



## BOROUGH OF DUNELLEN

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

TELEPHONE: (732) 882-4551  
EMAIL: [jcilent@munellen-nj.gov](mailto:jcilent@munellen-nj.gov)

### Message from the Mayor Jason F. Cilento October 2021

Before I begin this month's Message from the Mayor, I would like to wish former Council Member Stacy Narvesen and her family all the best. She will be missed from the Council and I enjoyed working with her on many things. I congratulate her replacement on Council, Richard Pinder, and I wish him well.

This month I would like to highlight road improvements in Dunellen. A major goal of this administration is to find creative, efficient, and cost-effective ways to improve our roads and the borough's underground infrastructure. On September 8, 2021, I introduced to the Borough Council an amended Ordinance 2021-23, Restorations to Streets and Sidewalks under Chapter 256-9, which they adopted on 9/20/2021. The intention of this amended ordinance is to enhance the borough's control over the paving and restoration process of our streets when utilities or private contractors must conduct work on them.

Our communications and efforts have enhanced over the past year with PSE&G and NJ American Water enabling us to become better partners when it comes to road improvement projects and coordination. We now meet regularly to more effectively time projects between the stakeholders, so utilities repairs are conducted before road improvements. Through these meetings, the Borough recognized that our current ordinance needed strengthening to better position itself when utilities and private contractors (doing work on adjacent properties) trench the street and conduct work. We have strengthened the ordinance so that these contractors cannot leave behind an unsightly patchwork of surfaces or conduct work on newly paved roads for a certain period, except for an emergency repair. Our prior ordinance did require a utility/contractor to restore; however, there were many other aspects of the process not addressed. This ordinance thus will empower the Borough at additional stages of the trenching activity.

Major sections now include or expand in the following areas:

1. A permit is required before any work is done; in the case of an emergency, a permit must be applied for within 24 hours.
2. The Application for a permit procedure is spelled out, now providing for full contact information, plus specifics as to time/place/job.
3. The ability of the Construction Officer to refuse a permit in the interests of public safety.
4. A section detailing how the trenching or excavation must be done (barricades, safety codes, refuse materials disposal, backfilling, conditions for approval, etc.).

5. A requirement that “the applicant shall restore (milling and repaving) the entire street surface from edge-to-edge, or curb-to-curb, for the full length of the excavation as described herein.”
6. A requirement that any work being conducted near intersections provide updated ADA compliant ramps where there is a current out of compliance sidewalk ramp.
7. A five-year moratorium on paving/repaving on streets recently improved by the borough (emergency situations excepted, with notification and conditions spelled out).
8. Fees for permits, bonds, and insurance.
9. Penalties for violations of this Chapter.

In addition to this ordinance amendment, the Borough of Dunellen can expect through the Middlesex County Mill and Pave program that the following roads will be paved this fall: Madison Avenue (between North Avenue and South Avenue), Grove Street (between Prospect Avenue and South Avenue), the entire length of South Avenue, the remainder pieces of South Madison Avenue, the entire length of High Street and the entire length of Lehigh Street. Furthermore, there will be enhanced striping along several of these roads to assist in pedestrian and traffic safety, as well as improved ADA compliant ramps. We had initially hoped to pave all of Pulaski Street, but with the recent news of the need for some sewer line repairs and the prospect of the culvert being replaced by Middlesex County, we have decided to postpone Pulaski Street.

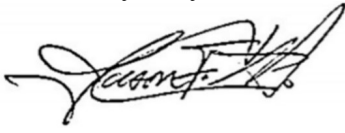
Moreover, due to NJ American Water undertaking water pipe cleaning and replacing as well as building hookups on Madison Avenue, Lincoln Avenue, North Washington Avenue, and the sections of Front Street, Dunellen Avenue, First Street, Second Street, Third Street, Fourth Street, and Mountain View Terrace between Madison Avenue and North Washington Avenue, which will be a two phase project starting in 2021 and finishing in 2022, we determined it to be prudent to postpone the paving of Lincoln Avenue until after NJ American Water has completed its project. The good news is that we will have all these sections paved by NJ American Water next year. We have assertively been working with NJ American Water and PSE&G to assist us in identifying streets they need to do work on and helping us by paving those roads (why we enhanced our ordinance). This will, again, help the Borough get more roads paved over a shorter period at either no cost or at a more cost-effective rate, thus allowing us to use resources otherwise used on pavement to better improve the underground infrastructure of the roads.

It is because of Ordinance 2021-23, Restorations to Streets and Sidewalks under Chapter 256-9, our participation in the Middlesex County Mill and Pave Program and our annual application for NJDOT grant funds for road improvements, that our Borough will be able to pave more of our roads at a cost-effective rate and over a shorter period.

I look forward to continuing to update Dunellen residents and businesses about the happenings around town and the improvements that we are undertaking in our Miracle Mile.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Yours very truly,

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  
Facebook: @mayorcilento  
Instagram: mayorcilento  
YouTube: Mayor Jason F. Cilento