Town of Newington, NH E-Newsletter

February 2021



The Town of Newington E-Newsletter includes information about Town-sponsored events, projects and special announcements. Visit www.newington.nh.us to join the distribution list, or to be removed.

Board of Selectmen

Timothy "Ted" Connors, Chair Kenneth Latchaw Michael Marconi

The Town Hall is closed on Monday, February 15th in celebration of Presidents Day.

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Upcoming Meetings:

2/10/2021	Economic Development Committee	10am	Via Zoom
2/11/2021	Conservation Commission	6:30pm	Via Zoom
2/12/2021	Budget Public Hearing	6:30pm	Via Zoom
2/16/2021	Board of Selectmen	6:00pm	Via Zoom
2/17/2021	Sewer Commission	9am	Waste Water Treatment Plant
2/22/2021	Planning Board	6pm	Town Hall



Langdon Library

The Langdon Library is open by appointment three days a week. Please call the library at 436-5154 or email info@langdonlibrary.org to schedule. Note: for same day appointments we recommend calling rather than emailing. 4 people limit per appointment. Browsing is limited to displays in lobby area. Masks and hand sanitizing or hand washing are required upon entering. Gloves are available but not required. Please use the outside book drop for all returns.

Covid 19 Vaccine Registration Guidance:

The most efficient way to schedule a vaccination is online. Since our state's population has a wide range of comfort with digital technology, NH librarians are compiling resources to assist in the vaccine registration process. Here are some helpful tips and information.

A state librarian shared "screenshots" of each step of the process. Click this link:

https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://docs.google.com/document/d/1deye5_hyy55WAQnq6qSVzaPw5ubSVghGDpJOkc0poCc/edit?usp=sharing_;!!Oai6dtTQULp8Sw!EyF4GJDMHoxmCZDsXvG4F-xeyrLaZ9Tw8yvQw1ZRSMmuKBoqm07ZRrczvxdLRq-Qr4HwDo0\$

Some parts of the process that get confusing for users:

Two-Factor Authentication: Be prepared to use two factor authentication and check your email a second time for a code.

Text Messages using Two-Step Notification: Receiving text notifications will require two steps, including checking your phone for the code.

When selecting race/ ethnicity, you will need to click the arrow button after your selection to move over.

Here are Frequently Asked Questions about the vaccine, how to find out your eligibility or what phase you're in, and more:

https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/vaccination-planning-faq.pdf

The Better Business Bureau recommends not sharing your vaccination card on social media: https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/01/us/vaccination-card-warning-post-social-media-trnd/index.html

The CDC has put out a user manual for the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS): https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/reporting/downloads/VAMS-User-Manual-Recipient.pdf

Finally, if you are eligible for the vaccine and do not have internet access to register, you may call 2 – 1 – 1 and will be connected with someone who can register you online. However, be prepared that the wait times are frequently two hours long.

Book Groups (adults)

This month we will discuss the book 1,000 White Women by Jim Fergus at virtual book groups on **Tuesday February 16 at 6:30 PM** and **Thursday February 18 at 10:30 AM**. You may find the access information for this event at

https://www.langdonlibrary.org/programs/book-groups/

New members are always welcome!

Imagination Bags (ages 4+)

Make an appointment with the library to pick up a bag of fun activities to complete at home. This month, bags include supplies to make Valentine's Day cards. We've also included some special treats to enjoy! We would love to see creations! E-mail photos to **programs@langdonlibrary.org** for a chance to be featured on our website and social media. Imagination Bags will be available for pickup at library appointments beginning **Wednesday**, **February 3**.

Leaping Learners Virtual Family Storytime (ages 0-6)

Every Friday at 10:30 AM, Miss Amanda will post a pre-recorded storytime for children aged 0-6 and their caregivers on the Langdon Public Library Facebook page. Miss Amanda presents fingerplays, songs, and a story to promote early literacy through play, and discovery. Learn more at www.langdonlibrary.org/leaping-learners.

