

## MINUTES

Byram Neighborhood Association General Meeting  
January 27, 2020, 7:00pm

The meeting called to order by [Joseph Kantorski, Chair](#), at 7:00 pm

Following introductions and remarks, the chair requested feedback on whether the BNA should send a letter to the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET), the Board of Education (BOE), and others requesting support for the funding in the capital budget for [Western Middle School \(WMS\) field remediation](#). A motion was made to approve this proposal and the vote was unanimous in favor. The chair also noted that draft bylaws would be circulated via the Byram Neighborhood Association (BNA) email list and a vote would be taken to adopt the bylaws at our April meeting (date TBD).

[State Representative Steve Meskers](#) gave an update on the repaired lighting under the I-95 underpass at Exit 2 and the proposed mural project for the same underpass. He explained his role in the WMS field remediation plans: as the town moves through the state approval process, he can work with CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to expedite approvals. He discussed the proposed development at Tarry Lighthouse, which is now a request for a 7-story building in a 5-story zone. He and Fred Camillo have both attended zoning meetings and spoken against the development along with BNA members and neighbors. [The next meeting of the Port Chester Zoning Board of Appeals is on February 20th at 7pm](#). Rep. Meskers also announced that he had been in communication with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) regarding the construction near the Midland Avenue exit on I-95 ([Last Mile Project](#)). He is scheduled to have a walk-through this week and will continue to share updates as he receives them. Sign up [here](#) to receive his newsletter.

[First Selectman Fred Camillo](#) reminded attendees to [sign-up online](#) for his weekly newsletter. He noted that proposed changes to the town's nuisance ordinance, which will help to address blighted properties, will be completed in the next couple of months. He is also working with Town Planner Katie Deluca on a policy addressing issues with short-term rentals offered through Airbnb.com.

First Selectman Camillo also discussed the Tarry Lighthouse development in [Port Chester](#). He has been in close contact with Mayor Falanca, who shares many of Byram's concerns. It was asked whether Greenwich could close the Mill Street Bridge, which remains unclear, but Greenwich wants Port Chester to know that it is serious about addressing the already heavy traffic in the area. Maintaining a good relationship with Port Chester is also a priority. First Selectman Camillo also mentioned other large developments proposed and recently approved in Port Chester that will increase pressure on local roads and infrastructure.

The First Selectman gave an overview of the [Pay-as-You-Throw](#) waste management changes included in the FY20-21 budget. Municipal recycling costs have gone up dramatically. The plan would require residents to purchase specially marked bags at local retail stores for \$1.25 (13 gal.) or \$2 (33 gal.). Proceeds would offset the cost of waste removal. There is a push from the Board of Selectmen's Sustainability Committee for composting and moving to reusable wares in Greenwich Public Schools, which will also reduce waste costs. Textile recycling is also being looked at.

First Selectman Camillo also addressed the [WMS field remediation](#), noting that \$8.5mm in funding is in the FY20-21 budget.

**Selectperson Jill Oberlander** noted that there is no plan for the WMS remediation in place at the moment, despite the proposed funding, and that community advocacy was essential.

**Gordon Beinstein, Western Middle School Principal** explained the different issues with WMS fields versus Central Middle School (CMS) fields, which have also been in the news. He noted that capping the contaminated fields with artificial turf might expedite the process. He suspects that the state will direct the town to test more and that WMS is watching the remediation plans for Greenwich High School (GHS) closely.

**Alley Bartholomew, New Lebanon School Principal** noted that the school had a successful magnet school open house the prior week and that the school is looking to increase enrollment, in part by bringing back families in the New Lebanon School district. The school is wrapping up [construction](#) and the field will be open, tentatively, by mid-April per Parks & Recreation.

**Judy Crystal, Friends of the Byram Shubert Library** (FBSL) described the many resources offered through the Byram Shubert Library (BSL) and highlighted a [February 6th event on recycling featuring Waste Free Greenwich](#). To join the FBSL, supporters can pick up an envelope at the library or go online to the Greenwich Library site. Donations support programming offered by the BSL to community members. She noted that the popular BSL Anniversary celebration is returning in May.

**Myrna Gardner, Friends of Byram Park Association** (FBPA) spoke about the newly-forming FBPA, whose mission is to advocate for Byram Park through beautification and community engagement. The town's Parks & Recreation Department has offered support and the FBPA is organizing under the Parks & Recreation Foundation. They tentatively plan to participate in the April Town-Wide Clean-up event with a bigger kick-off event over the summer. Special thanks was given to Debby Lash for her help in organizing the association. The BNA will post meetings on the [Facebook page](#).

