

2020 DR. MIRAGLIA SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

At the May 12 meeting of Borough Council, the announcement was made that Sarah Chung of 613 DeKalb Street was selected as the 2020 winner of the Dr. Vincent Miraglia Scholarship. Sarah, a senior at Upper Merion High School, will be attending Temple University and pursuing a degree in health sciences. Sarah ranks 1st in her class with a 3.96 GPA, and is a member of the National Honor Society, the Upper Merion Orchestra, and several other clubs and organizations. Please join us in congratulating Miss Chung, as well as all of our graduating Bridgeport seniors, and wish them well in this next chapter of their lives!

CHANGE IN POLLING LOCATIONS FOR 2020 PRIMARIES

On May 11, Montgomery County made the decision to relocate all municipal polling locations to public school buildings throughout the county for the Primary Election, which has already been rescheduled to June 2. For Bridgeport, this means that all three voting wards in the borough will be relocated to Bridgeport Elementary, 900 Bush Street. In a statement, Montgomery County noted that this change would only be in effect for the Primary Election and that voting precincts will return to their normal locations for the General Election this fall. Additionally, all voters are able to submit their ballot via mail. For those interested in this option, please visit the following website for further details: www.votespa.com

NEW BOROUGH WEBSITE UNVEILED

On April 21, Bridgeport unveiled the new municipal website, www.bridgeportborough.org. We hope that you find our new site, which is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to be more navigable, informative, user friendly, and cosmetically appealing than the previous version. In addition to the visual overhaul of the site, this new website also provides the following features previously unavailable on the old site:

1. Online bill pay for some borough fees, including building permits and parking tickets.
2. The ability to subscribe to receive the latest news, updates and alerts posted to the borough website.

NEW BOROUGH WEBSITE UNVEILED (CONT'D)

3. The ability to send messages directly to borough officials, which can be utilized to alert the borough of missed trash pickups, out streetlights, and more.
4. A New Resident Welcome Packet, which provides people new to and unfamiliar with Bridgeport with a working knowledge of what our community has to offer.

Please take the opportunity to browse through the new site and its content. We believe that you will find the new site not only attractive, but useful as well!

2020 CARNIVAL, MOVIE NIGHT CANCELED

Bridgeport Borough regrets to announce that the 2020 Bridgeport Carnival has been canceled. With a scheduled run date of June 16-20, there simply was no way that Montgomery County would be in the necessary phase of reopening within a such a short amount of time. Additionally, Family Movie Night, a new community event that was scheduled to begin on June 5, has also been canceled until further notice. Please understand that while there may still be a possibility that both the 2020 Carnival and Family Movie Night are rescheduled to a later time in the year, Bridgeport is unable to determine that date until Montgomery County has been provided with a more clear path to reopening. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

FACE MASKS AVAILABLE THROUGH BPD

While the region appears closer to reopening after the COVID pandemic, it looks like social distancing practices and other health protocols will remain in place for the foreseeable future. To that end, Bridgeport Borough wishes to remind residents that handmade COVID masks are still available and may be obtained at the Bridgeport Police Station, located at the corner of 4th and Mill Streets. Masks can be picked up from 8am-4pm, Monday through Friday. If nobody is at the front desk, then the front door of the station may be locked. If that is the case, then you can utilize the red phone box outside of the police station and request assistance, or you may try to dial directly to 610-275-1222. There is a limit of two masks per household, and those requesting masks will be asked to provide proof of residency, such as photo ID or a utility bill. Thank you for your attention in this matter and thank you to the residents of Bridgeport who've come together to craft these masks. Stay safe and healthy out there.



BOROUGH OF BRIDGEPORT

NEWSLETTER, SUMMER 2020

BOROUGH COUNCIL

PRESIDENT: Kyle Shenk, Ward 3

VICE-PRESIDENT: Tony Heyl, Ward 3

Howard "Randy" Bennett, Ward 1

James Fee, Ward 1

Diane Gundrum, Ward 2

Meghan Nolan, Ward 2

Cory Scott, At-Large

MAYOR: Mark Barbee

Keith S. Truman, Borough Manager

Todd J. Bereda, Chief of Police

Salvatore F. Bello, Jr., Borough Solicitor

Edward Woyden, Borough Engineer

Council meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7:30pm, at Borough Hall, 63 West 4th Street. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

ADMINISTRATION: 610-272-1811

POLICE DEPARTMENT: 610-272-5660

SITE WORK BEGINS ON FORMER CONTINENTAL BUSINESS CENTER SITE

Residents may have noticed that over the past few weeks, the riverfront property that was once home to the Continental Business Center has undergone a cosmetic transformation. In recent months a developer, PRDC Properties, has obtained equitable interest in the 30+ acre, multiple-parcel site that has been abandoned since a catastrophic fire gutted the massive industrial complex in 2001. In fact, May 15, 2020 marked the 19-year anniversary of the fire; and though thankfully no lives were lost, the landscape of the town was drastically changed by the loss of this economic engine and employment hub. While the potential redevelopment of this abandoned property is an exciting notion, Bridgeport Borough also understands that many questions naturally arise from the proposition as well. In order to be as transparent as possible with residents, the borough wishes to provide the following information for public consumption.