Out Loud with Miss Amanda (all ages)

Miss Amanda records a picture book on Facebook **every Wednesday at 6:30 PM.** January's theme is re-imagined fairytales and folktales! Find our Out Loud playlist on our Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/langdonlibrary/videos/

February 3: *Maybe* by Kobi Yamada

February 10: *Frog and Toad are Friends* by Arnold Lobel

February 17: *Dear Dragon* by Josh Funk

February 24: *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson

February Schedule:

The library is open for in-library appointments and no-contact curbside pickup on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday with the exception of Saturday, February 13 in honor of President's Day.

See you online, and at the library!

Lara Berry, Langdon Library Director

director@langdonlibrary.org

Newington Safety Lanes

In 2019 the Selectmen received numerous requests for safety lanes to be created in town due to several near misses of walkers and bicyclists on Nimble Hill Road and for the safety of the school children on their way to and from home and school. They appointed a committee to review these concerns and give recommendations to solve these issues.

The committee met with members of the Fire department, Police Department, School principal, students, town engineer and other staff to address the issues associated with constructing a safety lane and determine recommendations to present to the Selectmen. The committee talked with residents, reviewed previous town board and committee meeting minutes, and researched lanes and paths in other communities.

In early March 2020 the Committee learned that there was a grant available called the transportation alternatives program that could fund 80% of a safety lane for walking and biking. They also learned that this grant was only available every two years. Given this fact and knowing that they could not put forth a warrant article this late in the budget season it was determined that the best route would be to bring forth an amendment to the town budget at the 2020 town meeting. The amendment was approved overwhelmingly at the 2020 Town Meeting after a lengthy discussion.

The grant application process was postponed into 2021 due to the pandemic. The Selectman have recently decided to place the warrant (Warrant Article #2) once again on the upcoming Town Meeting agenda so all residents will have a chance to voice their opinions on this important matter. The Warrant is unanimously endorsed by the Board of Selectman and all but one member of the Budget Committee. The warrant does not seek additional funding as the money was approved in

the 2020 Town Meeting and has not been spent. If approved once again, the Town will submit the application in mid-March and expect a decision around September. The project could be initiated as early as Fall/2021.

A public opinion survey conducted by Newington's Safety Lane Committee found considerable community support with over 70% of the respondents in favor of applying for this grant. Numerous studies show the connection between trails and economic vitality. In addition to improving the safety of this corridor for non-vehicular traffic, this project will strengthen the local economy, help build a sustainable community, and improve our quality of life by creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and make the village center more accessible for all residents. The lanes will provide safe and enjoyable places for children and adults to walk or bicycle to work, school and to local businesses. It will also encourage physical fitness and healthy lifestyles. The Town is encouraged to include letters of support from residents, businesses, and other regional stakeholders to determine if Newington's project qualifies for this matching grant. The Safety Lane Committee has prepared a template for the Letter of Support (available upon request).



If the incorporation of safety lanes for non-vehicular traffic through Newington's town center becomes a reality the town will widen the busy 1.3 mile corridor from Shattuck Way to Arboretum Drive (Nimble Hill Rd). The new lanes will greatly improve safe access through this section of town that includes the school, town offices, recreation fields and facilities, the Town Forest, the Town Church, the Town Library, the historic district, the cemetery, and provide more convenient access to the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge and local off-road bike and foot paths. Many of these sites are used on a daily basis. This corridor is also an important route for commuters to bike into Portsmouth and the commercial sector of Newington and the Pease Tradeport which employs thousands of people in the region. These lanes will serve as connectors to other regional biking and walking paths in the area linking the communities of Dover and Portsmouth to Newington NH. The promotion of sustainability is one selection criteria for the grant.

