



BOROUGH OF DUNELLEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
355 North Avenue
Dunellen, New Jersey 08812

TELEPHONE: (732) 882-4551
EMAIL: jcilentto@dunellen-nj.gov

Message by the Mayor Jason F. Cilento June 2020

This message marks the completion of my first six months of being Mayor of the Borough of Dunellen. During this time, I have delivered these monthly messages to you as part of one of my promises to remain transparent and improve communications with residents. I believe as a public servant, transparency and communication is one of my top responsibilities, and I look forward to continuing these monthly messages.

I find it important to recognize those on the frontline each and every day in the fight against COVID-19. Thank you to the Dunellen Rescue Squad who have been on call 24/7 during this pandemic and thank you to the Dunellen Fire Department and Police Department for their service and protection. All of our emergency services are doing an exceptional job under unprecedented circumstances. Thank you to the Borough Council, OEM, borough administration under the management of Bill Robins, John Bruder our municipal attorney, the Clerk's Office, Tax Office, Municipal Court, Construction/Zoning, Public Works, our school district and our countless volunteers. In true Dunellen fashion, we have proven what community is about during this crisis by coming together, and we will be stronger for it.

Here are recent updates that have been shared at Borough Council meetings:

Grants: Recently, the Borough of Dunellen applied for the following grants:

1. State of New Jersey Grant:

- a. **Municipal Aid Grant Program:** Applied for additional funds for Lincoln Avenue Improvements to cover the majority, if not the entirety, of the overall cost of road improvements.
- b. **Safe Streets to Transit:** Applied for improved pedestrian crossing including Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons at key locations in the Borough.
- c. **Bikeways Grant Program:** Applied for bikeways improvements in key locations throughout Dunellen based upon the 2019 Dunellen Transit Hub Plan.
- d. **Transit Village Grant Program:** Applied for the Continuation of streetscape lighting along North Washington Avenue to and within Washington Memorial Park. Continuation of streetscape lighting on South Washington Avenue from North Avenue to the Redevelopment site.

- 2. AARP Grant Filed:** Working with residents Diana Starace and Julie Grof, we applied for a \$40,000.00 Liveable Community grant through AARP's Community Challenge program. The grant is intended to improve pedestrian crossing at South Washington Avenue and Orange Street, going into Columbia Park. We want to include a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon to remind drivers to slow down and stop when a pedestrian is crossing.

Eat Local Fridays!: Join the Borough Council and me every Friday in supporting our local restaurants by ordering curbside or delivery. Please remember these businesses are run by our fellow families, friends & neighbors. They support our community in many ways. Let's show our support! Here is a link to the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization's Dine-In Dunellen Guide: tinyurl.com/dineindunellen

Census 2020: Remember to respond to our federal government's request for Census 2020 information. Knowing who we are is the first step in helping all levels of government bring you the vital services to which each citizen is entitled. For example, the number of congresspersons allocated to New Jersey is dependent on our population. If we gain in population, we might gain additional representation in Washington, D.C. And all kinds of agencies and non-profit organizations use the data collected to create beneficial programs. For more information on Census 2020 and what Dunellen is doing to contribute to this national enterprise, go to: http://www.dunellen-nj.gov/news_detail_T30_R12.php

Make Some Noise!: Dunellen has joined its neighboring communities, Green Brook, Middlesex, Warren and Watchung in recognizing the service of our essential workers by making some noise each Thursday at 7:00 pm for our local heroes. We owe our gratitude to the healthcare workers, first responders, teachers, postal service workers, grocery store clerks, pharmacists, scientists, and all those on the front line providing essential services to us during the COVID-19 crisis. In our efforts to recognize these heroes, all residents and business owners are encouraged to go outside between 7:00 pm to 7:05 pm and ring a bell, blow a whistle, honk your horns, bang a pot or clap your hands to thank those who have served us. Let's continue showing our support in this way every Thursday evening at 7:00 pm. Thanks for your participation, and let's make all of New Jersey hear the sounds of our town and neighboring communities!

Dunellen Downtown Management Organization COVID-19 Business Resource Page: Part of the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization's mission is to assist Dunellen's local businesses. They have compiled a list of resources to help Dunellen businesses navigate the challenges COVID-19 has brought to the retail/service industries. Visit the link here for resource information: <https://tinyurl.com/DDMO-COVID19>

COVID-19 Information: If residents have questions regarding COVID-19, they are encouraged to call the NJ State Health Call Center at 1-800-222-1222 or you may call the Middlesex County Health Department 24/7 at (732) 745-3100. You may also visit the New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub at: www.covid19.nj.gov.

If you are in need of assistance due to a mental health crisis or domestic violence, here are contact numbers for you: the crisis text line by texting "NJ" to 741741; call the family helpline at

1-800-843-5437; the domestic violence hotline at 1-800-572-7233; or the mental health line at 1-866-202-4357. We encourage you to utilize these resources during this challenging time. You matter, and we want you to be safe.

Always know I am only an email or phone call away. Please use me as a resource. I may not have all the answers, but I will help find you the appropriate agency or authority that will get you the correct answer. We will get through this, no matter how hard it may seem right now. Be safe and stay well my friends.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason F. Cilento". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jason" being the most prominent.

Jason F. Cilento, Mayor

Borough of Dunellen

Phone: (732) 882-4551

Email: jcilento@dunellen-nj.gov

Facebook: @mayorcilento

YouTube: Mayor Jason F. Cilento, Dunellen, NJ