



MONTGOMERY

TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2023

PUTTING MONTGOMERY ON THE MAP FOR STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES

When we look back on the year, we remember the events that brought thousands of our neighbors together, and the cooperation and teamwork that made it possible. From community events to enhancing services and improving pedestrian safety, we have been busy advocating for our community.

“This year, we’ve seen a terrific partnership between officials at every level of government,” said Mayor Devra Keenan. “We’re connecting our residents to each other, to

the services available and tapping into our legislators to pull money back into the township, putting Montgomery on the map from a state perspective.”

That cooperation was evident during the Constituent Services Fair, which afforded residents the opportunity to meet with government staff at the county, state and federal levels. Notably, Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman held her first town hall in our municipality since it was added to the 12th district, which connected her with our residents to hear our perspectives.

We worked in tandem with county officials to complete the Otto Kaufman Community Center public water connection. Using American Rescue Plan funds, this project eliminates the need for wasteful plastic water bottles, instead adding new drinking fountains and bottle fillers. The public utility also opens up the potential for additional activities such as community gardening and cooking classes in the future.

Of course, we cannot talk about improving our community without acknowledging the selfless work of our volunteer fire and EMS departments. We honored them at our Community Heroes Picnic in June, which included ice cream and recognition for their efforts. Volunteers are the lifeblood of this community, and our fire companies and EMS rely on tireless service from residents to empower their mission.

We continued supporting our first responders by securing additional federal funding for the departments, including \$1.48 million for radios and communication equipment. Around



the municipal center, we obtained \$3 million to expand sidewalks and connections to neighboring areas. Each month we get closer to completion of the full project in collaboration with the state and county.

As we look towards the future, we continue exploring even more grant opportunities to improve our community and quality of life for all. From each of our families to yours, we wish you a joyous holiday and a safe and happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you at a community event in 2024.

Mayor Devra Keenan
Deputy Mayor Neena Singh
Vincent Barragan
Patricia Taylor Todd
Dennis Ahn



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OVER \$7 MILLION IN OUTSIDE REVENUE RECEIVED

Collaboration between Montgomery Township Committee Members, employees and community volunteers has resulted in over \$7 million in outside revenue this year. The additional funds from federal, state and county sources will help our municipality invest in services and infrastructure that improve safety and quality of life for all residents.



“We’ve been working hard to make sure Montgomery receives its fair share of support, and we are proud of this result,” remarked Mayor Devra Keenan. “But we’re not done yet. Each year is another opportunity to advocate for more funding that supports projects our community cares about.”

The 2023 calendar year is one of the most successful on record for obtaining grants, with awards in a wide array of areas for projects of all different sizes. Funding for public safety, environmental programming and public health outreach are among the areas that received aid.



WINTER WEATHER IS ON THE WAY

We have been fortunate the past few years with mild winters. But the forecast for the upcoming months shows that stronger storms are in our future. Unusual weather patterns have become increasingly frequent, and Montgomery residents should prepare for the possibility of severe weather throughout the winter.

Making sure that you are prepared in the event of inclement weather should be a priority.

“Right now, before a storm, is the best time to make sure gutters are clear,” explained Emergency Management Coordinator Sean Devlin. “Debris prevents ice that melts into water during the day from draining. At night, it refreezes and can lead to indoor leaks and ice damming.”

When the weather gets colder, it becomes even more important to stick together. Check in with and support your neighbors, particularly older residents. If you hire someone to clear your driveway or walkway, contact them before a storm to arrange details. Check backup generators and sign up to receive emergency alerts through Nixle - our police department’s emergency email and texting notification program.

MONTGOMERY FIRE AND EMS NEED YOU

Our fire companies and EMS are made up of volunteers who answer thousands of calls each year when our community needs help the most. These trained volunteers are not paid and actively fundraise to support the maintenance of equipment and facilities.

“In September, we were notified that Montgomery is receiving nearly \$1.5 million in state grant money for communications equipment,” said Mayor Devra Keenan. “This will be used for radios and other technology that supports our first responders arriving on the scene prepared with the ability to contact neighboring towns and the county without using personal cell phones.”