What is being proposed in this development project?

This project has not received any formal approvals from the borough at this time. However we do know that the developer wishes to build something very similar to the project that O'Neill Property Group, the previous owner of the land, had received approval to build several years ago, based on the sketch plan presentation that PRDC gave to Borough Council during a January 28 public meeting. The sketch plan proposed a townhome development consisting of around 325 units; a 250-unit apartment building; and a mixed-use building that would consist of commercial space on the ground floor and dozen condominiums above. Again, PRDC has not received approvals for subdivision, land development, zoning or building permits at this time; meaning that despite what has been proposed initially, the plans are in their early stages and still subject to change.

Where is this project in the land development approval process?

This project is in the extremely early phases of design, planning and approvals. At the January 28 meeting of Borough Council, PRDC made a sketch plan presentation of their vision for the property. While Council received the sketch plan favorably, please understand that no official approvals were given to PRDC at this meeting. The borough has yet to receive fully engineered plans for this project, meaning that PRDC has several more steps to complete before development can begin.

If the developer has not received any approvals yet, then why are they performing work on the site already? And what exactly are they doing down there?

PRDC is performing the early phases of the site work that would be necessary regardless of who ultimately develops the land. Namely, PRDC is 1) clearing the property of vegetation and debris left behind by illegal dumping and 2) erecting a fence around the perimeter of the project to both protect residents and keep trespassers out. In the next few weeks, PRDC will also begin to demolish the remaining abandoned buildings still standing on the site. PRDC, having equitable interest in the property, are permitted by law to perform this site work by obtaining the proper permits, which they have done. PRDC also intends to begin bringing in truckloads of certified clean soil in the coming months, but only after receiving the necessary permissions from the DEP and the County Conservation District. Truthfully, the fact that PRDC is willing to spend money to perform this site work **before** receiving any approvals from Borough Council is both a leap of faith and a gesture of good will toward the community.

Over the years, I have heard that the site might have environmental concerns. Will these be addressed prior to development?

Yes. This is the former site of an industrial park that was home to multiple types of manufacturing over many years. There is a distinct possibility that there could be environmental concerns that need to be remediated before development is permitted. For example, if there is still asbestos in the old buildings, then that will be safely removed prior to demolition. If there is soil contamination, the soil may need to be excavated and removed from the site, or the soil may need to be sealed and capped within concrete. Regardless of the possible concerns, please understand that the developer, the borough, and the state environmental agencies all enter this project understanding the ramifications. Environmental studies have been performed by the current and prior developers associated with this site, and there is absolutely zero possibility of approving construction on any project without addressing these concerns in a manner approved by the state agencies that govern over the environment.

Bridgeport Borough understands that with a development of this magnitude, residents are going to have questions about the varying phases leading up to, during, and after completion. To that end, Bridgeport Borough is committed to being as receptive as possible to the concerns and

questions raised by residents throughout this process. At the same time, Bridgeport Borough also acknowledges that the approval and review process is beginning at an unprecedented time in our state and nation's history. Local governments have been required to alter the manner in which public meetings are held, as well as how the public is able to participate in these meetings. With that in mind, the borough is hopeful that we will be able to hold in-person public meetings in a safe manner again in the very near future, which will allow more immediate and responsive discourse regarding this and other topics. Thank you for your attention in this matter, and please stay tuned to official Bridgeport Borough social media and website for further updates.

TWILIGHT ON THE RIVER CANCELED FOR 2020

Growing Bridgeport Together, who operates the Twilight on the River marketplace events, has regretfully determined that the 2020 schedule for Twilight on the River must be canceled. There have been discussions about weekend market dates later in the year; but much like the carnival, nothing can be scheduled until a clearer path to reopening this part of the state has been laid out.

NEW SECURITY CAMERAS FOR MEMORIAL PARK

On May 18, installation of a new security camera system began in Memorial Park. The project has a total cost of \$25,426, which was the low bid received by Valley Forge Security. \$15,000 of the project is being funded by a Keystone Communities grant. The project entails installation of a new 11-camera system that can be remotely monitored by Bridgeport Police Department, Public Works, and the Park Board. The goal is to provide enhanced security and safety for both park patrons and property.

BPD ADDS NEW VEHICLE TO FLEET

Bridgeport Police Department has obtained a new patrol car. The 2020 Ford Hybrid Police Interceptor SUV, purchased from Koch 33 Ford of Easton, was paid for entirely through a \$50,000 grant awarded by the Department of Economic and Community Development. As the first hybrid in the borough's fleet of vehicles, this patrol car is the initial step in moving towards greater use of renewable energy. The cost of upfitting the cruiser with equipment will also be covered by the same DCED grant.

Best wishes, and let us hope for better days ahead.