The safety lanes will further instill pride in Newington and inspire residents and their visitors to enjoy our rural town. The Safety Lane Committee is chaired by Derick Willson. Other members of the volunteer committee include Bill Wright, Bruce Johnson, Laura Wilhelm-Stone, Katie Hood, Mike Marconi, Mike Mazeau, Ted Karabinas and Ken Ernstoff.

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

Q1. What is the Safety Lane?

A1. The Safety Lane will widen much of Nimble Hill Road and add clearly marked 3-foot wide multiuse (non-motorized) lanes on both sides of the road from Shattuck Way to the school and from the Fox Point Rd intersection to Little Bay Rd. A single off-road lane will connect these two segments of the route from the school pass the Fire Station to Fox Point Rd. Another single off-road lane will start from Little Bay Rd in front of the cemetery/library up to Arboretum Drive.

- Q2. Will property be taken from residents?
- A2. No, the draft plans for the safety lane are within the town road right of way and therefore do not require taking property.
- Q3. Will there be sidewalks that require plowing and maintenance?
- A3. No, sidewalks will not be built. Widening the roads to add the safety lanes allows them to be cleared of snow by plowing with no extra manpower or equipment needed and normal road maintenance.
- Q4. Will there be rows of 4' high reflectors like some other towns?
- A4. No, lines will be painted on the road to designate the safety lane

Any other questions? Reach out to the Town Hall (436-7640 or email mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com) or any of the Safety Lane Committee members, listed above, for more information.

MAJOR NAVIGATION & SAFETY PROJECT FOR NEWINGTON'S WORKING WATERFRONT RECEIVES FULL FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION & FUNDING

The Town recently received some welcomed good news from the NH Congressional Delegation via the PDA's Division of Ports and Harbors. A long sought \$18.2M US Army Corps of Engineers project to widen the Upper Turning Basin at the terminus of the federally designated Piscataqua River shipping channel, proximate to the Sprague River Rd Marine Terminal, has been funded and included in the Corps 2021 Work Plan.

Tankers carrying petroleum products, including liquified propane gas, along with bulk or special purpose cargo ships calling at Newington's marine terminals and industries, utilize the Basin with the assistance of tugs to reverse direction to return to sea after discharging or loading their cargos. The narrow width of the existing Turning Basin presents a significant safety risk with resulting navigation restrictions that impact the ships calling in Newington. Currently, through the demonstrated skill and professionalism of the Portsmouth Pilots, ships up to 764 ft in length are being turned in the Basin with risk of a grounding that could potentially block the river with possible resulting damage to vessels, their crews and the environment.

The Project involves the removal of 728,000 cu yds of dredged material as well as an anticipated 25,000 cu yds of ledge from the River bottom so as to widen the existing Turning Basin. The widening from 800 ft to 1200 ft will greatly improve navigation safety and allow the lifting of transit restrictions which will potentially increase the competitive efficiency and capacity of Newington's up-river marine terminals, including the two Sprague facilities, Sea-3, and the Subcom cable loading facility.

The need for the Project was first validated in a 1987 Navigation Safety Improvement Study undertaken by the Corps. The limited funding available for such projects nationwide is highly competitive. Many years of effort, including multiple letters detailing the need to prioritize the project, from the Port Director Geno Marconi, Portsmouth Harbor Pilots and the Port Advisory Board, along with earlier letters of support from Newington's Board of Selectmen, were required to obtain the Corps commitment to undertake the Project. The NH Congressional Delegation's pursuit of authorization, funding, and priority for construction, culminated in a flurry of activity at year end, including Senator Shaheen's direct contact with the Secretary of the Army and the responsible Associate Director at the Office of Management and Budget to ensure the Project was included in the Army Corps FY 2021 Work Plan.

The last hurdle that remains for the commencement of the project by the Corps will be the release of the \$7.6M previously appropriated by the NH Legislature for the State's required non-federal cost share of the Project. It is anticipated that the project, perhaps along with some maintenance dredging

in the federal channel in the area known as the Simplex Reach in proximity to the Subcom facility, could be done within the fiscal year.

