

## High Bridge Borough Final Goal Report 2015

Councilman Zappa	PLANNING & ENGINEERING
Councilwoman Hughes	PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL, SOLID WASTE / RECYCLING, OPEN SPACE, CULTURAL & HERITAGE
Councilwoman Scarcia	INFORMATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EVENTS
Councilman Strange	EMERGENCY SERVICES, EDUCATION & MUNICIPAL COURT
Councilwoman Shipps	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & RECREATION
Councilman Stemple	FINANCE & GOLF
John Gregory	ADMINISTRATOR
Mayor Mark Desire	EXECUTIVE SERVICES

## **Engineering**

- **Cregar Road Phase V**
  - Was put out to bid and bids rejected
  - Received confirmation of Federal funding \$160,000.00 for phase VI in 2016
  - Combining Phase V and VI to reduce cost and road down time
  - Projecting Work to begin early summer 2016
  
- **Phase II Street Scope**
  - Hired engineering firm to complete design
  - Received DOT Approval of Policy and procedure manual
  - Be ready for bid early spring 2016
  
- **Construction of New Borough Hall**
  - Construction Project Awarded
  - Construction to begin early spring 2016
  
- **Classification and Prioritization of Borough Roads**
  - Completed
  - New Road Rehab and maintenance plan 2016
  
- **Repair of Mine Road**
  - First section of Mine Rd from Seal St. half way to Cokesbury RD repaired
    - Full Depth Reclamation (FDR)
    - Double Chip Seal
  - Ongoing pothole repair
  - Ongoing water line rerouting so bridge construction can begin
  
- **Transfer of Solitude Water Tower**
  - Secured FEMA mitigation grant for new generator saving borough/Village \$56,0000
  - Waiting on agreement for Solitude Village so final contract can be signed

## **Public Health**

- Continue organizing annual free Rabies Clinic
- Held October 3, 2015
- Serve on Office of Emergency Management as shelter coordinator
- Participated in the June 23 county drill: 287 drugs dispensed to 93 households in one hour

## **Environmental**

- Maintain updated Environmental page on our town web site and submit articles

to Bridge

- Trained in June to add basic information to web site, article updated quarterly
- Hold annual Arbor/Earth Day Activities with school
- Common Park weeding and planting on May 15
- Envir. Com sponsored an Earth Day assembly for grades K through Fifth
- Work with HART to become part of the Safe Routes to School Program
  - Received Bronze level award from State
- Revitalize the Natural Garden / Rain Barrel exhibit on hold until more activity at Solitude House
- Create anti-idling awareness
  - Worked with HART, HB police, and elementary school Environmental Club to conduct a survey and run a poster contest
  - information placed on the web site
  - Nov. - two anti-idling signs posted on Mine Rd. parking area (made from winner of poster contest )

### **Open Space**

- Remove trash from borough woodlands and open space areas and monitor easement areas
  - Walked these areas and picked up litter in the spring
  - Walked Columbia Trail: picked up litter and reported any concerns to County Park System
- Maintain Main St. Mini Park, Commons, Union Forge Park, and Police Station garden areas
- Weeding, planting, and watering: on going through the summer
- Continue actions to maintain "Wildlife Habitat Community" certification
  - Sent in re-certification documentation July 1
- Organize a guided trail walk on the Columbia Trail
  - Two guided walks on May 2 - used online sign up: 27 people
- Help plan Columbia Trail 20th Anniversary events.
  - Committee member : helped plan Taylor Ironworkers Historic Greenway Trail Walk
- Complete phase 2 of the garden grant to enhance the parking lot barren areas around the MacDonald St. parking lot ground cover planted in the fall and mulch added
- Organize mural painting on retaining wall around MacDonald St. parking lot wall washed and painted by DPW in spring
  - met with school art club teacher and a local artist for mural ideas
  - Eileen Bonacci completed painting panel #1
- Write article on the history of another one of our borough "Open Spaces": Golf Course completed and in Fall/Winter 2015 newsletter
- Enhance tree line in Commons Park separating the park from the new parking lot.

