



## **NEXUS Legislative Committee Stays Connected with Local Officials**

### ***Ocean County***

#### **Meeting with Mayor of Toms River**

The NEXUS Legislative Committee welcomed Toms River Township Mayor Mo Hill to the monthly Legislative Committee meeting as the guest speaker on December 16. Mayor Hill took office in 2020 and is serving his 2nd year as mayor out of his 4-year elected term. He was happy to meet with the Committee and provide an update on redevelopment projects and other issues impacting private property in Toms River.

Mayor Hill kicked off the discussion sharing his delight that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs selected Toms River as the location of a new 68,000-square-foot outpatient clinic for veterans. The new facility will be located on Hooper Avenue near the Seacourt Pavilion shopping center and next to the new Ocean County Social Services building, which is under construction. The mayor is requesting that the new building be named in honor of Leonard “Bud” Lornell, a decorated WWII hero from Toms River.

Much of the meeting centered on the status of homes that have been declared significantly damaged from Super Storm Sandy. Mayor Hill clarified that homes in the Township that have been declared significantly damaged ARE still able to obtain a certificate of occupancy to rent their homes. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has not completed the Flood MAPS and Mayor Hill said he will not penalize property owners because FEMA has not provided the MAPS. He referenced the MAPS are said to be completed sometime in 2025, but the slow process and lack of transparency has been a source of frustration.

While Mayor Hill confirmed that it’s “business as usual” regarding rentals for these significantly damaged homes, building permits will not be issued on these properties for additions to the homes (outside showers, installation of pools etc.) until the Flood MAPS are completed.

Mayor Hill shared that he has met with Congressman Kim’s Office regarding the lack of guidance from FEMA and continues to urge the agency and officials at the state for clarity. See Mayor Hill’s letter here detailing his concerns:

<https://www.tomsrivertownship.com/DocumentCenter/View/3447/Substantial-Compliance-Deadline-Letter-PDF?bidId=>

Moreover, Mayor Hill shared that the appeals process for the remaining homeowners with the substantially damaged home designation will be reopened in January 2022. The residential homeowner will first have to obtain an appraisal, and Toms River will be hiring an Insurance Adjustment company to handle the review process.

During the meeting, Mayor Hill also shared that the Township Council introduced an ordinance on December 15 that would require a certificate of occupancy inspection prior to transfer of property's deed. Toms River already required inspections for rental properties but not for sale. The rules were adopted on December 28 and can be reviewed in detail here on page 7:

<https://www.tomsrivertownship.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Minutes/12142021-457>. To streamline processes for residents, Toms River has consolidated both Code Enforcement and Building Construction under Department of Community Development.

### **Jackson Township Tables Ordinance Adding Costly Permit Fee for Real Estate Signs After Meeting with REALTORS®**

The Township Council and Mayor were set to vote on costly and restrictive changes to the sign ordinance law in Jackson on January 11 but tabled the measure to allow for more time for consideration after meeting with leaders and staff from NEXUS and NJ REALTORS® and hearing from other local REALTORS® who shared concern about the proposal. The ordinance would have required a permit and \$45 fee to place a for sale sign on a home being sold in Jackson. Additionally, this ordinance would also prohibit offsite open house directional signs. This new fee would add onto the already very expensive process of selling a home placed on home sellers at all levels of government.

NJ REALTORS® and NEXUS met with representatives from the Township on January 7 expressing concern about the new permit requirement for “For Sale” signs and the prohibition of open house directional signs within the municipality—concerns that were echoed by many other local realtors who reached out to the Township directly on the matter.

The REALTORS® shared that not only would the new rules add yet another fee on to the process of the already expensive process of selling a home, prohibiting directional signs would be a disservice to the residents of Jackson selling their homes as well as the possible future residents looking to purchase a home in Jackson. With the 2020 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers prepared by the National Association of REALTORS®, showing that 41% of home buyers identified real estate signs as a tool used in their home purchase process and 11% of buyers identified real estate signs (either a for sale or open house sign) as the way that they found the home they eventually purchased, these signs are critically important in the sale and property rental process.

The Association is grateful that the Township was willing to meet to discuss the matter and that the Council and Mayor are taking additional time to consider the complex issue. We will keep members updated and will continue to be a resource to Jackson on the matter.

### **Toms River Acquires Former Surf Club Property in Ortley Beach**

In the remaining days of 2021, Toms River finalized the purchase of the oceanfront property in Ortley Beach where the Surf Club was once located. The property was damaged in 2012 and has set idle since that time.

The township paid about \$7.3 million to purchase the former nightclub, along with two adjacent properties, including a 100-space parking lot. The state paid most of the cost from Blue Acres funds used by New Jersey to purchase land in the flood plain. In August, Toms River Council members agreed to use \$685,000 in open space funds to help buy the property.

