



MINUTES

Byram Neighborhood Association General Meeting
October 7, 2019, 7:00pm

The meeting called to order by Joseph Kantorski, Chair, at 7:00 pm.

Officer Keith Hirsch, Community Impact Officer (keith.hirsch@greenwichct.org) spoke about two recent accidents in Byram involving pedestrians being hit by cars. One, at Delavan and Veteran's Way involved an adult in the crosswalk. The victim was banged up but will be okay. The driver received a citation. The second was a child on a bicycle in the crosswalk at Byram Road and Frontage Road. The child received minor scrapes and bruises. The driver did not have a valid license. Note that the law in CT requires cyclists under 16 to wear a helmet. Officer Hirsch shared some statistics on enforcement efforts throughout town, noting that there are only 14 patrolmen on duty for a daytime population estimated at 100k. By this time last year, there were 5,055 traffic stops. This year there have been 6,726. On Delavan this year 646 citations have been issued. Most are issued between 8am and 4pm.

Residents asked about Ring Neighborhood, which Officer Hirsch noted will be active in Greenwich later this year. Many other questions pertained to parking enforcement on residential streets, tractor trailers on local roads, streets too narrow to have parking on both sides, parking on sidewalks. Contacts for different departments:

- Traffic Enforcement: 203-622-8000
- Parking Enforcement: 203-618-3060
- Traffic Signs, Signals, Regulations: 203-622-7766

Steve Walko, Chair of the New Lebanon Building Committee (NLBC), gave an update on the final phases of the school construction project. The committee's work is wrapping up and they should have the full CO delivered in the next few months. Several complaints have been made about the lighting and they are working to separate the lighting into zones. The parking lot lights, per BOE policy, will be turned off at 9:30pm and will be off on weekends. The new playgrounds have opened. Invasive weeds and foliage were recently removed and trees and landscaping are still being planted.

The field will be sodded in the coming weeks but will remain closed until the Spring to allow the sod to take root. The contractor will maintain the field for a year and then it is the responsibility of Parks & Rec. A new, temporary fence is currently being installed. The backstop is underway, a stone retaining wall was added to allow more space to make the field regulation size. A sidewalk connecting from William Street to the school alongside the library parking lot has been added. Questions were asked about voting, which will be via the main entrance from the upper level parking lot. The Registrar of Voters will make sure that there is adequate signage and the elevator will be operational to for those that cannot take the stairs. Drainage was also asked about, and the response was that drainage of the field has been greatly improved. All community

updates, meeting minutes, and other documentation is available on the Greenwich Schools website: <https://www.greenwichschools.org/departments/facilities-rentals/building-grounds-projects/new-lebanon-school-building-committee>

Katie Deluca, Town Planner (katie.deluca@greenwichct.org), with Planning and Zoning Chair Margarita Alban and Commissioner and Byram resident Nick Macri also in attendance, updated the community on the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), which is a state-mandated land use plan developed every 10 years, which informs the updating of zoning regulations and municipal improvement projects. It is a “vision statement” with a focus on preserving community character, increasing affordable housing, education, and more through planning. The Planning & Zoning Commission has outlined an implementation plan that involve reviewing the plan every two years vs. every 10 years.

Mrs. Deluca described changes made in recent years to R-6 (multi-family) zoning, which is now restricted to two-family vs. three-plus, which in turn made the process of having two-family homes approved easier. Other recent changes were made to the Waterfront Business Zone, which covers all commercial lots on the west side of South Water Street and was updated last year to allow more uses while increasing public access to the waterfront. Residential development is not allowed due to the flood levels. There were questions asked about potential P&Z applications for the Hasco building and the Bank of America building, but none have been filed. Useful contacts include:

- Zoning Enforcement (ZoningEnforcement@greenwichct.org or 203-622-7753) for illegal apartments, unapproved uses, and other zoning violations.
- Nuisance Abatement (NuisanceAbatement@greenwichct.org or 203-622-7753) for issues covered under the town’s nuisance ordinance, such as debris or inoperable vehicles on a property.

Joseph Kantorski (contact@byramneighbors.org) delivered the Chair’s Report. Representatives from the BNA attended a breakfast organized by the Chamber of Commerce for neighborhood associations from across the town to hear about the POCD. Connections were made with other associations and there is interest in ongoing communications.