But the most important part of these organizations are the people. Both fire companies and EMS are actively recruiting members to help answer the calls. Whether you have experience or are interested in learning more and giving back in an auxiliary capacity, your commitment is needed to help sustain these fine groups of residents.

Neighboring municipalities have outsourced EMS functions due to a lack of volunteers. Our goal is for Montgomery to remain an entirely volunteer squad, meaning those who receive services never see a bill. We need everyone’s help to sustain this vital community resource.



If you are unable to give your time, please consider a financial contribution. Each day our volunteers answer the call and help our community in its greatest moment of need. Your support is essential to everyone’s safety in our municipality.

DONATE TO FIRE CO. #1



DONATE TO FIRE CO. #2



DONATE TO EMS



CONNECTING MONTGOMERY: NEW CROSSWALKS ENHANCE SAFETY

Pedestrian safety has been a year-long focus in Montgomery, with communication lines opened between the community and our public health and police departments. Over the summer, township staff met with homeowners associations and developers, bringing stakeholders together.



Through open dialogue, we have created an action plan that has already led to results. A recently approved development project was modified following feedback specific to pedestrian safety, showcasing the power of collaboration.

“We’ve heard from residents about the need for more transportation options, including safe walkways and bikeways,” explained Deputy Mayor Neena Singh. “We spent time out in the community reminding everyone that ‘Montgomery Cares About You’ - cross only at crosswalks and follow other safety guidelines.”

Over the summer, our community also saw the opening of an additional crosswalk along Orchard Rd. This is part of a pedestrian safety enhancement project led by the state Department of Transportation to improve walkability along and across Rt. 206.

Mayor Devra Keenan is satisfied with the progress made, but reminds everyone that this process is iterative. “It can be slower than we’d like, but we’ve taken every action we can in the short term to make improvements,” she said. “Our engineering department is concurrently working at finding more long-term solutions with developers, as well as the county and state who are responsible for the major roads



in Montgomery.”

The intersection of County Rd. 518 and Rt. 206 has been a focus for several years. Two unsafe buildings were removed and additional safety features are slated for installation at the intersection in the coming year. The township continues working on making the corner a more attractive part of our town.

PROGRESS MADE ON 206/518 INTERSECTION

Montgomery saw long-overdue progress in the years-long effort to clean up vacant properties at the 206/518 intersection with the demolition of two buildings, including the former Gamma Tech building at 1026 Rt. 518.

Village Walk is also expected to make further progress on its face lift of the former Village Shopper strip shopping center, bringing a breath of modernity to formerly underutilized commercial space. The “inner” loop road is expected to open soon, helping relieve traffic on County Rt. 518 and Rt. 206. These updates continue improving our community both functionally and aesthetically.

The last project needed to satisfy the state-mandated affordable housing obliga-

tion was approved by our Planning Board in November. The current state mandate runs through 2025.

“We are ahead of most other communities in meeting our state affordable housing mandates,” said Township Administrator and Planning Director Lori Savron. “Our community leaders have worked diligently to review each project, with developers listening to feedback and making adjustments that benefit our community. These developments not only provide affordable housing but critical infrastructure improvements, including traffic relieving loop roads and enhanced pedestrian improvements including sidewalks and crosswalks.”

For further updates, visit the Projects & Initiatives page on the township website.



BRINGING MONTGOMERY TOGETHER

FIREWORKS

Thousands flocked to the Montgomery High School field for our annual fireworks. With an unusual start of summer due to the smog from Canada, we were one of the only communities in the region that found a window of time to host this major event that broke previous attendance records.



TRUNK OR TREAT

Unusually warm temperatures made for a memorable Trunk or Treat with over 50 vehicles decorated and more than 1,000 participants. Thank you to everyone who took time to put together a vehicle display and distribute treats.



RETURN TO ART

Our local artists got to display and sell their work at Return to Art, organized by our Arts Council in space donated by one of our local business partners. Attendees had the opportunity to chat with neighbors, who often fly under the radar as talented artists.



LET'S CONNECT MONTGOMERY!



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IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Municipal Offices (908) 359-8211
- Non-Emergency Police (908) 874-3333
- Parks & Recreation (609) 466-3023
- Senior Center & Food Pantry (609) 466-0846
- Department of Public Works (908) 874-3144