REMINDER- <mark>1</mark>	NEW	HOURS:	Town	Clerk/	Fax Co	ollector	Tuesday	y through	<u>Thursday</u>	<mark>/ 9am-4:</mark>	<mark>30pm</mark>
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Planning Board Update:

The Planning Board had a busy fall, reviewing development projects as well as analyzing and adopting minor amendments to the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Regulations. Additionally, the board examined the zoning ordinance to determine which provisions, if any, warranted amendment, in the wake of the adoption of the most recent Master Plan last May. The board continually looks for ways to improve the zoning ordinance to ensure that land uses that didn't exist even a few years ago are carefully considered. One of the many goals of the Planning Board is to develop and maintain regulations and ordinances that keep pace with the rapidly changing world around us and keeps Newington a great place to live and for business to prosper.

This year, the Planning Board proposed seven Zoning Amendments which will be voted on by ballot at Town Meeting in March. For the first time in several years, there are no amendments proposed which change current ordinances; rather, all of them seek to better explain specific sections.

The first amendment corrects a missing reference in the Floodplain Management Ordinance which is a requirement for the town to continue participating in the National Flood Insurance Program. The program provides affordable flood insurance for residents in communities that have adopted floodplain management ordinances. This amendment will allow Newington to continue participating in the program.

The second amendment provides a mechanism for the town to adopt development regulations and ordinances to land in Newington currently under the control of the Pease Development Authority (PDA) if it is transferred or sold to any other entity. Our current ordinances and regulations do not apply to property at Pease.

Zoning amendment #3 regulates the maximum length of a residential dead-end road to a maximum of 1,500 feet. The language in this amendment is the exact language currently in the Newington Subdivision Regulations, however, it was recommended that it be moved to the zoning ordinance with other dimensional requirements.

Finally, the purpose of amendments 4, 5, 6 and 7 is to add language in the description and purpose sections of the ordinance to better explain *why* the Office, Commercial and Industrial zoning districts and the Workforce Housing Overlay Zone were located where they are, and *why* there are specific

uses allowed in each zone that are designed to complement other similar uses. The location and uses allowed in these districts were carefully studied and supported by past master plans.

Copies of the full text of the amendments are available for review both on the town's website or at Town Hall. If you have any questions regarding the proposed zoning amendments, please contact Town Planner John Krebs at (603) 436-7640 or jkrebs@townofnewingtonnh.com

SCHOOL FUNDING-DONOR TOWNS

There has been a lot of activity during the month of January, but not much in the way of results on which to report. February will prove to be much more eventful. The NH Legislature began the month of January dealing with the logistics of how to proceed with new leadership while addressing the challenges that the pandemic brought. This led to a delay in the publishing of proposed legislation dealing with all areas of concern. No legislation has yet been proposed to fully implement the Commission to Study Education Funding recommendations as reported in previous newsletters. However, portions of the Commission's recommendations are appearing in various bills.

One such bill is HB 504, which is sponsored by the Commission's Chair. It proposes to keep the existing education funding formula, but eliminates various grants and offsets that currently allow towns/cities to keep the money they raise via the Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT). By eliminating these offsets, many communities including Newington will raise more in SWEPT than they will receive from State funding of an Adequate Education. This excess SWEPT will be sent to the State for redistribution to other communities that do not raise an excess SWEPT. This funding proposal will revert nearly 50 towns/cities into "donor" towns with the return of "receiver" towns getting a benefit of some sort. In Newington's case, it will have to raise an addition \$815,246 to be sent to the state in Fiscal Year 2022 should this bill pass as drafted. A hearing has been scheduled on HB 504 on February 17, 2021 before the House Ways and Means Committee.

There are other bills that address school funding, but do not directly address the Commission's recommendations. Since those bills could be amended to do so, the Town is continuing to follow those proposals.