- 5 trees added with grant money
- Work with other committees to beautify Main St. as part of Street Scape (trees, planters)
- Planted all Main St. planters: two sample planters with tree hydrangea
- Applied for NJ Recreational Trails Grant
  - Grant request submitted April for Nassau multi-purpose trail

### **Borough Trees**

- Identify areas in need of trees and apply for tree grants
  - No tree grants available this year.
- Pursue Tree City re-certification
  - Completed
- Move and re-build "tree nursery" area in Commons Park
  - Completed

### **Storm Water Management**

- Continue storm water management public awareness through articles in the Bridge Articles in each newsletter
- Organize and participate in the annual Raritan River Clean-Up Day held April 18

### **Environmental Green Efforts**

- Continue Green Team meetings and complete Sustainable Jersey certification actions working towards Silver Level
  - Submitted 5 actions for review to maintain Bronze level
- Farmers Markets
- Water Conservation Ordinance
- Community or School Gardens
- Safe Routes to School
- Anti-Idling Education & Enforcement Program
- Adopt a Green Purchasing Policy by Ordinance
- Continue to sponsor annual "Caught Being Green" award
  - Awards given in January to Dave Schweidenback : Pedals for Progress and HBES Environmental club for winning DEP Recycling Poetry Contest
- Organize Open Air Market opened June 27- October
  - met with HBBA to pass organization of the market to them starting 2016
- Assist PTO with school vegetable garden planted in spring
- Assist School with Sustainable School actions - submitted report in March

### **Solid Waste and Recycling**

- Organize Electronics Recycling Event
  - Held April 25: 155 cars/34 freon items/ 9515 pounds

- Sponsor E-container in commons
  - Contracted SAMR for 3 containers: one full
- Organize Rigid Plastic Event
  - Held June 27: filled one 30 yard container
- Organize Town wide Litter Clean Up Day
  - Held June 27: passed out trash bags
- Organize a Document Paper Shredding Event
  - Held June 27: 3,200 pounds shredded
- Coordinate Clean Communities Grant Program
  - Bought 5 new cigarette receptacles: 3 on Main St. / 2 Police
- Monitor solid waste / recycling program
  - Review weekly reports from LMR

### **Cultural & Heritage**

- Open Solitude House on a regular basis to the public
- May 30 & 31 school student art exhibit
- Solitude Theater fundraiser production May 1 & 2
- Open June 6 National Trails Day
- July 19 as part of County wide event
- No Dominion Theater group production Nov. 7,8,14,15
- Develop a formal Educational Outreach program for schools
  - started with the HBES art exhibit
- Apply to county for more historic place signs
- Sent in documentation for Rialto Theater sign request
- Pursue historic site grants
- Researched and sent C & H members to workshops
- Organize Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies
  - Memorial Day held on May 23: 75 people
  - Veterans Day held Nov. 7: 62 people
- Continue annual Main St. Historic Walk - rained out

### **Economic Development**

- Property Inventory and Marketing
- Handed out 30 Business Solicitation Brochures to real estate agents, landlords, committees, HBBA, and County Chamber of Commerce and made additional contacts.
- A new inventory listing of available rental properties with pictures and detailed information added to the Borough website
- Toured all available properties except *NJ Transit Station*.
- Actively participate with Mayor's Goal for 100% occupancy of all storefronts on Main Street
- Develop and maintain a compiled listing of deeds/purchases/value of Green Acres/Borough owned properties

- New Business Seminar:
  - Hosted a seminar given by the Small Business Administration and the County Health Department. Approximately 40 people were in attendance.
- Main Street Appearance Enhancements (*Trees, Hanging Plants, Planters*):
- Formed a subcommittee that included, EDC & Environmental Committee members, Council Liaison to Planning and Engineering). There were various ideas and proposals to include with Main Street Streetscape enhancements. Several of the proposals maybe cost prohibitive to maintain but team is continuing to work on ideas. HBBA has been pulled into the project. More items to work out in 2016.
- Parking Study:
  - Met with several businesses and building owners to obtain feedback and discuss objectives.
  - Performed a preliminary walkthrough of all parking for rental properties and businesses on Main Street and surrounding streets to identify current problematic areas.
  - Identified potential ideas for parking expansion to increase parking capacity.
  - Goal to be carried over to 2016 to determine next steps for future planning and action.
- EDC Code
  - Reviewed Code for Committee and discussed potential changes for the future
- Communications / Relationship Building
  - Enhanced communications with landlords and business owners by holding more face to face discussions. Discussions included new ordinances, accomplishments of the Borough, and discussions of new ideas to further enhance our business community.
  - Continued HB business visitation program and ensure program includes landlords on Main Street.
  - Chair and/or liaison met with each EDC members one to one to enhance communications and obtain personal feedback and needs to improve the committee.
  - Worked with businesses with their issues with sign and other ordinances, merchandise requirements on first floor, permits and application paperwork, relocation of one business to Main Street,
  - Walk through of available space, Linked real estate agents with potential new businesses. One open store without a lease on Main Street. Potential businesses in that store is in the works.

