



Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ



January 2021

Somerset Patriots Bring NY Yankees to Regional Center

The Somerset Patriots, six time Atlantic League champions, have become the Double-A minor league affiliate of the New York Yankees.



As a member of the Eastern Division of the Eastern League, the Patriots will compete against teams from

Hartford, CT; New Hampshire; Portland, ME; Reading, PA; Richmond, VA; Akron, OH; Altoona, PA; Binghamton, NY; Bowie, MD; Erie, PA; and Harrisburg, PA.



Since opening TD Bank Ballpark in 1999, the Patriots have welcomed over 7.5 million fans, averaging over 5,200 per game. The team has paid over \$21.1 million to Somerset County, maintaining taxpayer neutrality, while donating over \$5.5 million to charity.

Raritan Completes Master Plan Circulation Plan Element

The Borough Council recently adopted the Circulation Plan Element of the Master Plan that includes the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Plan.

The Plan was developed from input at four neighborhood meetings that assessed pedestrian safety throughout the Borough. The initiative was funded through a Regional Center Partnership Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Challenge Grant and will be awarded the American Planning Association-NJ Chapter 2020 Outstanding Planning Award.

Regional Center Mayors Look to 2021

Highlights of the 2021 Mayor addresses at the reorganization meetings:

Bridgewater Mayor Matt Moench

Take a fresh ddep look at the master plan for Bridgewater’s future; Update the open space and recreation master plan; Website upgrade for greater transparency; New focus to help curtail drug abuse; Expand “Shop Bridgewater” program.



Raritan Mayor Zachery Bray

Mayor Bray focused his remarks on his gratitude to the Borough Council, employees, and citizens of Raritan for surviving a time that will “go down in history as one of the strangest, most difficult, and stressful years in modern history.” He paid tribute to the hundreds of Raritan citizens who contracted COVID-19 and the 17 who passed away.



Somerville Mayor Dennis Sullivan

Divert Route 28 to Veterans Memorial Drive to free up local use of Main Street for Borough activities; Collect taxes or payments in lieu of taxes on non-profit and county propertities; Relocate the Motor Vehicle Commission office on Roosevelt Place; Construct a solar farm on the former landfill site on Route 206.



RWJUH Somerset Launches “Pay It Forward” Campaign

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset (RWJUH), an RWJBarnabas Health facility, has launched a “Pay It Forward” campaign to give back to the community for its support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hospital employees are encouraged to support the local restaurants who supported them during the height of the pandemic. Employees will present “Heroes Eat Here” thank you cards at the restaurants they patronize for take-out or dining in. This program follows “Pay It Forward” Fridays when employees ordered take-out meals from a designated restaurant each week for delivery to the hospital. In addition, the hospital has presented the restaurants with a “Heroes Eat Here” certificate to display in public recognition of their support.

Since last March, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset has received nearly \$400,000 in food donations from our community.

Somerville to Increase Online Presence

Somerville Borough Council has agreed to create the position of social media coordinator to increase the Borough’s presence on various social media platforms. They have also agreed to establish a YouTube channel so that meetings can be accessed by the public at any time. Determination on how to proceed will be addressed in the coming months.

Somerville Mixed-Use Development Moves Ahead

Somerset Development, amid the construction of a 156-unit townhome community in proximity to the



Somerville Train Station, has sold a 15-acre tract to AvalonBay Communities, Inc. to build a civic center, retail, public plaza, NJ Transit parking deck, and a 374-unit apartment community on South Bridge Street. A new road off Route 206 will be constructed to access the property.

County Planning Announces Awards

The Somerset County Planning Board announced the recipients of the annual Land Development and Planning Awards. The recognition is given for superior site design, addressing contemporary planning issues, and having a positive influence on the aesthetic character of the county.

Regional Center projects recognized include:

Bridgewater Township Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Travel Plan: Safe Routes to Schools, Parks, and Trails - that identified potential engineering and infrastructure improvements;

SOMA Luxury Apartments in Somerville - for its

attractive architecture and design elements, the substantial environmental cleanup, and easy access to downtown Somerville and the Somerville Train Station.

Bridgewater Among Best Places to Retire

Money Magazine has selected Bridgewater Township the eighth best place to retire in America. The designation is based on data including housing, climate, and safety.

Among the major draws cited are Washington Valley Park with trails for hiking and biking, the reservoir that is open for fishing, and the Hawk Watch. Other amenities recognized are Green Knoll Golf Course, nearby Neshanic Valley Golf Course, and the Somerset Patriots, Double-A affiliate of the New York Yankees.

Bridgewater Launches Road Improvement Website

Bridgewater Township has launched a website, www.ourBWroads.com, a website that serves as a one-stop shop for information, updates, and feedback on road improvement projects in the Township.

The site includes a message from the Mayor, frequently asked questions, an interactive map, a list of active and future projects, and a feedback portal.

RWJ University Hospital Somerset - "A" Safety Grade

For the fourth year, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset received an "A" grade in hospital safety for 2020 according to the Leapfrog Group. RWJ Somerset is one of 25 New Jersey hospitals earning the top grade.

Restaurants & Apartment Proposed for Train Station

Somerville is entertaining a proposal to convert the historic train station on Veterans Memorial Drive into three restaurants on the ground floor with an apartment on the second floor. The building was previously occupied by an attorney. The borough Planning Board is continuing to work out the details of the project.

Bridgewater Institutes Virtual Reality Training

The Bridgewater Police Department has begun using a virtual reality system to train officers in how to handle a potentially dangerous situation.

The Street Smarts virtual reality system utilizes hundreds of scenarios to provide real-life scenarios for officers.

Community Calendar

REGIONAL CENTER MEETING DATES

The Regional Center Partnership meetings are held virtually utilizing the Zoom application. To participate in the January 20, 2021 meeting beginning at 5:00 P.M.

Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89783968613>

Meeting ID: 897 8396 8613

One tap mobile

+1-929-205-6099 Access Code:

89783968613#

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, May 19, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, July 21, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

Thursday, September 9, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, November 10, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

LINKS TO REGIONAL CENTER

COMMUNITY EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Bridgewater:

<https://www.bridgewaternj.gov>

Raritan:

<https://www.raritanboro.org>

Somerville:

<http://www.somervillenj.org/content/4060/4459/default.aspx#gsc.tab=0>

<http://www.downtownsomerville.com/>

Somerset County

<https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/about/calendar>

Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ

Bridgewater Township, Raritan Borough, Somerville Borough

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