

NEXUS Municipal Monitor

August



Welcome to NEXUS Municipal Monitor—a bimonthly newsletter focused on real estate related issues on the local level that matter to you!

Stay informed of pending or recently passed ordinances that may affect the way you do business, and redevelopment projects that could impact the market.

Want to contribute ideas or be more involved? Look for details in the newsletter on Legislative Committee meetings with local officials and how you can make your voice heard. If there's an issue or development project that you think should be covered, please contact **Liz Peters at Lpeters@nexusaor.com

Join Us! Legislative Committee upcoming meetings via Zoom: 9/15, 10/20, 11/17 & 12/15 all at 10am. **Email Liz for Zoom info**

Lacey Township Mayor Steve Kennis Meets with Members of Legislative Committee

Lacey Township Mayor Steve Kennis and Township Administrator Veronica Laureigh joined the Legislative Committee via Zoom on August 18 to provide an update on all that is happening in the Township. Mayor Kennis has a strong background in real estate and investment, as he is a builder/developer at his family-owned business.

During the conversation, the Mayor detailed redevelopment projects in the works in Lacey, including a new Town Center, new restaurants and 250 townhomes along Route 9 and possible long-term plans for the Oyster Creek Power Plant that is no longer in function. The Township is also considering updating its Master Plan and looking for investors to purchase some municipal-owned properties that are located on "ideal" locations in Lacey. One such site houses the municipal building, which is why the Township is planning to build a new municipal complex on another property.

The Mayor Kennis and Administrator Laureigh both expressed their interest in working with realtors to encourage investment in Lacey. They touted the Township's reasonable tax rate, extensive park system, recreational facilities and good school system as reasons why it is such a great place to raise a family. And they would know, they are both born and raised in the Township! For more information about Lacey, visit <http://www.laceytownship.org/>

NJ Transit App Allows for Smartphone Ticket Sales for Light Rail Lines

Riders on NJ Transit's three light rail lines—the River Line, Hudson-Bergen and Newark Light rail—will be able to purchase single and round-trip tickets with a smartphone app. Prior to the upgrade, only monthly tickets could be purchased using the app.

BURLINGTON COUNTY

Burlington County to Extend Two Rancocas Greenway Trails

Burlington County's five-year trail-building initiative recently moved forward with a vote by the Freeholder Board to approve a \$3.7 million contract for the construction of the proposed Amico Island to Pennington Park trail. The planned 4-mile pedestrian and bicycle path will begin within Amico Island in Delran and end at Pennington Park in Delanco.

The project, which could begin in early fall, will link two of the county's most popular parks and create another link in the county's network of interconnecting trails through the Rancocas Greenway, a collection of about 1,200 acres of parks and open space along the Rancocas Creek. The project is expected to also include installation of bike racks, bicycle repair stations, kiosks, and additional parking and picnic tables at both parks.

The Freeholder Board also announced that Phase 1 construction for the planned Arney's Mount trail project, which will link Kinkora Trail, between Mansfield's Community Park and Springfield's Veteran Memorial Park, with the Rancocas Greenway network is also expected to begin later this month. The project will include a new trailhead off Tower Drive in Springfield; a handicap-accessible, 2.2-mile path; a separate equestrian trail; and an "adventure trails" up and around the mount, which offers views across the county as far as the Philadelphia's skyline. Both trails projects are being funded entirely with federal grants the county secured to expand the county's network of pedestrian and bicycling trails.

Burlington County Awards \$5.2 Million in Park Grants to 38 Municipalities

Burlington County recently announced that every town that applied to the Municipal Park Development Grants program will receive funding to improve their parks and recreational facilities this year. A total of \$5.4 million in funding was awarded to 38 municipalities. The funding comes from the county's open space and farmland preservation tax and can be used to construct or improve parks facilities or to purchase open space or farmland for future parks. For a list of 2020 Municipal Park Development Grant Awards, visit <https://www.co.burlington.nj.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1335>

Moorestown Planning Board Approves Affordable Housing Project on Centerton Road

Moorestown Planning Board recently approved plans for an 82-unit, three-story affordable housing apartment building on a 17-acre site on Centerton Road. The rental apartments are to be age-restricted, comprised of 76 one-bedroom units, 6 two-bedroom units and 151 parking spaces. The project will be built next to another proposed, 130-unit, luxury senior housing complex.

CAMDEN COUNTY

Camden Police Department Launches Senior Watch Program

The Camden County Police Department has initiated a new program for vulnerable populations in the city to address quality of life conditions. Senior Watch is the newest community policing initiative from the agency that proactively assists the department by identifying individuals that could be exposed to extreme conditions.

The program will be put into use during conditions such as a public health crisis and extreme weather emergencies, or to prevent fraud and exploitation targeting elderly residents. During these times, police officers contact or go to the homes of registrants to check on their well-being. Residents and family members of residents can go to <https://seniorcontact.camdenpd.com/contact> to sign up a loved one for the program and they will be put into a secure registry for officers to reference in times of need.

To be eligible, Camden residents must meet the following criteria:

- Ages 70 or older, or disabled;
- Lives alone; and
- Does not reside in a senior living facility.

OCEAN COUNTY

Construction Moves Forward on Several Projects in Brick Township

Construction on several big projects in Brick Township that were approved prior to the COVID-19 public health crisis are moving forward as scheduled.

Approved in 2018, the first Royal Farms in Ocean County is under construction at the intersection of Routes 70, 88 and Olden Road at the site of the former Jersey Paddler. The 4,600-square-foot food store/gas station is a chain known for their fried chicken. Wawa will be opening at two new locations in Brick. One is at the corner of Duquesne Boulevard, opposite Target on Route 70, where a Panera Bread is also planned on the site. The other is being built at the site of the former Laurelton Mobile Home Park on Route 88 and Jack Martin Blvd. The 12-acre site will also include a 4,535-square-foot bank, and a 7,182-square-foot retail building in which a 3,000-square-foot restaurant

will be located. Construction of a new free-standing Dunkin Donuts building with a drive-through window at the corner of Folsom Drive and Route 88 is also underway.

Jackson Township Bans Short-Term Rentals

On August 11, Jackson Township Council passed an ordinance banning short term rentals with a duration less than 30 days and eliminating pool rentals. The move was in response to a series of “pop-up” parties at large homes throughout the Township and according to supporters, to preserve quality of life for residents. Opponents say the rules go too far preventing property owners from earning extra income renting their homes on a short-term basis.

Jackson Enacts Vacant Property Ordinance

In late June, Jackson Council members voted unanimously to increase the initial registration fee and a renewal fee for vacant properties in the township. The ordinance establishes an initial registration fee of \$500 for a vacant property and a \$1,000 renewal fee for a vacant property. Money collected from the fees will be used by the governing body to maintain the upkeep of properties should property owners refuse to take proper action themselves.

Toms River Awards Contract for Revaluation

The Toms River Township Council recently awarded a \$2,348,650 contract for a town-wide revaluation, which is expected to begin next month. Professional Property Appraisers will be tasked with inspecting all township properties — there are about 42,000 total — with new values slated to go into effect by October 2022. The revaluation is expected to take about a year to complete.

Controversial Gas Pipeline Project Temporary Suspended by NJDEP

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has suspended construction of the New Jersey Natural Gas Southern Reliability Link pipeline to reevaluate the project’s general permits. The halt is in response to damage to roads, a stream, and a home near the project. The pipeline was planned to connect to a compressor station in Chesterfield and run 28 miles of pipe through Burlington, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties. Specifically, it goes through Plumsted Township in Ocean County and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and ends in Manchester Township near the corner of Route 70 and Colonial Drive.