



*"Crossroads of the
American Revolution"*

2022- Q1

The Town Crier

Hopewell Township Newsletter

From the Mayor- Hopewell Township to Honor Black Historical Figures in New Neighborhoods



Working in coordination with leaders of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum (SSAAM), Hopewell Township will be naming the streets in two new neighborhoods after prominent Black residents of the Hopewell Valley throughout history.

If you look at the street names, landmarks, and parks around Hopewell Township, local history and historical families feature prominently. From Blackwell Road to Woolsey Park, Hopewell Township has always honored its history. However, a key segment has been overlooked for this honor over the many centuries. The contributions of Black residents of the Hopewell Valley have been wide-ranging and historically significant, yet we do not see their mark on the roads and streets around town. With the coming of two new neighborhoods, we have the rare opportunity to correct this.

When approached about the need to name the new streets in the Hopewell Parc and Hopewell Collection neighborhoods, I immediately thought of the beautiful Black History Month Resolution written by local residents Elaine Buck, Beverly Mills, and Catherine Fulmer-Hogan. Ms. Buck and Ms. Mills, in addition to co-founding the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum (SSAAM), wrote the book *If These Stones Could Talk: African American Presence in the Hopewell Valley, Sourland Mountain and Surrounding Regions of New Jersey*. Ms. Fulmer-Hogan is a SSAAM Trustee who also founded the Hopewell Valley Heritage Week and serves as a Trustee for the Hopewell Museum. Their Resolution describes Black Americans from the Hopewell Valley who made critical contributions to the community and society, from William Stives, a Revolutionary War veteran and Badge of Merit recipient, to Civil War heroes Aaron Truehart, Lewis Fisher, and William Boyer, among

others, to pioneering athlete Paul Arnold. Recognizing these historical figures once a year for Black History Month is important, but a more lasting recognition would be even better.

We are fortunate and thankful that these three women leaders agreed to partner with the Hopewell Township Committee and Lennar, the developer of the new neighborhoods, on this project to permanently recognize prominent African American residents by naming streets after them. "The legacy of these local free and enslaved persons of color created inroads and pathways for all of us that have come after. How fitting that we would name the roads that will bring a new and diverse population to our community in their honor," said Ms. Buck, Ms. Mills, and Ms. Fulmer-Hogan. Mitchell Newman, a Vice President with Lennar adds, "Lennar is honored to partner with Hopewell Township to designate street names with local significance for our two communities in Hopewell. Selecting

street names based on Hopewell's history is a wonderful way to recognize and preserve the past while forever connecting our new communities with Hopewell's roots."

One important issue in this project is the need to use someone's full name, rather than just their surname as is often done for street names, when honoring African American historical figures.

This is important to distinguish the people being honored from the family that once owned their ancestors. All of the streets in the new neighborhoods that honor individuals will have two full names for this reason.

As the new neighborhoods break ground, please look out for events and further information describing the people being honored and their contributions to the Hopewell Valley.

Courtney Peters-Manning, Hopewell Township Mayor

Financing a Better Future with PILOTS

While Hopewell Township delivered the lowest equalized municipal tax rate in Mercer County in 2021, we are continually searching for new non-tax revenues to deliver the services our residents expect for less.

One potential solution is a PILOT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) agreement. But before I get into that, I want to provide insight on the financial headwinds the Township faces.

First, state aid to Hopewell Township has largely been flat at \$1.6 million since 2011 and now covers only 6.6% of expenditures (amongst the lowest in the nation). In addition, the Legislature diverted a dedicated municipal revenue source towards other priorities via their Energy Tax legislation. This diversion has contributed to a \$1.5 million+ annual loss in revenues.

Second, COVID-19 impacted several other non-tax revenues, most notably court revenues.

Finally, while we have worked hard to lower debt, reducing it more than 20% since 2014, the Township's debt service still accounts for ~25% of total spending. For perspective, last year's \$6.5 million in debt service exceeded what we expend on the Public Works and Police departments combined.

