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Town of Morristown Updates From Mayor Timothy P. Dougherty

Contact the Mayor directly by email at mayor@townofmorristown.org



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Winter Preparedness

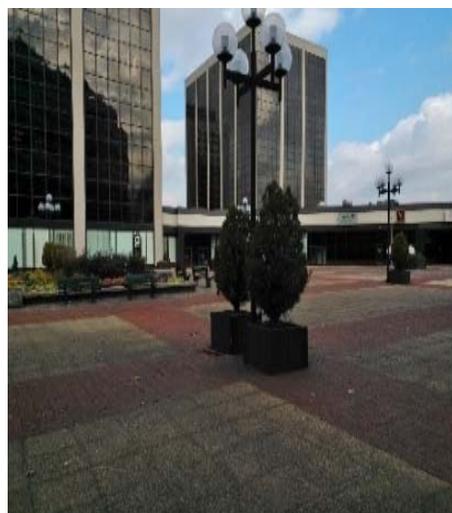
Does Buffalo's recent blizzard have you worried? After the tough winter we experienced last year, the Morristown Department of Public Works' twenty eight full time employees are ready and able to handle the coming winter weather. The



Town's in-house mechanics worked throughout the year to make sure that Morristown's fleet of plows, salt trucks, loaders, snow blowers and dump trucks are in excellent working order. DPW crews are available around the clock during ice and snow events. During a snowstorm there could be a dozen plows on the road along with three salt trucks and crews on foot clearing sidewalks. Should we experience a very heavy snow storm, the services of outside contractors to supplement our DPW forces will be utilized, as needed.

Snow will be removed from the roadways and sidewalks, loaded on to trucks and piled in remote locations. This allows the business district and residential streets to return to normal functioning as soon as possible. When conditions dictate, and to greatly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town's plowing and snow removal, we ask that residents move their vehicles to one of the many safe public parking garages in Town. Notices of this request will be posted on the Town's official website, www.townofmorristown.org, and email blasts will be sent to residents that have [Signed Up for e-Alerts](#).

Headquarters Plaza Pioneer Park



There is a valuable piece of public space that sits between Headquarters Plaza and 1776 on the Green. It's possible that you passed this plaza on many occasions, but over time stopped taking notice. Since its inauguration in 1989 the 1+ acre park has been known as Headquarters Plaza Pioneer Park, named after the AT&T Pioneers, an important volunteer organization whose

goodwill legacy is long and inspiring. Pioneer Park was developed with the best of intentions. Both the Town and the owners of the Headquarters Plaza complex wanted to provide town residents, shoppers and local workers space to relax, speak with friends, and take a short respite from daily challenges. Unfortunately, Pioneer Park has not often been used over the last 25 years. Some complain that the Park is too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter, and it offers only a few places to sit and there are no tables.

Given the history of Pioneer Park, I'm happy to share with you some important anticipated changes. The Town Council has authorized the administration to sign a sales agreement with the owners of Headquarters Plaza for the land underneath the high-rise offices, hotel, mall and parking garage, which were being leased to Headquarters Plaza since 1979. The agreement will, among other things, result in an overhaul of the park. The owners of Headquarters Plaza, Olnick & Fisher, agreed to spend between \$500,000 and \$1,150,000 to renovate Pioneer Park. The owners also agreed to grant an easement to the Town allowing the perpetual use of the park by the public, including special events.

It is obvious that the theory of providing public space and "they will come" has not worked. To understand how Pioneer Park can be best utilized, the Town and Headquarters Plaza partnership ownership will initiate a series of three public work sessions where landscape architects and Town residents can imagine how Pioneer Park can be truly inviting and best utilized by the public.



The Vail Mansion—A Short History

I'm sure that Theodore Vail would be totally surprised to see restaurant diners entering expectantly into the mansion he built in 1918 in the center of Morristown. Perhaps he'd be more surprised that 110 South Street once held jail cells when it did double duty as the Town Hall and police headquarters. With the recent opening of the Jockey Hollow Bar & Kitchen in the historic mansion, the palazzo-like building with the distinctive reflecting pool in front has once again been gloriously reinvented.

Theodore Vail was not only the first president of AT&T but an investor in South American industry. He had several homes and the mansion was not his primary residence. He designed the building to be part home and part Vail family museum of inventions. But at his death in 1920 he had never yet lived in his mansion.

Eventually the town was given the opportunity to purchase the Italian-inspired mansion for a much needed municipal building, moving its offices and police department in by 1923. 73 years later, the town had outgrown the space. After hosting the 1997 Mansion in May fundraiser for Morristown Memorial Hospital, the land in back of the mansion was developed into a 36 unit luxury condominium community. The Residences at Vail Mansion opened in 2008, and the interior of the Vail Mansion was completely renovated in 2014 as a restaurant with four distinct bar and dining centers.

Though Theodore Vail traveled widely he was raised in Morristown, and would undoubtedly be excited to see the incredible restoration of the building he never got to live in.

Creating a Community Forest

The Morristown Shade Tree Commission was founded in 2013. By the end of this year the Commission will have planted approximately 175 new trees of varying species on public property. Assisted by a part-time arborist, the Commission is currently working on a tree awareness campaign concerning the value and care of the town's community forest.

Should you need a tree, you can request one be planted on the public right-of-way (the strip of land between the sidewalk and the street) or in a nearby park. The Shade Tree Commission encourages making your tree request by filling out the form found on the Town of Morristown official website using the Shade Tree Commission's link. Interested residents are welcomed to attend Shade Tree Commission meetings. The schedule is posted in town hall and can also be found on the Town of Morristown official website.

Road Improvements

The infrastructure of towns and cities are central to the ongoing vibrancy and sustainability of the communities. For that reason, you'll be happy to learn that our Engineering Division designed and supervised the construction of numerous improvements to town roads in 2014. A significant part of those improvements included the milling and resurfacing of approximately 17 roadways.

The Engineering Division also focused on roadway geometry at key intersections. With the aim of calming traffic and increasing pedestrian and bicycle safety, changes were made to curb, sidewalk and drainage structures at Ford Avenue/Franklin Street, Ford Avenue/Hill Street and Ford Avenue/Morris Street. Additionally, streetscape improvements were constructed on Speedwell Avenue between Flagler Street and Henry Street including new sidewalks and streetlights matching the decorative style used throughout the business district.

Please share with me any feedback you may have regarding the ongoing maintenance of our road system.



The Intersection of Franklin Street and Ford Avenue

Your Feedback Is Welcome

Send questions, comments and/or suggestions for future issues to mayor@townofmorristown.org.