## Website

- Revamped the Borough Website with a new section for business. The design is intended for those who wish to open a new business or expand their current business. This will include instructions and a checklist to help guide any new businesses with how to open up a business in High Bridge. The purpose is to

assist with navigating through local permits and registrations, construction, documentation requirements, and key contact information for business support services (Borough Hall, EDC, HBBA, Code Official, Construction Official, County Health Department, SBA).

- Improved use of website with new website service provider and Administrator.
  - This year 4 people were trained on uploading to website.
  - Training new people to the website kept monthly costs down while ensuring that we are sustaining quality service.
  - Utilized Deputy Clerk's experience with websites and he assisted in design of new pages, new layouts, etc.

### **Newsletter**

- Evaluated the Borough's costs and services for newsletter. Costs to produce, print, and mail newsletter have decreased since 2013 from 9,000 per year 6,000 per year. Costs of printing and mailing with the county has increased.
- Workflow with vendor was revised to improve the timeliness of preparation, printing, and mailing newsletter.

### **Events**

Easter Egg Hunt, Pooch Parade, Soap Box Derby, Movies in the Park, Summer Concerts, Community Day, Paint Out, Halloween Parade and Costume Contest

- We successfully served the community of High Bridge with running events for High Bridge through the use of event project coordinators and resident volunteers. All events were proven to be family-friendly, no cost to the public and encouraged visitors to High Bridge to patronize local businesses!
- Brought in approximately \$21,000 overall in donations and sponsorships for all events
- Developed a public survey to obtain feedback on all Borough Events and to obtain any new ideas for new events. No issues reported.
- Discussed a new Borough event for 2016 and discussed changing Community Day to include new ideas

### **Department Public Works and Recreation**

- Equipment/Fleet
  - Replace 2000 Ford pickup (convert current to flatbed) Emergency replacement of 2004 instead
  - Purchase Pothole Patcher - \$60K Rented a machine this year
  - Continue to prioritize the maintenance/repair of current equipment in-house Ongoing, incl. shared services with County garage
- Buildings & Grounds

- Begin in-house fertilizer/pesticide treatment (5x) using golf course tank/sprayer and taking advantage of HBH wholesale pricing Completed
- Continue to cut grass at all locations Completed
- Maintain diamonds (drag 2x week) and lines (2x week)
- Field/parks cleanup 3x week Ongoing/Complete for year
- Roads
  - Mine Road – millings, reclaim most of it in summer Completed
  - Work with Engineering Liaison to prioritize roads to be fixed/paved Completed plus educated and communicated about Road Referendum
  - Fix road at bridge on Cregar Road Completed
  - Water line bypass at Mine Road bridge prior to county fixing bridge Postponed
  - Replace/repair/maintain road signs Completed as needed
- Water & Sewer Continuing/Complete for year
  - Meter reading and meter replacement
  - Water main breaks – first response
  - Maintain wells/pumps
- General Completed
  - Replace lights in Arch St tunnel and paint white safety section
  - Plow and salt roads/salt stacking/clean trucks
  - Leaf and brush pickup Ongoing at time of update 12/6/15
  - Maintain licensing
- Update field rental form and fees Completed
- Field rental to Tewksbury Lacrosse league Completed
- Create manuals for field rentals, programs, playgrounds Ongoing at time of update 12/6/15 – needs input
- Review Park Rules from ordinances Completed, print up/laminate and post publicly Not complete
- Move Rec Containers to Shop E or paint/screen existing container at that location Not complete
- UFP gazebo upkeep Completed
- Two-week Summer Rec Program Completed - 157 children
- Recruitment of new members needed!

### **Emergency Services**

- Develop and Maintain effective communication with all emergency services through timely meetings and other means.
- Continue to explore opportunities for shared services to control costs and enhance services and response times.



## HB Fire Dept.

- Continue to provide fire prevention programs for both schools and put together an adult interactive fire prevention program, which will be accessible on our website, [www.highbridgefire.org](http://www.highbridgefire.org) **Completed**
- Upgrade our firefighting turnout gear and personal safety equipment, SCBA. Noting that NFPA and PEOSHA has placed a 10 year shelf life on all turnout gear. **Half of SCOTT packs replaced this year, half to be replaced in 2016**
- Complete our radio upgrade and ensure that all firefighters are trained in their use. **Completed**
- Enhance our driving training program to ensure that every member knows how to operate all departmental apparatus.
- Continue to hold our annual fundraisers: **Completed**
  - Golf Outing
  - Annual Picnic
  - Road Drives to supplement our Borough funding and help maintain our level of fire protection.