That's where PILOTS come in. PILOTS are proven tools used throughout New Jersey that can help us build a stronger financial future.

The NJ Department of Community Affairs encourages municipalities to utilize PILOTS to foster economic development, enhance the municipal tax base, expand community services, and advance other public policy initiatives. The Township Committee has already successfully deployed PILOTS to satisfy the unfunded state mandate on Affordable Housing. By encouraging private developers to provide affordable housing, we will save Township residents over \$160 million in construction costs vs. what we would have had to expend if the Township built these units itself. In addition, PILOTS help reduce the residential tax responsibility for current residents by providing significant incremental revenues to the municipality.

Here are two recent examples. The Woodmont project on Federal City Road is projected to deliver \$830,000 in new municipal revenues in Year 1, once construction is complete. This is equivalent to ~5% of our current TOTAL municipal tax levy and roughly as much as BMS (our largest taxpayer) paid annually, before moving to Lawrence Township. Over 30 years, this PILOT will deliver \$46 million in municipal revenues, or enough to retire most of our debt. Importantly, the proposed apartments at Woodmont are targeted to singles and young couples, to minimize the number of new school-aged children. In fact, a benchmarking analysis of similar Woodmont projects indicates this project should generate fewer than 30 additional students, which is well within the current number of open seats in the school district.

A second project, on the Zaitz tract behind the Shop Rite on the

31 Circle, will deliver \$112 million in new municipal revenues over 30 years, or 6.1 times more than if taxed conventionally, again without meaningfully impacting school enrollments. This project will also deliver over \$16 million in additional benefits to Township residents, including infrastructure, grading, and storm water management for our new Senior + Community Center, public safety and traffic improvements at the Route 31 Circle, and 78 affordable housing units.



Beyond these projects, the Township Committee recently approved a PILOT for the Hopewell Parc project on Scotch Road. This development will be phased in over 12-15 years, but will initially deliver \$7 million yearly in incremental municipal revenue (~30% of current Township revenues). Over the 30-year term of this PILOT, we could leverage these revenues to finish paying off the Township's debt and to fully fund future year capital needs without new borrowing.

With these funds, we will also be able to fund upgraded facilities for our EMS and other first-responders and other community amenities, including the new Senior and Community Center. Additionally, our Schools and the Fire District will continue to receive all of the monies they budget. Did you know by law our Schools and the Fire District receive all of the monies they budget (NJ Revised Statutes Sec 54:4-75), no matter what? As such, the presence of a PILOT has no bearing on School budgets and the amount of funding the Schools receive.

Contrary to some of the social media discussion in recent weeks, our schools will continue to receive all the monies set in their annual budget. By law our schools and the Fire District must receive every dollar set in their budget (NJ Revised Statutes Sec 54:4-75), no matter what. As such, the presence of a PILOT has no bearing on school budgets and the amount of funding our schools receive. Like all Township residents, the members of the Committee are committed to the success of our schools, for the children of the community as well as our own families.

We have been in active discussion with HVRSD, the Fire Commissioners, and other interested parties throughout this process, and will continue to work together towards a better (and more affordable) Hopewell Township.

If you want to learn more, there are detailed presentations and supporting material on the Township website at www.hopewelltwp.org/594/Senior-Community-Ctr. Video recordings of our 1/27 and 2/22 Township Committee meetings are here- www.hopewelltwp.org/CommitteeMeetingRecordings. And feel free to reach out to me directly at kkuchinski@hopewelltwp.org.

Kevin D. Kuchinski, Hopewell Township Committee and Finance Liaison

Public Works helps Hopewell Township run!

We've seen significant snowfall this winter, across several storms. Despite the beauty of a snowy Hopewell Valley, these snow storms can cause significant damage and put our roads, schools, and commerce at a standstill.

Thanks to our Public Works team, our roads were quickly cleared and our residents kept safe during this season's snowfalls. And clearing wintry roads is just the tip of the iceberg of services provided by Public Works.

