



Mayor Brindle's Opening Remarks September 4, 2018

Good evening everyone! I hope you all had a fantastic summer. As Jim mentioned, there has been a lot happening in Town and I hope you've noticed many newly paved roads and transformations in progress at Mindowaskin Playground and Parking Lot 7.

As has become customary, I wanted to give you a brief update and status on my priorities.

NJ TRANSIT

NJ Transit issues and the Raritan Valley One seat ride initiative remain at the top of my priority list. I attended the NJT hearings in Trenton last month with Westfield resident Marty Robbins, revered for his role in the creation of NJT, who also testified. We spoke to legislators and senior staffers about the need to more equitably allocate peak one seat rides based upon increased ridership along the Raritan Valley Line. I met with Plainfield Mayor Adrian Mapp last week to hear first hand what a one seat ride would do to advance his city's economic development efforts, and we plan on sharing more information with legislators in meetings that are scheduled this month with the Raritan Valley Line Mayors Coalition. I want to give a special shout out to Sen. Tom Kean and Sen. Nick Scutari who have provided guidance, support and leadership to our Mayors Coalition.

WESTFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Regarding police matters, I met separately with Summit Police Chief Weck and Springfield Chief John Cook, Chairman of the Union County Police Chiefs Association, to discuss our search for a permanent chief and ask for the Association's guidance and input regarding best practices. Jim Gildea and I will be meeting with the Association in the coming weeks and will have more to share about the selection process after that meeting. As I stated previously, the new Chief will be someone with unquestionable character and integrity that is capable of leading the department through a cultural transformation, with an emphasis on community policing. While the search will be broad, it's important for the public to know that a new Police Chief must come from within as per State law.

MAYORS FOR OUR LIVES

I'm happy to report that the US Conference of Mayors has partnered with the March For Our Lives organization to create Mayors For Our Lives, asking Mayors to take a pledge to actively participate and promote National Voter Registration Day on September 25. I have signed the pledge and am in the process of talking to various groups about how we can ensure a successful effort to get as many new voter registrations as possible. We will be sending out more information about how you can help as soon as details are ironed out.

ICE RINK AT GUMBERT

The temporary ice rink at Gumbert is in its final planning stages before installation begins next month which will include permanent park improvements such as new sidewalks and lighting. Volunteers are

needed to work on a Promotions/Events Committee as well as an Operating Committee. We will be sending information about how to sign up this week.

MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan process is moving forward after a working group convened to evaluate the proposals that had been submitted. This group, which included Jim Gildea, Town Planner Don Sammet, Planning Board Chairman Robert Newell, Councilman LoGrippo and additional Planning Board members, will continue to assess final proposals before making a recommendation to the Planning Board. We expect the Planning Board can award a contract to a consultant on October at which time we'll be able to communicate more specifics about the consultant selected and the public input process going forward.

The deadline for submission for the Parks Strategic Plan consultant is next Wednesday. We will be able to provide a more specific update regarding next steps at the next Town Council meeting.

Tonight, we will be doing a few fun and important things. One of them is related to beer, and if the positive response to the proposed Craft Brewery Ordinance is any indication, residents will like this one too.

NEW CONSTRUCTION SITE ORDINANCE

But first, I want to bring your attention to an ordinance that we're finalizing tonight that requires fence screening around construction sites. We have heard complaints from many residents regarding concern over the unsightly and sometimes unsafe conditions of various residential and commercial construction sites. While many developers are consistently conscientious and compliant, I have spoken personally to those that are not, even meeting them on their sites to point out what is unacceptable. I am scheduling a meeting with local developers and our construction officials so that I may personally reiterate our requirements, their obligations, and the fines that will be incurred for noncompliance. Tonight's ordinance requiring fence screening is intended to contain flying dust and matter on construction sites while also making them more sightly. The Town has already installed screening as seen on the parking lot 7 site.

ADDAMSFEST/BEER GARDEN

As you may have heard, things will be getting very ookie and spookie in Town the last weekend of October as we introduce the inaugural AddamsFest, a three-day celebration of Westfield's very own Charles Addams. There will be a number of events over the weekend, one of which is the transformation of Elm and Quimby Streets into Charlie's Ale Garden on Saturday night, 10/27.

Tonight, after an advertised RFP, we are thrilled to be awarding the contract for the beer garden operation to the Harvest Restaurant Group, the parent company of Addams Tavern. It will be great to have Addams Tavern playing a major role in this signature weekend. We are also announcing a significant partnership with Lyft to provide safe and convenient travel options over the weekend and beyond.

Many thanks to Councilwoman Dawn Mackey who is Chairwoman of the event, and to the countless number of volunteers who have been putting in tireless hours pulling the weekend together. It's going

to be such a fun community celebration and I would encourage you to keep abreast of all the details by following AddamsFest on Facebook.

Have a great and safe week. Enjoy the first week of school!