As you can imagine, this is a complex effort requiring a high degree of experience and skill. Many other impacted communities are finding the same difficulties in following the ever-changing legislation. That is why several other communities have been discussing with Newington the possibility of banding together to share the cost of an advocate/lobbyist to assist the potentially 70+communities that may become donor towns again. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been drafted and has begun to be circulated to the town/cities of common interest on this issue. In fact, the Newington Board of Selectmen voted on February 1, 2021 to sign the MOU and become a

member of this group known as the Coalition Communities 2.0. If enough communities vote to become members, a lobbyist will be hired to assist us in making the argument that a donor/receiver town funding model is flawed and full of inequities. More study is needed before relying on this method of funding education.

DOUBLE
POLES IN
NEWINGTON



As you drive down Nimble Hill Road and other roads in town you may see two telephone poles, instead of one, in places. The Towns of Exeter, Newington and Durham along with the Cities of Dover, Somersworth, and Portsmouth have been meeting with NH Public Utilities Commission (NH PUC) staff and with representatives of Consolidated Communications to address the prolific number of double poles in each community. The reasons for the existence of these double poles are numerous and not necessarily caused by Consolidated Communications. However, the communities involved have been very vocal that they are being greatly impacted by the delayed removal of old poles that are being replaced by new ones. Unfortunately, Consolidated is usually the last to be removed from a pole because they are the lowest one attached to the pole. To further complicate the matter, Consolidated is not necessarily the one responsible to remove a pole once their equipment is removed.

This is a statewide issue that is one of the byproducts of utility deregulation and increase competition. More providers mean more utilities making more attachments to the poles thereby increasing the difficulties in the logistics of pole management. These new providers may or may not be regulated by the NH PUC according to state law. HB 169 has been introduced to address some of these inconsistencies. In the meantime, the collaborating communities mentioned are attempting to reach agreement with Consolidated to address our issues in the short-term.



Newington Fire & Rescue

And just like that, January has come and gone and Spring will be here before you know it. As more and more information rolls out about the COVID-19 vaccine and seems to be changing all the time, some people may have questions. Please feel free to contact the Fire Station if you're not quite sure or need some clarification.

Although we've had several cases here in Town, over all we've been very fortunate. I commend all of you that continue to wear a face covering and practice responsible social distancing. It does make a difference.

With all of the Town Departments working diligently on their respective budgets and warrants, should you have any questions about the Fire Departments items, please reach out.

As part of the recent MRI assessment that was done on the Fire Department, one of the recommendations, that had already begun, was to perform a "community risk assessment". This would be to make sure that the Department is prepared and able to mitigate the hazards and potential emergencies within the Town. I am happy to pass along that Newington Fire was chosen along with 249 other departments throughout the country to participate in a CRA pilot project sponsored by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) with no costs associated. This is a work in process and there are many moving parts but we are excited to be a part of it. Along with Department personnel, we have also invited a resident and member of one of the businesses in Town to be part of the "CRA Team". More to follow.

As always, we are here and available if you have any needs or questions. Stay safe. EJ Hoyt Fire Chief

436-9441 x6

ehoyt@newingtonfire.org

GENERATOR SAFETY

When using portable generators please, for the safety of you, your family and pets follow these guidelines:

- Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas at least 5' away from all doors, windows and vents.
- Make sure you have working carbon monoxide alarms in your home.
- Do not use a generator in a wet area. This can cause shock or electrocution.
- Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.



• Store fuel in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as being for fuel. These containers should be stored outdoors.

Electric Portable Space Heater Safety

When the weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our homes. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or to heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations.



- Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off should it tip over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

Covid-19 and our Business Community

Newington is home to some businesses that have taken the lead in helping the country fight this pandemic. **Thermo Fisher Scientific**, with a location in Newington is a world leader in serving science. Covid-19 has put a strain on the supply chain for laboratory plastics used in the administration of tests and the analyzing of the tests.

