



Town of Barkhamsted
First Selectman's Newsletter
Nº. 2, July 2008



It's been 6 months since I took office and I see progress in many areas. We were able to pass a Town budget with no tax increase and, even with the slight increase in the Fire District mill rate, your total tax bills only went up a very small amount. This is great news considering fuel oil and gasoline costs, and their impact on all of us.

Capital Projects - Work has begun on several projects which were approved during the past few years. Some of these, like the new air conditioning and new windows for Town Hall, will help save energy compared to the current, ancient window air conditioners and leaky windows. In addition, we're working with Northeast Utilities to install new lighting, which will pay back in 26 months, and, which will then provide long term savings.

Road Safety - The CT DOT has installed a flashing light at the intersection of River Road (Rte 181) and Rte 44; they have put in new signs on Ripley Hill Road; and the Town has repaired the flashing light above the Elementary School. The State is studying the intersections of Rtes. 318/219 and Rtes. 179/219, which have very high accident rates. I will let you know their recommendations when the studies are complete.

Pleasant Valley Bridge - I know many of you are concerned about the condition of the Bridge. It was inspected last year and is structurally sound. CT DOT is starting the design process to define the needed repairs and the painting procedures. They will go out to bid next year, but will be unable to start the construction until April 2010. This project needs a full construction season because they must install a tent over the bridge to protect the River from lead paint and will limit bridge traffic to one lane. I wish I could report that it will happen sooner, but I have tried every trick I know to accelerate the project.

Seniors Transportation - The Northwest Connecticut Transit District provides Dial-a-Ride service several days a week for Senior Citizens. This service is free on a donation basis for people (60) or older and consists of

curb-to-curb transportation service in a paratransit van. Transportation is provided to nutrition programs, medical appointments, shopping and for other social and personal purposes. For more information, call the NWCT Transit District at 489-2535 or visit their website at <http://www.nwcttransit.com/>.

Recreation - We also have a new Recreation Director, Karen Cersoli. She's hard at work planning summer camp and is also putting together events for the coming year. I'd like to thank Debbie Brydon for her years of dedicated service as Rec Director.

Renter's Rebate Program - Francine Beland, the Tax Assessor, would like to remind you that the State Renter's Rebate Program is available for Elderly Renters and Totally Disabled persons. Income limits are \$29,800 for single individuals and \$36,500 for married; the filing period ends Sept. 15; and proof of income and expenses are required. For more information or applications, please call the Assessor's Office @ 379-3600.

Farmington River Overlay District - For those of you who live within 100 feet of the River, there are special regulations that resulted from the Farmington's West Branch being designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. Please contact Debbie Brydon at the Building Office (379-1314) for copies of the regulations before you undertake any landscaping within the 100-foot buffer.

Housing Rehabilitation Loans - The Town has over \$125,000 that was repaid by residents who received loans from an early 1990's Housing Rehabilitation program. The funding can be used for certain types of home repair projects and is intended for families with low-to-moderate incomes. The loans do not have to be repaid until the house is sold and are interest-free. We will be restarting this program in the near future and will be announcing the income requirements and eligible projects. If your house needs major repair, you may qualify for this program.

Please contact me at 379-8285, if you're interested, or if you have any other questions.

Don



**Town of Barkhamsted
67 Ripley Hill Road
Barkhamsted, CT 06063**

A FEW REMINDERS

TOWN HALL IS OPEN UNTIL 6:00 PM ON WEDNESDAYS FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE UNABLE TO CONDUCT YOUR BUSINESS WITH THE TOWN EARLIER IN THE DAY. PLEASE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS TIME, AS WE LOVE VISITORS.

TAX BILLS WERE SENT OUT THE END OF JUNE. THE FIRST INSTALLMENT IS DUE BY THE END OF JULY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL TERRI COLLINS, THE TAX COLLECTOR AT 738-4762.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET THAT DOG LICENSES MUST BE RENEWED EVERY YEAR AND WERE DUE IN JUNE. PLEASE OBTAIN YOUR DOG'S LICENSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO.

RRDD 1 PERMITS AND STANCLIFT COVE STICKERS MUST ALSO BE RENEWED BEFORE YOU CAN USE THE FACILITIES. THEY CAN BE OBTAINED AT THE LANDFILL AND AT THE COVE.

THE BUILDING OFFICE WOULD LIKE TO REMIND YOU THAT SWIMMING POOLS, EVEN THE 2-FOOT INFLATABLE POOLS, REQUIRE A PERMIT AND THE INSTALLATION OF A SAFETY FENCE. PLEASE CONTACT THE BUILDING OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS (379-1314).

THE FIRE DISTRICT WILL BE CONDUCTING TRAINING EXERCISES (ONE EACH IN JULY AND AUGUST) SIMULATING FIREFIGHTING AT THE PLEASANT VALLEY METHODIST CHURCH AND THE BARKHAMSTED SCHOOL. BOTH DRILLS WILL START AT 7:00PM. SOME DISRUPTION OF TRAFFIC MAY RESULT SINCE THEY WILL BE PUMPING WATER FROM THE EAST SIDE OF THE RIVER ACROSS THE BRIDGE AND DOWN THE ROAD. PLEASE BE ATTENTIVE TO THE FIRE POLICE DURING THE DRILLS.