



BYRAM NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION VIRTUAL MEETING

Monday, October 5, 7:00pm

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

We were fortunate to hear from the candidates for State Senate and State Representative that represent Byram. Note that Voting District 4A is in the 149th District and Voting District 4 is in the 150th District. Maps of the voting districts are available [here](#). Website and contact information for each candidate is provided below.

Kimberly Fiorello, Candidate for State Representative, 149th District

- Website: <https://www.kimberlyfor149.com/>
- Email: Kimberlyfor149@gmail.com

Kathleen Stowe, Candidate for State Representative, 149th District

- Website: <https://kathleenstowe.com/>
- Email: kathleen@kathleenstowe.com

Joe Kelly, Candidate for State Representative, 150th District

- Website: <http://joekellyct.com/>
- Email: info@joekellyct.com

Steve Meskers, State Representative, 150th District

- Website: <https://stevemeskers.com/>
- Email: meskers4greenwich@gmail.com

Ryan Fazio, Candidate for State Senator, 36th District

- Website: <https://www.ryanfazio.com/>
- Email: ryan@ryanfazio.com

Alex Kasser, State Senator, 36th District

- Website: <https://www.alex4ct.com/>
- Email: alex@alex4ct.com

BNA Chair then shared a number of community updates, which are available [here](#):

This was followed by an open forum with residents sharing information and issues.



Wendy Figueroa shared concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety, particularly at the crosswalk at Delavan and Chestnut/Veteran's Way, increased litter, and the need for more police presence to prevent crime.

Brian Kelly, Volunteer Coordinator for the Greenwich Fire Department, shared that they are seeking more volunteers to serve the community. The Byram Firehouse is on schedule to re-open in the Spring/early Summer in time for its 130th Anniversary. You can contact Brian for more information about volunteering at bkelly@greenwichct.org.

Alex Popp updated us on his work improving the historic Burying Ground on Byram Shore Road. He and his daughter worked on cleaning up the site and have been working with Parks & Recreation and the Tree Warden on improvements, like two oak trees that were recently planted. They are working on adding a plaque and communicating with descendants. If you are interested in getting involved, you can contact Alex at alexjpoppp@gmail.com.

Andrea Casson asked about parking regulations, particularly the rule that [cars cannot park within 5 feet of a driveway](#). That is a rule that is enforced, although it often requires notifying parking services or the GPD. Another rule stipulates that [cars cannot remain parked in one place for more than 24 hours](#). The full ordinance with parking regulations can be found [here](#).

Tom Eckert shared his concerns regarding the traffic and pedestrian safety issues at Delavan and Veteran's way and described his own experience of being hit by a car at that location. He pointed out that it is used by children walking to New Lebanon School and that there are many families in the area. He feels this should be at the top of the list of priorities for the BNA. Tom also noted that his wife, Liz Eckert, had spoken to the Board of Selectmen about this issue and the Board of Selectmen suggested that the BNA should work together to define the issues and propose solutions.

Scott Anderson echoed the need to bring these issues to the town with a collective voice and that the concerns are related. He suggested that we would have a better chance of moving the ball forward if we take this approach.

Bob McKnight noted that many of these issues were addressed in the [Byram Comprehensive Plan](#), which was already accepted and voted on, has not been fully implemented by the Town and that it would make sense to focus on the solutions outlined in that document that have yet to be addressed.

Julie Bordier asked about the Western Middle School fields and when that work would be concluded so that the fields could be re-opened. The status and the remediation plan options were discussed at a Board of Education Meeting on May 21. Some of the related documents can be found [here](#) and [here](#), public comments from the meeting are [here](#). The BOE voted 6-2-0 to approve "artificial turf be installed as the approach for the remediation action plan", which will be incorporated into the Remedial Action Work Plan presented to CTDEEP and the EPA. The Board of Estimate and Taxation



had removed capital funding for the project from the FY20-21 budget because it was unlikely that the project would have the necessary approvals to begin but indicated that they would support the funding in the FY21-22 budget, which goes into effect in June 2021. During the budget process for FY20-21, the BNA wrote to the BET and urged them to fund the project and do everything possible to expedite it.

Paul Pugliese proposed that the BNA focus on beautification and parking and the positive effects these efforts have on the business community. He expressed that commercial vacancies are related to a lack of parking for customers and that on-street and municipal parking improvements are needed. He also noted that residential parking is an issue but residential parking permits close to the village can be a detriment to the business community and that we need to find the right mix. He also noted that there are proposals in the Byram Comprehensive Plan that have not been acted on that would be a benefit.

Bob McKnight noted that the town had considered purchasing properties in the village a number of years ago and that with some of the recent vacancies that the BNA should push to have the town look into acquiring more land for parking.

Matt Popp shared suggestions for committees that could focus on different areas and issues in Byram including a Land Use Committee to look at parking, pedestrian safety, planning & zoning applications; a Beautification Committee to look at pocket parks, street trees and ball fields; a Byram Park Committee that could perhaps help kickstart the Friends of Byram Park.

Vin DiMarco echoed comments about revisiting the Byram Comprehensive Plan. He also pointed to the increase in walkers and cyclists during the pandemic and that adding more infrastructure to promote walking and cycling would have a traffic calming effect. He also noted that increasing the amount of parking can increase car traffic and that we should discuss alternatives. With the approval of the of Conservation and Development, there are implementation committees that have been set up, and a subcommittee of one of those is looking at bicycle access and proposals for safe, local bike routes.

Lucy von Brachel reminded residents that Election Day is November 3rd and the New Lebanon School PTA is hosting its annual bake sale fundraiser and a raffle for the 5th grade.

Lucy went on to discuss the draft Bylaws that had been circulated and requested feedback on proposed amendments using the "raise hands" feature in Zoom. Attendees favored two-year terms for officers over one-year terms and supported having committee chairs be members of the BNA board. She also noted that we traditionally relied on a plurality vote in BNA elections, but the draft Bylaws say a majority vote and that will be changed back. Changes will be made to the draft accordingly and circulated prior to the next meeting when we vote to adopt them.



The open forum was followed by the election of officers. The new executive board of the BNA is:

Chair: Joseph Kantorski
Vice-Chair: Liz Eckert
Treasurer: Scott Anderson
Secretary: Lucy von Brachel

Congratulations to the new officers!

Following the election, State Representative **Steve Meskers** urged the BNA to work with other groups in the community, such as the school PTAs and the business community, to increase our ability to advocate effectively for Byram with our elected officials and Town government.

Matt Popp echoed Rep. Meskers' comments and urged that committees be formed as soon as possible.

Joseph Kantorski noted that committees will be established before the next meeting so that we can get to work on the issues raised in the meeting and asked that people reach out if they would like to participate.

Samarpana Tamm noted that variances for the Tarry Lighthouse development in Port Chester had been denied by their Zoning Board of Appeals, but the applicant is returning with revisions on October 15th at 7:00pm.

Wendy Figueroa offered her skills in support of the BNA and volunteered to chair a committee, assist with translation, and help to increase membership and fundraising efforts.

The next Byram Neighborhood Association Meeting will be in January, but the BNA will continue to communicate and solicit feedback through email and social media.

For more information: contact@byramneighbors.org