

Town of Stonington

# Monthly Newsletter



## October 2022

*There have been many positive happenings in Town thanks to the dedicated work of many of our Town staff, elected officials, volunteers and our extensive nonprofit and business community. We are once again grateful to all who have contributed to our Newsletter. We continue to welcome feedback on further potential enhancements and ideas. We are also always happy to set-up a time to connect in-person or on a call to discuss any existing projects, new ideas or areas of concern.*

*Thank you, Danielle Chesebrough, Stonington First Selectman*

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# Town Department Updates

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### Assessment Department

The Department of Assessment is finalizing work on the 2022 Revaluation Project. We are in the closing stages and plan to present an educational workshop to the public once it is complete. We will also be posting information on the Town & Department website. Once the values are completed, every taxpayer will get a preliminary notice of valuation. At that time, residents and property owners will have an informal opportunity to meet with staff if they have concerns over their value. Since this is a revaluation year, the deadline for submitting applications for the PA-490 farm & forest program is December 31, 2022.

### Selectman’s Office

We hit our fundraising goal for the Veterans Monument thanks to the tremendous effort from many volunteers, but in particular Stacey Haskell! We were able to break ground this month, and the foundation has been set. The next step is selecting a local, artist to help bring history to life and honor



our veterans through visual storytelling on the eight sides of the monument. Once this is completed, we should be able to have the monument in place by Flag Day 2023. Our next objective for this project is to interview local veterans so we can showcase these videos on the monument website. If you or anyone you know might be interested in being interviewed, or helping with this stage of the process please reach out!



To date, we have held two community dialogues on short-term rentals, both of which were amazing examples of civil discourse at its best. People with a diverse range of views on the topic came together and engaged in meaningful dialogue around this challenging issue. We are tentatively looking at November 30 for the next meeting at which time we will share and discuss a tentative, draft ordinance that has been created based on input from residents and research on what other communities are doing around the country.

We are so fortunate in Stonington to have a robust commercial fishing fleet, the last of its kind in CT. Working in partnership with a group of local fishermen, work is underway to replace the commercial ice machine down at the Town Docks. This is a badly needed capital investment, and real progress has been made towards securing a new machine. Further work is needed to secure all the funding, but it is looking positive that a new machine should be in and working by this Spring. Further, thanks to efforts from Congressman Courtney's office- along with our Congressional Delegation- it looks very likely that we will be able to secure \$900,000 in funding needed to make needed repairs to the North Pier of the Town dock.



(Photo: The Day Newspaper)



Thanks to years of efforts from our Solid Waste team, and support from the State of CT, we were successful in securing a grant that will allow us to launch a curbside composting program. We have will be sharing details about the program over the coming weeks, and the program should launch in January. Thanks to our 'yellow bag' (unit-based pricing) program our trash per capita is already half the State average, and with this new program we could see our rate go to 80% less than the state average! This is a win for the environment and for tax payers.

The Council of Governments for Southeastern CT, CCM and COST have all been meeting this past month and will continue to meet in the coming weeks to finalize our legislative priorities for this upcoming session. It has been wonderful getting to discuss a range of topics facing our State and Region with other Mayors, First Selectman, and Town Managers. I was also able to join a number of stakeholders from the region for a meeting with Governor Lamont and some of his staff to talk through a number of issues related to regional tourism and the upcoming budget and session. If there are specific legislative priority areas you would like to see as a priority for this upcoming session and would like to discuss, please reach out soon.

## Human Services- Parks & Rec



Pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the US, and you have a chance to play right here in Stonington with Coach George Crouse, who is now a certified USPTA instructor! There are options for Juniors/Teens (7-17), as well as adults at all levels. It runs for 5 weeks and starts in early November. Learn more or register at [Stonington.recdesk.com](http://Stonington.recdesk.com)