**Jason Grippo, Greenwich Community Gardens**, (GCG) announced the [March 15th Armstrong Court Garden Plot Sign-up Day](#). The event is from 12:00-2:00pm and children are welcome – there will be a craft and planting activity. The 100+ garden beds, which are 4ft. by 8 ft. are available to rent for \$25 annually. There are periodic presentations and events offered by GCG and current members shared their enthusiasm for the garden.

**Ann Blumenstaadt** provided information on the upcoming [2020 Census](#). On [Monday, February 10th at Town Hall](#), the [Connecticut Complete Count Committee](#) will meet with the Secretary of State. She noted that the last census resulted in an undercount in Byram, which can impact federal funding for projects. Fred Camillo sent out an [email about census jobs](#) as well. Clare Kilgallen noted that the schools have been provided letters that can be sent home to help educate families on the importance of being counted.

**Clare Kilgallen, New Lebanon PTA Co-president** shared that the popular Spaghetti Dinner is planned for March 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm in new gymnasium. The dinner includes over 100 prizes to win. Businesses can advertise in the program and donate goods or services as well. The cost of admission is \$15/adult and the entire community is welcome.

Mrs. Kilgallen also provided an update on the Frontage Road project. According to Department of Public Works's Jim Michel, "We are scheduled to go out to bid in February or March. Based on where bids come back we may have to wait until May to enter into contract following the [May] RTM budget vote. Therefore the project is still on schedule to start construction in the spring/summer 2020 and be completed by the end of 2020." It may require some community advocacy to ensure approval. Further, there may be additional approvals needed by the State Department of Transportation and [WestCog](#).

Byram resident John Macri expressed disappointment that they are waiting until February to go out to bid. He is concerned about the project starting while school is in session given the high traffic at Byram Road. He also suggested that the crosswalks at Byram Road and Frontage Road include flashers and a streetlight to provide better visibility for drivers who have difficulty seeing pedestrians at night.

**Bob McKnight, BNA Vice-Chair and [RTM District 4 Chair](#)** was congratulated for his being elected Chair of the Representative Town Committee's (RTM) Appointments Committee, which interviews and vets candidates for many town boards and commissions. He noted that the [FY2020-2021 Budget](#) would be coming before the RTM in May and that all are welcome to attend RTM Meetings, both the District 4 meetings at the BSL and the General Meetings at Central Middle School.

**Samarpana Tamm, BNA Treasurer** reported that the BNA has 21 paying members and donors.

**Lucy von Brachel, BNA Secretary and BNA Land Use Committee Chair** encouraged more people to [sign up as members](#). Funds support our website and will allow the BNA to return to offering scholarships and support to local community members. She touched on the update to the nuisance ordinance and asked community members to consider advocating for the changes when they come before the RTM. She reiterated much of what Fred Camillo and Steve Meskers had reported on the Port Chester development, and noted that there are West Putnam Road developments coming up at P&Z and that we expect to see applications soon for more units at McKinney Terrace and Armstrong Court as well.

### **New Business**

- Resident and RTM Member, Don Vitti reported that at the [Pemberwick-Glenville Association](#) meeting, he learned that Pemberwick Road will be closed down for a couple of months to fix a deteriorating and dangerous falling rock wall.
- The [Byram Volunteer Firehouse](#) renovation is under way and the BNA will provide an update on the timeline when it becomes available.
- Steve Meskers noted the increase in telephone scams, particularly [those related to Eversource](#), which are very sophisticated. He urged residents to be wary of anyone asking for personal information or monies over the phone.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

## STATE

### **State Senator Alex Bergstein**

<http://www.senatedems.ct.gov/bergstein>

860-240-0393

Email: <http://www.senatedems.ct.gov/bergstein-contact>

### **State Representative Steve Meskers**

<http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Meskers>

1-800-842-8267 | (860) 240-8585 Email: [Stephen.Meskers@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Stephen.Meskers@cga.ct.gov)

## TOWN

### **First Selectman Fred Camillo**

203-622-7710

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/530/First-Selectman>

Email: <https://www.greenwichct.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=335>

### **Selectwoman Lauren Rabin**

203-622-7710

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### **Selectperson Jill Oberlander**

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### **Board of Estimate and Taxation**

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/680/Board-of-Estimate-Taxation>

Budget Meeting Schedule

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13993/Budget-Meetings-Calendar>

## SCHOOLS

### **Gordon Beinstein, Principal, Western Middle School**

203-531-5700

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<https://www.greenwichschools.org/western-middle-school>

### **Alley Bartholomew**

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<https://www.greenwichschools.org/new-lebanon-school>