



North Caldwell Community News

Welcome to our first newsletter!

There are exciting things happening in North Caldwell and we want you to know about them! From beautiful new recreational facilities to future new parks and updated infrastructure, North Caldwell is on the go. We're proud to receive so many accolades including just being named the No. 7 Best Town for Families in New Jersey. We would like to share some of the features, ongoing projects and plans for our Borough. So that we may send future newsletters to you via email, please send your email address to info@northcaldwell.org.

Property Tax Reduction

The best news is that your property tax bill for 2019 is anticipated to reflect a 16 tax point reduction! No, that's not a typo. You are getting a tax reduction. While that is certainly good news, even better news is that the North Caldwell portion of your property tax bill has not increased, not a dime, for four out of the last seven years. We are very proud of this accomplishment. Even in those few years where there was an increase, it was extremely modest. This accomplishment was achieved through countless hours of budgeting and cost cutting measures including shared services with like-minded neighboring communities. We are always on the lookout for state and federal grants, including a FEMA grant of \$78,612 we just received as well as a sizeable NJDOT Grant of \$340,000 for repaving Brookside Terrace. We will endeavor to continue our penny-pinching ways while offering the same services you expect, while constantly evaluating, improving and adding to our community services.

Walker's Pond

Better still, even greater things are on the horizon. Walker's Pond will once again be our community's crown jewel. For those we only recently welcomed to town, Walker's Pond is the 17 acre property located on Mountain Avenue at the intersection with East Greenbrook Road. For many years, its long-time owner, Woody Walker and his family, graciously welcomed the town's citizens to their skating pond and older members of our community fondly remember many nights of ice skating around a bonfire while drinking hot chocolate. We hope you and your children will soon enjoy the same experience. We are so lucky that the Walker family and the town's leaders were able to work together to achieve a sale to the Borough on extremely favorable terms so that the property could be preserved for future generations, free from developers who would forever change such a visible and treasured piece of our collective history. Whenever we can legally do so, we strive to protect as much open space as can be

achieved while keeping a tight rein on spending. Often those two goals conflict but through creative means, we have done much. An example of that is in the period when we were negotiating the purchase of Walker's Pond, we were able to retire old debt resulting in little or no appreciable effect on our current budget. The pond restoration project may also be the recipient of grant funds from the NJDEP (HDSRF) which would further reduce any possible fiscal burden. We are currently awaiting permission from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to commence the dredging of the pond to restore it to its original size and beauty. We hope work will begin on the project by this fall.

Turf Field at Liberty Park

One of our community's newest, most visible and oft-used facility is our beautiful turf field, which is being enjoyed by not only residents of all ages but by the other members of our community who are enjoying the scenic walking path which surrounds the field. We welcome all who haven't yet experienced the new Liberty Park to come and enjoy it. The project was years in the making and propelled to completion by the tremendous efforts of our terrific North Caldwell Recreation Foundation. Many thanks to them for partnering with the Borough to bring the project to fruition. Please come to take a look at the new and improved Liberty Park if you haven't already.

Green Brook

Recently, people have heard rumors about the sale of Green Brook Country Club. While the new owners have promised to run a first-rate golf club, if that cannot be achieved, and despite our fervent hope to the contrary, they have the legal ability in future years to develop the property. We have successfully negotiated a resolution of that potential through, once again, intense negotiation and court intervention, striving to lessen, as much as we legally could, the size of the development and the impact on the town.

Roadway Triangles

The three triangles in town have recently been beautified by new landscaping, including flowers and shrubs. A blinking yield sign has been installed by the County on East Greenbrook in an effort to make people see and obey the yield signs. We have asked the County to consider other improvements to safety in that area.

Development

A common misperception is that a municipality can prevent development. Unfortunately, given state affordable housing requirements, a town can try to control, but cannot prohibit development. Years of litigation, court intervention and intense negotiation reduced the potential impact on our community and delayed the current Hilltop development project over a period of greater than ten years. That development is on property previously owned and sold by the County of Essex to the developer. It would have been a much larger and more dense development but for our actions.

