



BOROUGH OF DUNELLEN

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Message from the Mayor Jason F. Cilento May 2021

I hope my May 2021 Message from the Mayor finds you and your families in good health. We are beginning to see the fruition of some of our road improvement projects and redevelopment efforts and I look forward to reporting to you throughout the year on the happenings around the Borough of Dunellen. Please always know my office door is open to you for your comments, questions or concerns. You can call my Borough Cell at (732) 882-4551 or email me at: jcilentto@dunellen-nj.gov.

Here are some important things happening in the Borough of Dunellen.

Memorial Day in Dunellen: Please join the Borough of Dunellen as we return to an in-person Memorial Day event on Monday, May 31st. Last year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Dunellen community marked the day with a video honoring those who served to protect our country and made the ultimate sacrifice. This year, we decided to move forward this year with an in-person event – we remain committed to holding up the memories of our fallen heroes. The Dunellen Recreation Department, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5479 and American Legion Post 119 are organizing the event.

The parade will begin at 10:00 am and travel from the American Legion on New Market Road through the streets of Dunellen and end at Washington Memorial Park on North Washington Avenue with a ceremony around 10:45 am. The parade will feature floats, classic cars, fairytale princesses, Recreation Department and Dunellen High School groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, the Dunellen Police Department, the Dunellen Rescue Squad, the Dunellen Fire Department and more. The parade route runs south on New Market Road, west on Grove Street, north on Madison Avenue, east on North Avenue/Route 28, north on Jackson Avenue, west on Second Street, and south on North Washington Avenue.

The Dunellen Recreation Department is looking for organizations to walk in the parade and create their own parade floats. For more information, contact Alex Miller, Recreation Director, at amiller@dunellenborough.com. The Memorial Day Ceremony will be held at 11:00 am at Washington Memorial Park.

The community will also recognize a National Moment of Remembrance as Dunellen's churches toll their bells at 3:00 PM on May 31. In an act of unity, please take this one-minute pause to remember those who have died in military service. To also add to the patriotic pride in Dunellen, the Dunellen Arts & Culture Commission and the Dunellen Recreation Commission have invited

residents and businesses to participate in their annual “Patriotic House & Business Decoration Contest!” Participants were asked to decorate the side of their houses or storefronts that is most visible from the street with the winner being announced on May 30.

Capital Improvement Projects:

South Madison Avenue: the Contractor has been performing some incidental work including the construction of pavement base repairs. Once this is completed, the milling and paving of South Madison Avenue between Walnut Street and Center Street will begin. During the course of the work, the road will be closed to through traffic. Street parking will also be prohibited and there will be limited access to all driveways during work hours on these days, which are anticipated to begin at 7:00 am. If you require use of your car during work hours, please move it out of the work area by 7:00 am each day starting on Monday, May 24th. Driveway restoration will be done at the same time as the paving work. We ask that all cars be kept off the street to avoid interfering with the milling and paving operations. The road will be fully accessible at the end of each workday. If you have any questions, comments or special needs, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Matthew Falco of CME Associates at (732) 727-8000 ext. 1536.

South Madison Avenue Culvert: As you may have noticed, this project is fully underway. This project is estimated to be completed by August 2021. If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office or Dunellen’s Borough Administrator William M. Robins who may be reached at (732) 968-3033 ext. 3. You may also reach out to the Project Manager, Edward C. Plank at eplank@undergroundutilitiescorp.com.

Middlesex County Mill and Pave Program: Due to the Middlesex County culvert project being estimated to be completed in August 2021. Our engineers have recommended that the county mill and pave program impacting the milling, paving and striping of the following roads Madison Avenue (between South Avenue and North Avenue), Grove Street (between Prospect Avenue and South Avenue), South Madison Avenue (between Walnut Street and South Avenue), Pulaski Street (south side), High Street, Lehigh Street, the Fire Department parking lot, and the remainder of South Madison Avenue (between Walnut Street and South Avenue) begin in Dunellen towards the end of their paving rotation in 2021. Estimated time frame for these streets would be in the fall.