The official ribbon cutting and GRAND OPENING for the Far Flung Disc Golf Course at Spellman Park was simply wonderful! Over 50 business owners, sponsors, stake holders & disc golf players gathered for the celebration that was also [broadcasted LIVE by Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce.](#) We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our Title Sponsor: Far Flung Disc Golf ~ Founding Sponsors: Mystic Knotwork; Ear Nose & Throat Associates of Southeastern Connecticut; The Valenti Family of Dealerships; First Financial Advisory Services. ~ Hole Sponsors: Pawcatuck Roofing Co.; Beer'd Brewing Co.; The Moody Family; Gales Ferry Medical Group; Davis Standard; Chelsea Groton Bank; Stonington Prevention Council; SHS Class of '98 ~ and Seasonal Sponsors: Captain Daniel Packer Inne; Cindy Gardiner with Coldwell Banker Coastal Homes; McQuade's Marketplace; Ritacco Electric; Kris Theodore - Real Estate Agent; Schooners Beverage Company Take a ride through Spellman Park and check out what this fun sport is all about! The 9-hole course is FREE and open to the public during normal park hours.





Progress continues on the new Tennis and Pickleball Court construction! Foundation has been set, cement has been poured, poles are installed and bases for the lights are coming soon. It's a race against the weather, but progress is being made each week!

### **Planning Department**

The Department of Planning manages Stonington's land use decision-making, permitting and enforcement processes and provides technical assistance to several local boards and commissions. The Department also leads Community Development efforts, often administering special grant-related projects.

The Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Selectmen both voted to opt out of the Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations in CT Public Act 21-29. This means that the Town is able to maintain its current Zoning Regulations, which were amended in 2018 to allow Accessory Dwelling Units for more property owners. The issue of Accessory Dwelling Unit eligibility is expected to be part of the ongoing Zoning Regulation Rewrite.

The Department and the Town's various land use boards are currently reviewing several development applications including the following:

- Zoning Variance application seeking to vary Flood Hazard Substantial Improvement requirements for the redevelopment of an existing commercial structure at 2-6 Mechanic St., Pawcatuck. Public hearing has been continued to December 13, 2022.
- Site Plan application for 2 retail buildings, including a drive-thru for a retail use, at 376, 380 & 384 Liberty St. (Project originally approved in 2006).
- Special Permit application for modifications to Winn Development's approved mixed income residential development at 27 W. Broad St. & 15 Cogswell St. Modifications include reduction in number of units from 82 to 70, reduction in building size by 25,000SF, modification to building design, and increasing parking. The development will now be an age-restricted development requiring at least one resident to be at least 55 years of age. Public hearing date is to be determined.

### **2022 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Competitive Funding**

The Board of Selectman voted on Wednesday, October 26 to hire Eastern Connecticut Housing Opportunities as the consultant on this project. The Board of Selectman held a public hearing on Wednesday, October 26 for this Community Development Block Grant Non-Competitive

Funding for \$600,000 in CDBG funding to design and construct a “green septic system” for St. Edmund’s on Ender’s Island. The state of RI has many of these ‘green septic systems’, and if approved by DEEP this would be the first in the State of CT.

### **Establishment of Cultural District**

Through four community conversations and an ongoing series of subcommittee meetings the establishment of a local cultural district is being explored and researched. This geographically designated area could be a resource to both the Town and Borough for future grant money to bolster our local Arts & Culture community. Work is underway to bring this to a Town Meeting, likely this Winter. To learn more or get involved with this exciting new project please contact Elsie Bisset [elsiebis@yahoo.com](mailto:elsiebis@yahoo.com).

For more information on Economic and Community Development, remember to visit the Economic Development Commission’s fantastic website, and sign-up for additional community news at [stonington1649.com](http://stonington1649.com)

### **Police**



We have been working on updating our logo and have added it to our building entrance. We have also created a uniform committee to explore changes to our uniforms. The committee presented a change for our current uniform hat from the Stetson style to an 8 point classic look that was original to the Stonington Police Department in 1938 through the early 1980s. The uniform committee put the change out to a department wide vote, which was accepted.

We are currently working with a company to produce four recruitment videos. Filming for the videos have begun and we hope to have a finished project in a few months. We believe it is important to highlight our town and the benefits of working and living here. This project is being managed by LT Schneider and a voluntary group of officers with a goal of opening our recruitment efforts nationwide.



Over Halloween weekend, we helped out with some local events. Here you can see Youth Officer Browning at a Trunk or Treat Event in Mystic and Res. Ofc. Cassata in the Borough with a new partner to ride with! Our Stonington officers officially assist with over 40 annual events, but they also informally help out at many more!