Purchasing the Surf Club land allows Toms River to expand its public beach in Ortley Beach, as well as increase beachfront parking. The township also hopes to build a gazebo on the extended boardwalk but will need approval from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

### **Point Pleasant Beach Implements Restrictions on Short Term Rentals**

Last month, Point Pleasant Beach Borough Council voted unanimously to enact stringent new regulations on short-term rentals. The rules took effect January 1.

The [ordinance](#) bans the renting of properties for fewer than seven days from May 15 to Sept. 30, or less than one month in the offseason. It also denies certificate of occupancy to any owner with prior revocations or suspension of license, or with any violations of any borough ordinance. It also requires rental owners to provide the names and permanent addresses of each proposed tenant, and tightens parking restrictions around each house, among several other requirements. The Legislative Committee plans to meet with the Mayor to discuss.

## **Burlington County:**

### **New Requirement Added to CO Process in Willingboro**

Beginning January 2022, Willingboro is now requiring a video inspection and a certified inspections report from a Master Plumber to indicate whether the private sewer lateral is in satisfactory condition. If it is determined that the sewer lateral is not in satisfactory condition, needed repairs must be completed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. These new rules were enacted as part of Ordinance 2021-13, Inspection of Private Sewer Laterals-Chapter 291 which can be reviewed here:



Willingboro sewer  
lateral inspection info

The Legislative Committee is planning to meet with Willingboro Officials early this year to discuss these new, concerning rules.

### **Final Phase of New Residential Project Underway in Mount Holly**

The final phase of construction of [Mi-Place at West Rancocas](#) apartments located right off the New Jersey Turnpike in Mount Holly is now underway. The project, developed by KMS Development Partners in conjunction with Fenmoor Homes, is expected to contribute to the area's current revitalization by adding 96 apartments and 12 townhomes to the existing 228 apartments and four townhomes. The community offer a shared clubhouse and fitness center, a resident's lounge and a dog park, as well as pet-friendly accommodations.

### **New Income-Restricted Apartment Complex Opens in Lumberton**

A new, LEED-certified, income-restricted, 70-unit apartment complex opened in Lumberton Township. The new green community-- Cornerstone at Lumberton--features non-invasive landscaping, the use of recycled materials during construction and Energy Star-certified appliances. The one-, two- and three-bedroom apartment homes feature a full-size washer and dryer in each residence, fully equipped kitchens with granite countertops, blinds in every room, clubhouse and fitness room, secured key fob access, internet/Wi-Fi in common areas, computer workstations, tot-lot, barbecue and picnic area, half-court basketball and onsite resident services.

## **Camden County:**

### **Cramer Hill Park – Formerly a Landfill—Opens in Camden**

On November 30, state, county and local officials cut the ribbon on the new 62-acre Cramer Hill Waterfront Park that sits on the land of the former Harrison Avenue Landfill that was an eyesore in Camden for over 70 years. The \$48 million dollar project that took five years to complete connects the community with its waterfront. The park includes three miles of biking and hiking paths, a restored wildlife habitat, a playground, a kayak launch, picnic tables, benches, and an amphitheater. The location offers stunning views of downtown Camden, the Camden Waterfront, the Delaware River, Petty's Island, the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and the Philadelphia skyline.

### **Mayor and New Business Administrator Take Seat in Camden City**

On January 1, Victor Carstarphen was sworn in to a four-year term as Camden's 49<sup>th</sup> full-time Mayor. He was appointed to Camden City Council as the 2nd Ward Representative on January 3rd, 2020. On May 11, 2021, Camden City Council voted to appoint Councilman Carstarphen as Mayor to fill the unexpired term created by former Mayor Frank Moran. On January 4, City Council confirmed Mayor Carstarphen's choice for Business Administrator—Timothy Cunningham. Cunningham served as a member of the Christie Administration as director of the NJ Division of Local Government Services and assistant commissioner for the NJ Department of Community Affairs.

### **Targeted Municipalities Legislative Committee Plans to Meet with in 2022:**

- Camden, Mayor Vic Carstarphen
- Cherry Hill, Susan Shin Angulo
- LEHT, Mayor John Kehm Jr.
- Point Pleasant Borough, Mayor Kanitra
- Willingboro, Mayor TBD

### **2022 Legislative Committee ZOOM Meetings**

Please join us if you can! E-mail [vjones@nexusaor.com](mailto:vjones@nexusaor.com) to be added to the meeting distribution list. The committee is looking for more active REALTORS® to participate!

- Wednesday, January 19, 2022 – Guest Speaker Mayor Catrambone of Delran Township (Burlington County)
- Wednesday, February 16, 2022 – Guest Speaker Mayor Rob Jakubowski of Audubon Boro (Camden County)