of the Township Committee, I would like to congratulate Lt. Blanchard and Sgt. McMahon on their recent promotions and wish them continued success in their new positions,” stated Deputy-Mayor Neil Lewis.

Driving Safely in Winter Weather

Winter weather creates unique challenges for motorists. If you must drive, try not to go out on the roads until the snow plows and sanding trucks have had a chance to do their work. Be sure your car is prepared with all season or snow tires, working windshield wipers with windshield cleaning fluid, and enough gas to complete your trip.

Deputy Mayor Neil Lewis notes, “The key to safe winter driving is to leave a few minutes early for your destination, to follow safe winter driving practices and learn what to do when things don’t go as planned.”

When driving on an icy road, slow down and leave plenty of room to stop. When braking, do so gently to avoid skidding. If your rear wheels skid, take your foot off of the accelerator and steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they’re sliding right, steer right.

Turn your lights on to increase your visibility to other motorists. Never use cruise control on icy roads and be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads which will be the first to freeze. Do not pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you’re likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.

If you get stuck, do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper. Instead, try turning your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way. Then, using a light touch on the gas, try to ease your car out. You can also use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car, or pour sand, kitty litter, or gravel in the path of the wheels to help get traction.
At Your Service...
Township Clerk’s Office: 799.0909 x 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 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.

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

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.

Public Works Department 609-799-0099

Recycling & Conservation Center
Hours of Operation
Through December 4th, the center will be open Mondays and Thursdays from 5:30pm to 7:30pm and on Saturdays from 10:00am to 5:00pm. From December 5, 2022 through March 31, 2023, the center will be open only on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

Curbside Recycling
Scheduled pickup dates are December 5th and 19th; January 2nd , 16th and 30th ; February 13th and 27th

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 1st, 2023 from 8:00am-5:00pm at the Conservation Center

Middlesex County Programs
Paint and household hazardous waste disposal services, and paper shredding events 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.

PLAINSBORO SNOW TOTALS IN THE LAST THREE SEASONS

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

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

Useful Numbers
School District Information 609-716-5000
Report street light out to PSE&G 1-800-436-7734
Report potholes to Public Works 609-799-0099
New Jersey American Water 1-800-272-1325

Plainsboro Public Library
Location: 9 Van Doren Street
Phone: 609-275-2897
CALL FOR HOURS
Website: www.plainsborolibrary.org

Township Meetings
All meetings are held in the municipal building at 641 Plainsboro Road unless otherwise noted:

Development Review Committee
3rd Tuesday, 6:00pm
(virtual)

Environmental Advisory Committee
4th Monday, 6:00pm (virtual)
Call 609-799-0099 x1502 for more information

Fire Commissioners
2nd Tuesday, 7:00pm at firehouse

Township Committee
Regular Mtg. 2nd Wednesday, 7:00pm
Agenda Mtg. 4th Wednesday, 7:00pm

Planning Board
3rd Monday, 6:00pm (virtual)

Zoning Board
1st Wednesday, at 6:00pm (virtual)