The breakfast was followed by a meeting with Representative Steve Meskers, Town Administrator Ben Branyan, and members of the CT DOT to discuss the I-95 Underpass between Ritch and Delavan Avenues. This was to discuss inadequate lighting in addition to a proposed community mural project. The CT DOT has recently completed new guidelines to follow and the approval process is far clearer.

The BNA’s new [Facebook Page](#) and [Facebook Group](#) were discussed. The group is a forum for community members to bring up local issues, share information, and notice local events. An issue with another group using the name “Byram Neighborhood Association” remains unresolved and the next steps will be to work with Facebook to determine a solution.

Many candidates for the November 5th municipal election were present and invited to briefly introduce themselves. They included Fred Camillo (First Selectman), Carm Budkins and Molly Saleeby (Town Clerk), Miriam Kreuzer (BET), Christina Downey (BOE), Lauren Rabin (Selectman), and Howard Richman and Heather Smeriglio (Tax Collector). A number of current RTM members running for re-election were also present. The BNA plans to send Byram-related questions to all candidates, the answers to which will be posted on Facebook and shared with the email list.

Robert McKnight, Vice-Chair of the BNA and Chair of RTM District 4, provided an update on the RTM. There are two more meetings left in the two-year term. The upcoming meetings are expected to focus on amendments to RTM Rules and policies in addition to approval of appointments to town boards and commissions. All 17 seats in our RTM district are up for re-election and there are 17 candidates on the ballot. All RTM meetings, committee meetings and district meetings are open to the public. More information about the RTM and District 4 membership is available on the Town's website: <https://www.greenwichct.gov/1463/District-4>

Samarpana Tamm, Treasurer, encouraged attendees to fill out a [membership form](#) and include an annual contribution to help pay for expenses relating to the BNA website, post office box, and supplies.

Lucy von Brachel, Secretary, called for volunteers to help develop new **bylaws** and form a 501c(3). Please contact her at lucy@vonbrachel.com if you are interested.

Lucy continued with a report of the Land Use Committee, which has recently had two meetings focused on **blighted properties** in Byram and elsewhere in town. In addition to committee members, neighbors of blighted properties, including residents from the Riversville area have also attended. The group has developed a draft blight ordinance and members have met with Town Administrator, Ben Branyan, to discuss the town's plans to update the existing nuisance ordinance to enable all stakeholders – property owners, neighbors, and the town – to have a clearer process to follow and a clearer definition of what constitutes a violation. The town hopes to deliver an ordinance to the Board of Selectmen in December. More meetings with the town are planned. The community group wants to continue to work on its own ordinance but hope that with continued cooperation, a single ordinance that satisfies all can be presented to, and accepted by, the RTM in the coming months.

A number of Byram residents also attended a **Port Chester Planning** Commission Meeting on September 30th to hear a presentation on a proposed [9-story mixed-use development](#) covering the entire block between Main Street and Abendroth from Tarry Lodge to Tandoori. The applicant is proposing 274 rental units and 358 parking spaces. Also on the agenda was another [9-story mixed-use development](#) at 108 South Main Street with 115 units and 104 parking spaces and a [17-story mixed-use building](#) at 44 Broad Street, across from the train station, with 286 residential units and 267 parking spaces. [Meetings](#) will be posted on the Facebook page and group as we hear about them. Nick Macri noted that Greenwich's Planning & Zoning staff has been meeting with their Port Chester counterparts to discuss developments near the border with a focus on



traffic and parking concerns generated by the development. Comments were made suggesting that Greenwich should be more proactive in its consideration issues across its borders as many changes may be outside our control.

The upgrading of the roads in the **Frontage Road** area, discussed in the June BNA meeting, is still scheduled to go to bid this winter with work scheduled to begin in the spring.

Questions were asked about the **I-95 construction** project on the NY border, the “Last Mile” project. The BNA will reach out to Rep. Meskers for an update, but the project basics can be found here: <https://www.thruway.ny.gov/oursystem/last-mile/index.html>

Residents also expressed the need for a town traffic engineer and smart light technology.

And, the town is readying for the 2020 Census and a suggestion was made to coordinate outreach and gather information because the results affect funding for area projects and resources.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.