## Emergency Squad

- Maintain/grow membership, certifications, services offered to the community - **Completed**
- Maintain equipment and facility with timely repairs, replacements and upgrades when necessary – **Ongoing (New Ambulance will be joining the squad soon)**
- Enhance communication with the community regarding services provided and opportunities offered - **Ongoing**
- Install Washer/Dryer in Building – **Incomplete (Risk Management Issues)**
- Remodel Bathroom to include mens/womens bathrooms and to include showering facilities. **Incomplete (Risk Management Issues)**
- Remodel conference room into dormitory-style sleeping area for emergency housing and/or on-call staff to reduce response times. **Incomplete (Risk Management Issues)**

## High Bridge Police Dept.

- Complete server and other technology upgrades to the police department facility and all necessary data and procedural transitions for their implementation. - **Complete**

## OEM / CERT

- Provide technical and personnel resources and services to our Emergency Services and the Community both public and private **-Ongoing**
- Maintain communications with all emergency services through quarterly local and county meetings of Emergency services **Complete**

- Continue Deputy Coordinator training to manage various responsibilities. - **Ongoing**
- Coordinator, Deputy Coord. & CERT Coord. - Complete 2 FEMA online or equivalent DHS/OEM/CERT related courses -**Complete**
- Create Council member FEMA/OEM training program -**Ongoing**
- Submit Newsletter articles to raise awareness regarding personal risk management **Complete**
- Participate in Community Day - educate residents on family emergency planning & readiness. **Complete**
- Maintain and grow Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in membership, certifications and service. -**Ongoing**
- Maintain necessary resources for CERT training and operations **Complete**
- Champion CERT resources ( CERT \$, Safety Equipment, Communications, uniforms from OEM budget) -**Ongoing**

### Golf and Finance

- Prepare a 2015 Budget within the 2% Tax Levy Cap & with in 3.5% Cap. Excluding impact of 2014 Revaluation. **Completed, increase was 188,204 under the 2% cap**
- Return Borough owned Properties to the tax roles. Generate a listing of all Borough owned Property. Return as many lots as possible to the tax roles: **Ongoing Properties identified, talks started with owners to gauge interest to purchase.**
- Investigate the Pro's & Con's of Selling the Boroughs Water System to a Private Company. Determine if it is in the Borough's best interest to sale the Water System using the proceeds to pay down debt and or repair infrastructure. **Ongoing, decision to utilize a binding referendum for the sale pushed to next general election**
- Address the issue of Golf Balls leaving the Golf Course Property on the 17th hole. **Completed, new tee box created, net repaired**

### Administrator Goals

- Update and Modernize Borough Forms- **Completed**
- PB & BOA appl, Dog Lic, Vacant Reg, Landlord Reg, Recreation form, Utility Closing, Utility Hook-up, Road opening permit, and created a FAQ guides to help residents through the various applications **Completed**
- Set up Borough Facebook page – Abandoned, there is already a High Bridge Community page, there is no easy way of restricting posting due to free speech rights, the Public Service Announcement Email account set up in it's place is a more appropriate venue for what we are trying to accomplish, account has been set up and utilized with 91 email accounts to date
- Complete Town Hall project – Awarded, work in process and ground breaking to happen next year

- Update the Record Retention Schedule – Completed and ongoing: 1,400 pounds of documents shredded not including old CD's of old meetings
- Complete Clerks Courses – Completed > Passed! Administrator is now a Registered Municipal Clerk allowing the Borough to meet its statutory requirements.

### **Executive Goals**

- Abandoned property
  - Inspected and then contacted abandoned property owners on West Main, Deer Run, Hoffman and Wilson. Made bank and/or owners aware of High Bridge ordinances. Some owners attended council meetings in hopes of working together with the Borough.
- Continue to find new partners to further Shared Services initiatives
  - New programs with the High Bridge Schools, continue to use County and State contracts, equipment sharing between neighboring towns as needed.
- Adaptive reuse of the Borough's Historic properties
  - Gave tours to potential parties for Shop E, Solitude House and Springside Farm. Met with summer camp group for use of buildings in Summer 2016. Creating lease contracts for council review.
- Transit Village
  - Met with the State and Highlands to successfully adapt the area. This project had influence on revitalization of downtown as evident in 2015. Application started, running concurrently with Highlands TDR study
- Expansion of golf course use
  - Explored winter use of the golf course options. Nothing set up yet. Met with potential builders to explore restaurant and banquet hall. Meetings will continue in 2016.
- Lake Solitude – Hydropower, SEDP, DEP
  - Had early year meetings on hydropower with interested party. Will send out RFQ in 2016.
- Sewer rates
  - Ongoing litigation with Clinton Town
- Decrease the cost to run our local government
  - New Borough Hall project will continue the downsizing of local government and cut cost on running the facility tremendously.
  - A once full time Clerk is now a part time position combined with Administrator
- New employee evaluations – completed and implemented.