Redevelopment and Downtown Dunellen: Utility work and new sewer pipes are being installed for Dunellen Stations and it will not be too long before we see the construction of the first buildings on the site. Our downtown is experiencing a mini-explosion of new plans and actual construction as proposals are being reviewed for at least five new mixed-use developments. Older buildings will be either rehabilitated or completely replaced and will be homes to new retail businesses and new residents. I look forward to sharing with you their progress as we move forward with them. The Mayor and Borough Council are periodically reviewing our Downtown Redevelopment Plan, fine-tuning it for new opportunities and conditions. We have recently modified the requirements for parking and building density, aspects of redevelopment that affect the livability and viability of any new development. In addition, we have added a new part-time worker to the Department of Public Works whose main task is to maintain the neatness and cleanliness of our downtown. He regularly patrols for litter and waste

from Jackson Avenue to Madison Avenue. Finally, we thank the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization and the Dunellen Arts and Culture Commission for their activities in placing yarn bombs about the parking meters and the hanging of flower baskets from our decorative light poles. Amazing how a little art and beauty can transform a downtown! And there's so much more to look forward to!

Dunellen Pop-Up Park: The 2020 Downtown Dunellen Visual Preference Survey revealed overwhelming support for a pop up park on North Avenue. A pop up park is a low-cost, high-impact project which transforms an underutilized outdoor space and can last a day, weeks or months. We have been working to put together the pop up park in the Borough Hall parking lot in an effort to support this place making effort. The pop up park will be open for the months of June through September 2021, with a ribbon cutting event scheduled for Saturday, June 12 at 11 am. The space will be furnished with flower planter boxes, which will help delineate and soften the space's edges. Local businesses and organizations are invited to use the space to hold open classes or programs. Dunellen resident Autumn Barbato is helping organize a calendar of cultural events for the Dunellen Pop Up Park. If Dunellen businesses or organizations are interested in scheduling time to use the space once it is open, please contact Parks and Recreation Director Alex Miller at (732) 968-3033, x8 or amiller@dunellenborough.com.

Unsolicited Handbills and Circulars: In an effort to keep Dunellen a clean community, the Borough Council approved an ordinance to assist in discouraging unwanted solicitation materials issued to properties, most notably, the delivery of the STAR-LEDGER EXTRA.

In order to discontinue to the delivery of the STAR-LEDGER EXTRA advertising material to your home, you may contact the advertising agency CBA Industries via email at basantos@cbaol.com or call them at 1-800-376-6222 and ask to be removed from their list.

We recognize many residents are happy to accept the unsolicited material placed on their driveways and enjoy using the coupons available. However, there are many residents who wish to not receive it and consider it an annoyance, as well as not environmentally friendly.

Unresolved matters with Optimum Altice USA:

In ensuring we continue advocating for better customer service for our residents, we have begun tracking UNRESOLVED Optimum customer complaints. This refers to customers who have successfully contacted Optimum's customer service and did NOT have their issue resolved. Please note, in this matter, the Borough will not be addressing unresolved issues but needs this data in order to understand the scope of the quality of TV, phone and Internet services in Dunellen so that it can better advocate for improved services for the Dunellen community. Several residents have taken advantage of this form and Optimum Altice USA has worked to mitigate their problems. To submit your complaint, please visit: <https://forms.gle/n8p6ZwTdgUFETY86A>

COVID-19 Information: By Executive Order No. 242, Governor Murphy is lifting some major COVID-19 restrictions and we are moving forward toward normalcy. Effective May 28th, the indoor mask mandate in public spaces will be lifted for those who have been vaccinated, as well

as the six-foot social distancing requirement in both indoor and outdoor spaces, the prohibition on dance floors at bars and restaurants, and the prohibition on ordering and eating/drinking while standing at bars and restaurants. Additionally, effective Friday, June 4th, indoor gathering and capacity limits will be lifted.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Yours very truly,
Jason F. Cilento, Mayor
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