In response to this need, Thermo Fisher Scientific has stepped up and is expanding its laboratory plastics production in several plants. They are creating 1,000 jobs worldwide in order to increase capacity and assist the supply chain shortage. In addition, they have developed a new highly automated diagnostic testing solution that can analyze up to 8,000 Covid-19 specimens in 24 hours.

Newington is proud to have Thermo Fisher Scientific as a valued member of our business community. www.thermofisher.mediaroom.com

Wilcox Industries as an essential manufacturing business has been a leader in assuring the safety of their employees and their families. Acting quickly, they discovered FUZE Biotech with an office in Portsmouth that had an innovative product after being applied to a surface kills bacteria, mold and

microorganism living on the surface for several months and not harm people or the environment. FUZE was tremendously gracious and sent a team to spray the Wilcox facility with virtually no disruption to their operations. Wilcox has a legacy of proud partnerships and Newington congratulates Wilcox Industries for taking quick and effective action to protect their people. Fighting The Pandemic (wilcoxind.com)

ODOR COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding obnoxious odors continued to be receive with the latest one occurring in mid-January. Although the number of complaints has drastically reduced as we enter the winter months, this is not unusual given the history of complaints and the decrease in outdoor activities by residents. That does not mean the Town has not been working on this issue. Representatives of the Town and of Sprague Energy have met twice and exchanged emails during the last 4 months trying to determine the who, what, when, where, why, and how these complaints are occurring. We know when these complaints occur, but we do not necessarily know with certainty who is causing them, where are they emanating and why, and what is the exact cause and how to correct the problem. Sprague Energy has pledged to assist the Town in making these determinations if we can both share timely information. Look for an enhanced reporting system coming that will provide both parties real-time information when complaints are received.

The US Environmental Protection Agency and the NH Department of Environmental Services have encouraged this dialogue as part of their regulatory process.

REQUEST FOR STATE TO GRANT THE BLOODY POINT TRAIN DEPOT TO NEWINGTON

The Historic District Commission has asked the State to rehabilitate the Bloody Point Railroad Depot, create a park in the area around the building, and transfer the property to Newington. The HDC and Selectmen met with our US Senators & Congressman's office representatives as well as our State Senator and Representatives about preserving the Depot and land around it.

A final determination on how to proceed has not been reached by the State at this time.

<u>Video Recordings of Public Meetings</u>: As we reported last month, as requested by the Budget Committee at their September 2020 meeting, the Town has been recording public meetings as

possible and uploading them to YouTube. Check out our link to YouTube on the Town website home page (bottom left icon "View Meetings")

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMG06KVwbssN0bODtaB8ybA



New Hampshire State Bird

Purple Finch



Although this beautiful finch looks red it has been dubbed the Purple Finch and is our state bird. As we look for ways to steer clear of others during the pandemic; bird watching is a great activity. Many varieties of owl have been photographed at Fox Point and around Newington. Set up a bird feeder and you will see Chickadees, Blue Jays, Gold finches, Cardinals, Flicker, other varieties of woodpecker and the list goes on!

Looking for the "Rare Bird Alert" for NH? Click on the link below:

https://www.unionleader.com/nh/outdoors/rare-bird-alert/article 17a84653-c1d0-50af-8ff6-91480d332be7.html

Hours of Operation: Town Offices - Mon - Fri. 9 - 4:30pm

NEW HOURS: Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Tuesday through Thursday 9am-4:30pm

Building Dept. - Mon - Thurs 6:30am- 4:30pm

Planning Dept. – Monday & Thursday 9 - 4:30pm (Planner by appointment)

Langdon Library - COVID HOURS- BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Tuesday 1-7pm and Friday 9-3pm and starting Saturday, Oct. 17th -Saturday appointments from 10-3pm

Transfer Station Wed 5 - 7pm, Sat 9 - 3pm

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Newington Town Hall 603-436-7640