Affordable Housing Development

Residents also ask about our future low and moderate income housing units. We and all other New Jersey towns are required by the State of New Jersey to provide opportunities through affordable housing to those not otherwise able to afford to live in North Caldwell. Originally, the State ordered us to build approximately 900 units but through our planning professionals and other legal means, we greatly reduced what the State believed was the current need for such units in North Caldwell to 50. The five acre property upon which the units will be built was given to the town for free and the units will require no bonding or other Borough debt and will result in no municipal budget impact. Assuming they can qualify, this new neighborhood will, for example, give a recent college graduate wanting to move from home but stay close to family, or those seniors wanting to stay in town or near their grandchildren, an opportunity to live in what is otherwise an expensive place to live. These affordable units will be a beautiful and fitting addition to our community.

Climate issues and drainage

Despite all the rosy news, North Caldwell is also facing the same challenges many other communities throughout our area and the United States are experiencing with the extremely wet weather conditions which have affected so many of our neighbors and friends. A solution will not be easy. It is a problem requiring study and creative solutions. However, we have hired the experts necessary to explore our options and hope to have some concrete answers soon.

Volunteers

None of the great things going on in North Caldwell could happen without the efforts from so many volunteers on our fire department, boards, coaches and parents. That's what makes our community so special. That's what makes our town the place people want to move to. That's what makes North Caldwell the place we live, raise our families and enjoy our retirement years. If you haven't already, please consider volunteering and contact any of us to communicate your interest.

North Caldwell Police Foundation

We would be remiss not to recognize the efforts of our Police Foundation whose members have raised, through concerts, community events and plain old requests for contributions, hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy our police certain equipment and crime fighting tools our community might not be otherwise able to provide. Once again, our residents have stepped up to enhance our safety and community enjoyment.

Our Schools

While our schools are governed separately, the Mayor and Council recognize the tremendous importance of our schools to the desirability of our community, as the education of our children is one of the key factors residents often cite as motivating their decision to move here. The achievements of our Board of Education, our administrators, teachers and parent volunteers cannot be overstated.

Police, DPW and Volunteer Fire Department

We are working with our dedicated Police Department, helmed by our hard-working Chief, Mark Deuer, to enhance safety, reduce speeding and keep us safe and secure in our neighborhoods and homes. He and his department's vigilance is a critical component of our town. Our Department of Public Works can be seen around town fixing roads, maintaining our water supply system, snow plowing, making repairs, painting, improving our municipal buildings, and otherwise keeping our town beautiful. Among some recent projects were the oversight of the turf field installation, landscaping, painting of the pool facility and police department, fencing at the DPW facility and countless other jobs. Our NCFD and its Chief, John D'Ascensio, represent the best in volunteer fire services. We cannot stress enough how grateful we are for their dedication and service to our community.

Municipal Staff

We have a great municipal staff and we cannot overemphasize how much they do for all of us. We hope you'll stop by to say hello and meet them, especially our new Borough Administrator Kevin O'Sullivan, our Borough Clerk/Deputy Borough Administrator, Tami Michelotti, and our CFO, Rich Mondelli, who keeps our budget lean. We think we have the best people and we believe that when you meet them, you'll agree. You can reach them at 973-228-6410.

That's all for now. We hope to make this newsletter a regular way to let you know what's going on in your community. See you around town!

Your North Caldwell Mayor and Council
June 2019

P.S. - Please make sure to review the events listed below and tell your friends and neighbors about them.

Upcoming Community Events

Municipal Alliance Movie Nights:

Wednesday, July 10th

Wednesday, July 17th

Wednesday, July 20th

Fourth of July Fireworks

Bonnel Field, 265 Westville Avenue, West Caldwell, NJ

(sponsored, in part, by North Caldwell)

Thursday, July 4th at dusk

Town Picnic at Municipal Pool (open to all residents free of charge)

Saturday, September 7th, 1:00 – 6:00 P.M.

Mayor and Council Meetings:

Tuesday, July 16th at 6:30 P.M.

Tuesday, August 13th at 6:30 P.M.