"Public Works employees are passionate about keeping Hopewell safe during winter and destructive weather events. Staff members respond at any hour, on weekends and holidays, and work up to 50 hours clearing the roads for residents, commerce, commuters, and emergency vehicles," said Hopewell Township Director of Public Works and Township Administrator, George Snyder. The Township of Hopewell Department of Public Works' mission is to "provide essential services that promote and enrich the quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses. It is the department's goal to provide services through practical use of resources, technology, communication, teamwork, education, and innovation."

Specifically, Public Works is responsible for the upkeep of Hopewell's 144 miles of roads plus:

- Mowing grass and maintaining trees in Township right-of-ways
- Maintaining street signs and painting crosswalks
- Snow and ice control
- Storm drain maintenance
- Sanitary sewer distribution lines maintenance
- Water supply systems upkeep
- Municipal building maintenance
- Park and field maintenance
- Leaf and brush collection
- Bulk waste, Freon appliance, and tire collection and recycling
- Paper shredding and electronic waste collection events
- Vehicle maintenance services for municipal vehicles, including Police vehicles



The Department of Public Works is a dedicated team of 25, many of whom are Township residents themselves, who care deeply about these essential services that keep Hopewell moving.

The Public Works team is committed to having open lines of communication with residents on any needs or issues. Residents can share any identified needs through Hopewell Township's SDL portal. The SDL Portal is a cloud-based service that provides residents with ready access to up-to-date Township data and services whenever they need it, and can be accessed at <https://www sdlportal com/>. To reach Public Works directly call 609-537-0250.

April is Bulk Waste Collection Month! Collected by zone, fee required. Go to www.hopewelltwp.org/BulkWaste for more information. May is Brush Collection Month.

David Chait, Hopewell Township Committee Member

Great job Hopewell Valley!

As of February 28th, 2022, 64% of children ages 5-11 have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination trains the immune system without the inherent risks of COVID-19 infection. Side effects in children are usually mild.



An experiment



Many of us have become accustomed to using QR codes at restaurants during the pandemic. Instead of typing in a website, you use your mobile phone's camera to scan a QR code which then takes you to the website. Hopewell Township is going to experiment with using QR codes to see if they are helpful. We included one in the 2022 calendar for October, which takes you to a site for more information about the spotted lantern fly. If you are unfamiliar with QR codes, try this one, which takes you to the Township's homepage. Please keep in mind you do not have to use a QR code, but we think it will be easier for many people than typing in a long web address.

Coming in 2023—The Woolsey Park Bandshell

Hopewell Township residents will have a new place to get together next year in Woolsey Park.

Thanks to the support of Assemblyman Anthony S. Verrelli of Hopewell Township, as well as his 15th Legislative District partners Senator Shirley Turner and Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, the Township was awarded a state grant of \$500,000 to build a bandshell in Woolsey Park.

“I am very happy that our community will have this bandshell,” said Assemblyman Verrelli. “It will be a great place for everyone to gather for performances and other events.”

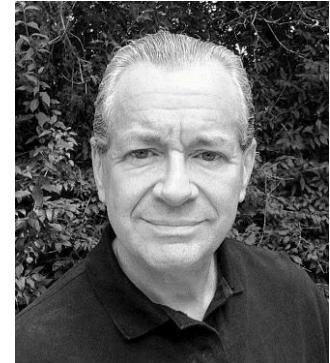
Woolsey Park covers 167 acres and offers trails and open fields as well as the Hopewell Valley Veterans and 9/11 Memorials. The park is also used for special events hosted by organizations including the Township’s Parks and Recreation Department, the Hopewell Valley Veterans Association, and the Hopewell Valley Arts Council. “The bandshell will be a great asset for our concerts and other programs,” said Karin Poveromo, Director of Recreation. “I’m really looking forward to it!”

Under the terms of the grant, construction must be completed by next year. The Township issued a Request for Proposal for a design consultant and a contract has been awarded. The consultant will be responsible for working on a site-appropriate design for the bandshell as well as associated landscaping and parking.