On October 29th, SPD participated in DEA National Take Back Day. Officer Cullen greeted citizens dropping off their unused medications so they can be disposed of properly. The medications that we collect get turned into a collection site for disposal. On this day and with what we have collected over the last several months, we turned in 280.4 lbs of medications. You can always bring in your unused medications and safely put them in our green medication lock box in our lobby 24/7.



We are currently involved in a promotional process for the ranks of Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain and Deputy Chief. We hope to complete these processes shortly and present candidates to the Board of Police Commissioners in the month of November



October 21, 2022, Stonington Police Department, Connecticut and Town of Groton Police Department stood together as a joint honor guard to pay respects for our fallen brothers, Lt. DeMonte and Sgt. Hamzy. Several officers from our agency along with officers from all over the country showed a powerful and respectful presence. We continue our thoughts for the Bristol PD, the families and community during this difficult time.

## Solid Waste

Recycling is important as it prevents pollution, reduces the need to harvest new raw materials, saves energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, saves money, reduces the amount of waste that ends up in landfills, and allows products to be used to their fullest extent. If our society wants to truly reach some level of sustainability, recycling needs to play a core role in that, there's just no alternative.

The world's natural resources are finite, and some are in very short supply. At a fundamental level, recycling paper and wood can save trees, recycling plastic means creating less new plastic, recycling metals means there's less need for mining and recycling glass reduces the use of new raw materials like sand. Recycling reduces the need to grow, harvest, or extract new raw materials from the Earth. That, in turn, reduces the harmful disruption and damage being done to the natural world, which means fewer forests cut down, rivers diverted, wild animals harmed or displaced, and less pollution

You may have heard of "The 3 R's": Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. While recycling is important, the most effective way to reduce waste is to not create it in the first place. Making a new product requires a lot of materials and energy and then the product has to be transported to wherever it will be sold. That means to reduce and reuse are also important ways to protect the environment.

Some of the ways to reduce and reuse include looking for products that use less packaging, buying reusable items, maintaining and repairing products like clothing so they don't have to be thrown away and borrowing, renting or sharing items that are used infrequently like tools. Reducing our consumption should be the first step, and reusing also tends to be far more sustainable than recycling.

Some people believe recycling is a sham, and that simply isn't true, but it does take a lot of intention to make it work well. You can do your part by making sure that you only throw items that are recyclable into your recycle bin. Are you confused about what kind of plastics can go in your bin? That's understandable! Plastics are one of the most confusing materials to recycle. In fact, only a few types of plastic are really designed to work in the recycling system.

Don't throw things like plastic bags, black plastic or batteries into your bin, they don't belong! Black plastic containers, including take-out, mushroom and frozen food trays are not accepted in Connecticut's mixed recycling program. These items belong in your yellow bags. The same goes for small plastic bottles like prescription or aspirin bottles.

Last fiscal year the Town of Stonington diverted 3,893 tons of recycling from going to the incinerator as trash. Thru both people power and technology, the recycling is sorted into different commodities that will go back into the supply chain to create new products.

Still have questions? Visit [www.recyclect.com](http://www.recyclect.com) for a comprehensible list about what should and should not be put into your recycling bins.

<b>ONLY RECYCLE</b>	<b>NO TRASH</b>
<b>These items only</b>	<b>Not Allowed</b>
• Cardboard	<b>NO</b> - Trash
• Newspaper	<b>NO</b> - Plastic Bags
• Magazines / Junk mail	<b>NO</b> - Foods
• Glass & Plastic Bottles	<b>NO</b> - Styrofoam
• Aluminum Cans & Foil	<b>NO</b> - Electronics
• Metal & Tin Cans	<b>NO</b> - Yard Waste
	<b>NO</b> - Bulky Waste

Always remember that waste is preventable and not inevitable, and this is something we should all live by in our daily lives and work towards as a community.

### **Tax Collector**

The second installment of real estate and personal property taxes may be paid any time between now and February 1, 2023. Snowbirds, does it make sense to pay before you head south? Other taxpayers, do you want the tax deduction this year, then pay before December 31, 2022.

**Thank you for reading our Newsletter!**