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Town of Morristown Newsletter From Mayor Tim Dougherty

Contact Tim directly by email at mayor@townofmorristown.org

Introducing a Newsletter for Residents...

When you walk through Morristown today it is difficult to imagine that our downtown had experienced extensive store vacancies a short time ago. During that period Morristown itself had little new construction, and many of its beautiful historic homes were in need of repair. Fortunately, we are experiencing a positive new chapter in our town's history. I would like to bring you up-to-date on some recent initiatives that will continue to make our town a vibrant, livable community. Below are five areas of interest that I receive frequent questions about.



Individual Highlights:

Speedwell Redevelopment

Transit Village

Property Taxes

Affordable Housing

CVS Pharmacy

Speedwell Avenue Redevelopment Plan

There are now four distinct phases in the Speedwell Redevelopment Plan. The first significant activity of this important project is now underway and will result in an attractive 268 rental unit (10% affordable) apartment complex located on the previous site of the public works garage, behind Early Street and Atno Avenue. The developer, Mill Creek Residential Trust LLC, broke ground in March of this year and forecasts completing this phase by Spring, 2014.

This will be the future home of new residents, who will patronize our local businesses and contribute to the continuing renaissance of Morristown.

Train Station Area Development Status



We recently secured an in-kind services grant from the American Architectural Foundation that will allow the town to re-vision and develop the area around the New Jersey Transit train station into a vibrant center of community life. The changes have already begun with the complete renovation of the train station building, which first opened its doors in 1913, and the completion of The Highlands apartment complex. Our aim is nothing less than to transform this area into a first rate Transit Village.

No Increase in Property Taxes

We have been able to stabilize property taxes during the last three years through responsible local economic policies and updating development strategies to grow our municipal tax base.

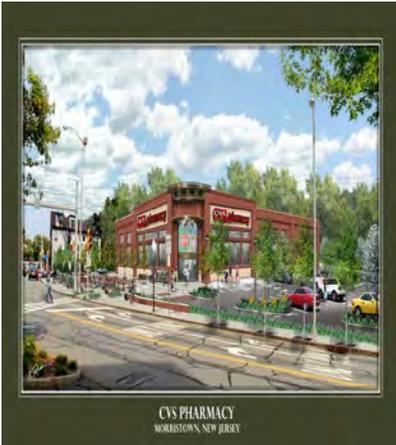
We continue to work diligently to keep taxes stabilized.

“Looking ahead, we are developing a cohesive development strategy with sustainability as its centerpiece.”

CVS Pharmacy

More recently, your town council and redevelopment board approved the building of a new CVS retail project to be located at the corner of Spring and Speedwell avenues. This will now be the fourth phase of the Speedwell Redevelopment Project. The pharmacy and retail store will replace a blighted car dealership and gas station that have been vacant for almost 30 years.

The impetus for the project was the critical need expressed by residents of two major neighborhoods for a local pharmacy. The CVS structure will be set back from the street. As part of the “greening” of the property, 71 trees will be planted and green spaces will be added near the Spring Street entrance. The project is intended to create an urban landscape that supports Speedwell Avenue redevelopment and enhances downtown Morristown.



Affordable Housing

The town has prepared and adopted its first Affordable Housing and Fair Share Plan for the creation of low and moderate income units which will also meet state guidelines. All future development projects containing eight or more units will include an affordable housing set-aside of 12.5% in accordance with the Town’s Affordable Housing Overlay Zone. We are also partnering with organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity and Homeless Solutions in replacing older, underutilized housing with attractive, low rise residential units. A tour of Martin Luther King Avenue and Abbett Avenue provides wonderful examples of the changes underway. Finally, a new apartment building now in construction located on Ridgedale Avenue has set aside 4 of its 23 units for affordable housing and, as described above, the new apartment complex that is part of Speedwell Redevelopment will devote 26 units to affordable housing.

Your Feedback Is Welcome

Please let me know if this newsletter has been helpful.

I’d also like to know what topics and issues you want more information about. Please email me at:

mayor@townofmorristown.org

with your questions and suggestions for future issues of this newsletter.