Later this year, the consultant will present their suggestions to the Woolsey Park Advisory Committee for review and there will be an opportunity for residents to comment.

The Hopewell Township Committee will make the final decision on location and design, and construction will then begin.

We’ll be sure to keep everyone updated on the latest news about the bandshell on the Township’s website as well as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Michael Ruger, Hopewell Township Committee Member

New NJ Plastic Bag Ban Starts May 4th

Do you regularly bring reusable bags when you go to the store? If not, you may be surprised next month when your grocer no longer provides paper or plastic. On May 4th a new law takes effect across New Jersey that requires shoppers to use reusable bags.

Hopewell Township is partnering with community organizations to ease your transition. NJClean, the litter abatement program that sponsors our local Clean Communities program, is now sponsoring BagUpNJ, bagupnj.com, a program intended to help residents use reusable bags. Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space (FoHVOS) facilitates NJClean programs for the Township. They have reached out for help to the Hopewell Valley Green Team, Hopewell Valley Regional School District, and local businesses to coordinate an education and reusable bag campaign.

As part of HVRSD Green Week, watch for posters designed by high school art students to be distributed around town, reminding you to bring your reusable bags.

The goal of the new state law is to cut down on waste, litter and pollution. If you are wondering if avoiding single use bags will actually have a significant impact, Paul Kinney of the Hopewell Township Environmental Commission already did a study, found at

www.hopewelltwp.org/EnvironIssues. Spoiler Alert: The study shows once the ban is implemented, the Valley will see an estimated annual reduction of 24.6 tons of plastic and 32.6 tons of paper takeout bags. The report concludes “the impacts of just this one law in one state will make significant improvements at the local and state levels with benefits felt beyond our borders.”

Watch for upcoming plans for Hopewell Township and FoHVOS to supply reusable bags to local businesses and residents. The school district and the Green Team will facilitate distribution.



Don’t wait until May 4th to do your part. Hints:

- Keep extra reusable bags in the car.
- Hang reusable bags by the door or alongside coats and jackets.
- Get some lightweight “packable” bags that pack into a small pouch, to keep in your purse or pockets.
- Put a sign on your door as a reminder.
- Write “BAGS!” at the top of your shopping list.

And, most importantly, remind everyone you know to Bag Up New Jersey. It’s not only the law, it’s the right thing to do.

Lisa Wolff, Executive Director, FoHVOS

Pick Up a Free Radon Testing Kit: Keep Your Family Safe

Free radon test kits are available from the Hopewell Township Health Department while supplies last. The Health Department is open 9am-4pm weekdays and is located on the lower level of the Municipal Services Building. For more information and to pick up your kit call 609-737-0120.



What is radon? Why should I be concerned?

Radon is a gas that gets into the air when uranium in soil, rocks, and water breaks down naturally. We can't taste, smell, or see

radon gas, but it can be harmful with extended exposure. It can enter homes through cracks in the foundation, floor, walls, and through basement floor drains and sump openings. Radon can be found in any type of building, but it's especially important to test for radon at home, where we spend most of our time. Levels of radon can change over time depending on the outdoor conditions and use of indoor space. According to the recommendations from the Surgeon General, all houses should be tested for radon periodically to minimize risk.

After smoking, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, and is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Although about 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked, smokers who are exposed to radon are at increased risk of developing lung cancer. We do not know whether radon poses a greater health risk to children than adults.

The amount of radon in the air is measured in picocuries per liter of air, or pCi/L. The average indoor radon level is about 1.3 pCi/L, slightly higher than outdoors, which is about 0.4 pCi/L. We know that any radon exposure can be harmful, and the EPA recommends the level of radon be 2 pCi/L or below for all indoor air. The good news is there are effective, affordable measures available to reduce indoor radon, and they can prevent radon-induced lung cancer and save lives. By evaluating your home for radon, you make an informed decision about how to limit your family's risk of exposure to radon.

Additional information- <https://www.epa.gov/radon> and <https://www.cdc.gov/radon/radon-facts.html>.

