



Dear Friends & Neighbors,

Project Updates:

Downtown

As I reported earlier this week, we are progressing with the downtown improvements involving the **Bank building and Train Station**.

The redevelopment agreement for the Bank building has been fully executed, the **\$1.66M Purchase and Sales agreement** has also been fully executed, and Environmental testing has been satisfactorily completed, marking the end of the environmental due diligence period. Next, the Economic Development Committee will review concept plans for the mixed-use former Bank building at 129 Hardenburgh. **The Bank building plans provide for underground parking.** Once the Committee has a concept plan to recommend, the entire Council will need to approve a plan, at a public meeting, and any necessary changes to the redevelopment plan will be adopted by the Council.

The Station restaurant coming to the Train Station is continuing its interior renovation and working with the Borough and NJ Office of Historic Preservation on the interior finishes. They are planning to open in early 2027.

Pine Terrace

In October, we will be reviewing the proposed designs for the paving of Pine Terrace, which represents the last dirt road in Demarest to be approved for paving. The paving of all dirt roads, including Pine Terrace, will be completed in the spring of 2027.

Since we have conducted robust paving programs and have now fully funded the paving of the last of the unimproved roads, I have asked the finance committee to consider prioritizing funding for drainage upgrades in the coming years' budgets - a planned pivot from paving to drainage infrastructure upgrades. As we all know, our weather has gotten more extreme, storms are more frequent and more severe, presenting a challenge to our drainage system. I believe there are many areas in town that would benefit from drainage upgrades. While we are currently working with our engineers and road department to identify the areas most in need, if you have a drainage concern that you have not spoken to us about, please reach out to ensure that we evaluate that area.

Establishment of a Dedicated Storm and Emergency Trust Fund

I have also recommended that the Finance Committee and Council, together with the Borough's financial professionals, establish a Storm and Emergency Trust Fund ("SET Fund") to ensure that the Borough has dedicated trust funds readily available when severe weather or other emergencies strike.

The **SET Fund** would be comprised of trust funds held specifically for emergency expenses, including storm cleanup, emergency repairs, hazardous tree removal, employee overtime, and other costs caused by storms and emergencies. **I have proposed that an initial \$300,000 for the SET Fund be funded from the proceeds to be received from the \$1.66M the Borough will receive from the Bank building closing.**

Most importantly, these funds would remain available for emergency use even when regular municipal department budgets are frozen or otherwise restricted. This would allow the Borough to respond immediately when an emergency occurs, with trust funds in place without delay.

Establishing the **SET Fund** is a commonsense approach to emergency preparedness: plan, set aside dedicated resources, and make sure the Borough has the financial ability to act quickly when our residents need us most.

Compounding the financial issue is that the recent storms have been very localized, which means that state and county funds are less, or not, available to help offset the costs that get passed on to our taxpayers. My expectation is that establishing the **SET Fund** will alleviate the financial pressure when storm response is necessary.

The Borough already added a provision in the 2026 budget to provide funding for **sewer and water infrastructure repairs**; an initial step to ensure that the Borough is planning ahead for storm emergencies.

Demarest Nature Center

Join the Demarest Nature Center this **Saturday, October 3rd from 12-5 at the Duck Pond for their annual Oktoberfest and Kraft Show**. In addition to crafters showcasing their work, there will be a variety of nature-themed exhibits and educational demonstrations. Take a canoe ride in the duck pond or build a birdhouse or birdfeeder for your backyard. Then stay for the live owl, raptor and amphibian exhibits. Or learn about fishing or nature photography. There will also be demonstrations on making stone tools, spinning and weaving yarn and painting. Not the nature type? Then head over to the beer garden and have a pretzel or something from one of the other food vendors while enjoying our selection of live music. **There is no better way to spend a Saturday afternoon, all while supporting your local Demarest Nature Center!**

Norsemen 12U Travel Baseball Goes Pink

The NV 12U travel baseball team is going pink this fall to raise money for 2027 team events (including the Cooperstown tournament) and for The Pink Fund (a non-profit that provides financial support to women with breast cancer). There are 2 ways to support at the link [HERE!](#)

1. **ROCK THE PINK:** Purchase custom pink Norsemen socks (\$18/pair).
2. **DONATE:** Make a fixed donation or, if you know a 12U player, pledge \$1 for every base he reaches this fall season.

Golden Seniors

New Jersey offers several property tax relief programs for eligible seniors, including ANCHOR, Senior Freeze and Stay NJ. The Demarest Golden Senior Committee is helping residents understand and apply for the benefits available to them.

The Committee will have a table at Oktoberfest this Saturday, October 3, from noon to 3 p.m. to answer questions, provide information and help residents register for free application assistance.

On Thursday, October 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Demarest Library, qualified representatives from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program will provide free help preparing the applicable property tax relief forms.

Please stop by the Committee's table on Saturday to learn more and sign up. Information about the state's property tax relief programs is also available at [New Jersey's property tax relief website](#).

United Methodist Church at Demarest

The Church will host Homecoming Community Sunday on **October 4 at 10:00 am**. All are welcome to enjoy music, an inspiring message and fellowship. UMC Demarest, 109 Hardenburgh Ave, [201-768-4355](#)

On Saturday, **October 10, at 5:00 pm**, United Methodist Church at Demarest will host a free concert and dinner event. Mission Choir is a 40-voice mixed choir serving churches and communities through music. All are welcome. No RSVP is required. UMC Demarest 109 Hardenburgh Ave, Demarest [201-768-4355](#)

Demarest Library

Join us on **Monday, October 5th from 6:00 - 7:15 PM** for a special opportunity to meet this month's monthly art exhibition photographer, Joe Corrado, in person! Learn about the inspiration/story behind his photographs and discuss his latest work. Register [here!](#)

Join us at the library on **Wednesday, October 7th from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM** for a presentation on Breast Cancer presented by the Center for Discovery & Innovation, a Member of Hackensack Meridian Health. During this program, patrons will learn about breast health, the importance of screenings, and other resources and information. Register [here!](#)

Join clinical neuropsychologist and author **Dr. Katie Davis on Thursday, October 8th from 6:30 - 7:30 PM**, for a conversation about her new book, *Actually, You're Fine*. Dr. Davis will discuss why parents have become so quick to view ordinary childhood challenges through a diagnostic lens, how to tell the difference between a problem that requires intervention and one that may resolve with time and support, and how parents can resist the pressure to optimize every aspect of their children's lives. Following a brief introduction to the book and its ideas, Dr. Davis will take questions from the audience about parenting, child development, diagnoses, school, behavior, and more. Register [here!](#)

Diwali 2026 is finally here! On **Saturday, October 24th from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM**, all are welcome to come celebrate Diwali with the Demarest Library! Join us for a family friendly event with food, dance performance, henna (sponsored by the Friends of The Demarest Library), crafts, storytime, and more. This will take place at the Demarest Library! Register [here!](#)

Have a great weekend,

Mayor Brian K. Bernstein

*My Friday emails to the residents are now reaching **1,248 people!** My goal is for every Demarest resident to be up to date on what is going on around town, please help with that goal by forwarding this email to your friends so they can visit demarestnj.gov and sign up for my weekly emails! The link can be found about halfway down the homepage.*

Borough of Demarest | 118 Serpentine Rd. | Demarest, NJ 07627 US

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