Uma Purandare, Hopewell Township Committee Member

Are you a hunter? Apply now for your 2022-23 Hopewell Township permit!

The application period for deer hunters who would like to hunt in the Hopewell Township Deer Management Program ends May 13.

Hopewell Township will be accepting individual permit applications for the Township's municipal Deer Management program for the 2022-23 hunting season until May 13. All applicants must be fourteen (14) years or older, have a valid New Jersey hunting license, and must maintain \$1 Million general liability insurance for the entire hunting season. Confirmation of insurance is required. There is a \$30 non-refundable application fee. Please note there are a limited number of open hunting spots available. Available spots will be filled by a lottery process and successful applicants will be notified. Once notified, successful applicants are required to participate in a hunter orientation safety course and pay an additional \$70 to receive their hunting and parking permits. Permits will be valid for the entire 2022-23 white tail deer hunting season.

Licensed hunters who are interested in participating in the program should visit www.hopewelltwp.org/DeerManagement for an application form and for parcel location maps. The maps include information on maximum number of hunters for each parcel, and permitted sporting arms, rules, and regulations. Paper copies of these applications are also be available in the Township's municipal building lobby. All applications and required documents must be submitted in person by the applicant to the Hopewell Township Police Department, 201 Washington Crossing-Pennington Rd, Titusville, NJ 08650, by Friday, May 13 at 4pm. Applications will be accepted from 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday. Only completed applications which include required documents will be processed. For any questions, please email deermanagement@hopewelltwp.org.

If you were a participant in the 2021-2022 program, be sure you have reported all your harvests to the Township and don't forget to complete your end of year survey at www.hopewelltwp.org/EOYDeerSurvey21-22.

A graphic with a deer silhouette and text. It includes a photo of a deer, the word 'HUNTERS!', the text 'Apply for your 2022-23 Hopewell Township Deer Hunting Permit March 7-May 13', and the website 'www.hopewelltwp.org/DeerManagement'.

HUNTERS!

Apply for your 2022-23 Hopewell Township Deer Hunting Permit March 7-May 13

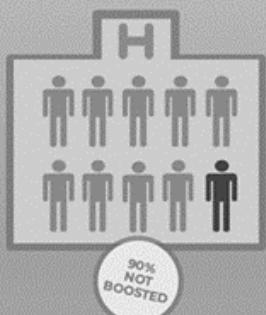
www.hopewelltwp.org/DeerManagement

COVID-19 Boosters are Keeping People Out of the Hospital



A recent NJ hospital survey found that:

- More than 90% of adults **hospitalized with COVID-19** had not received a booster*
- More than 90% of adults who **visited the Emergency Department for COVID-19** over a 24-hour period had not received a booster**



Find a COVID-19 vaccine or booster:
visit covid19.nj.gov/vaccine or call 855-568-0545

*Based on self-reported survey of all NJ hospitals conducted by the New Jersey Hospital Association (total of 5,943 adults hospitalized with COVID-19). Based on self-reported survey of 27 NJ hospitals conducted by the New Jersey Hospital Association (total of 3,835 adults who visited the Emergency Department due to COVID-19)

Don't forget to get boosted!

COVID-19 boosters are preventing severe illness and hospitalizations. Unfortunately, 30% of senior citizens in New Jersey have not received a booster dose. Our immune response naturally wanes as we get older, but a booster dose can ramp up neutralizing antibodies, giving extra protection during times of high community transmission. Encourage your vulnerable loved ones to get boosted today!

NJ DRIVER ALERT: NEW SAFE PASSING LAW



SLOW DOWN.
MOVE OVER.
PASS WITH CARE.
4 FEET. IT'S THE LAW.



Join the Senior Services Mailing list! www.hopewelltwp.org/SeniorList

Join the Recreation Mailing List! www.hopewelltwp.org/RecEmailList

Stay informed! Other lists- www.hopewelltwp.org/list.aspx
(be sure to register for [News Flash Home - Hopewell Township News](#))



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