



# THE REGIONAL CENTER

Winter  
2017-2018

BRIDGEWATER • RARITAN • SOMERVILLE

A partnership for a better tomorrow

IN SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

## INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION RESULTS IN VETERAN'S PARK

Veterans Park on West Somerset Street in Raritan Borough was officially dedicated in early September. The project is the result of efforts by the Somerset County Freeholders, Somerset County Park Commission, Raritan



Borough, and local veteran's organizations including the Basilone Parade Committee. The park is adjacent to the statue of World War II hero John Basilone and consists of a semi-circle of nine flags representing the U.S., New Jersey, Somerset County and the branches of the service. Three monuments recognize veterans from Raritan Borough and a plaque memorializes borough citizens killed in action during World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

## TOOLKIT SUPPORTS THE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT OF TALENT

A presentation by Mike Kerwin, President/CEO of the Somerset County Business Partnership (SCBP), at the July Regional Center Partnership (RCP) meeting, focused on the recently launched Somerset County Employer Toolkit.

Developed by Somerset County Tourism with a team including SCBP, RCP, Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC), Somerset County Park Commission (SCPC), the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB), and representatives of the private sector, the Toolkit combines information on Somerset County tourism, workforce development, and economic development for visitors, residents, employers, and employees.

The Toolkit was developed to satisfy the need for a package of materials to support efforts to attract and retain a talented workforce and address the universal competitiveness challenge. The content includes information that is important to prospective employees and visitors.

Included in the Employer Toolkit is the Somerset County Destination Guide, the new [www.VisitSomersetNJ.org](http://www.VisitSomersetNJ.org) tourism website, a promotional video, and a points of interest map, all of which have been carefully designed to incorporate information that is relevant to those looking to attract talent, live, work, or learn in the County. Highlights of the website include a user-friendly design; featured "Live, Work, & Learn" content; integration of social media platforms, Trip Advisor reviews; an interactive map; a personalized trip planner; and a language translation tool. The Toolkit simplifies the process of delivering relevant information to residents, employers, and visitors.

Kerwin noted that tourism is a \$1.2 billion industry in Somerset County, employing 20,000+ people. 70% of visits to the County are business related.

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## HISTORIC SITES IN THE REGIONAL CENTER

The Somerset County Regional Center communities have a rich history dating back as far as the Colonial period and the Revolutionary War. Somerset County is among America's oldest, having received its charter on May 22, 1688.

The Regional Center's historic sites include:

### BRIDGEWATER

#### **Van Horne House, 941 East Main Street**

Used at various times by Generals Lincoln, Stirling, Lee, and Cornwallis, the house was an integral part of the Battle of Bound Brook. Owned by Somerset County, it is the headquarters of the Heritage Trail Association.

#### **Van Veghten House, 9 Van Veghten Road**

The house served as the headquarters for Quartermaster General Nathaniel Green during the winter of 1778- 1779 with an entire division of American troops near the house. It is now headquarters of the Somerset County Historic Society.

#### **Middlebrook Encampment, Middlebrook Road**

(located near the Regional Center) Washington's Continental Army of 5,000 troops camped there in the early summer of 1777 and the winter of 1778-1779. At the Washington Campground Association lands, the Declaration of Independence is read yearly in a public ceremony on July 4th.

### RARITAN

#### **Relief Hose Company No. 2 Engine House, 16 Anderson Street**

Completed in 1894, the structure includes a 3-story hose tower and delicate stained glass windows. The building has served the Raritan community in numerous capacities.

#### **General John Frelinghuysen House (Raritan Public Library), Somerset Street**

Originally constructed in 1750, the house was the homestead of the Frelinghuysen family. General John Frelinghuysen was an attorney who served as a Brigadier General during the War of 1812 and was

later the Surrogate of Somerset County.

#### **Nevius Street Bridge**

The Nevius Street Bridge is a three-hundred-foot-long, two-span, double-intersection Pratt through-truss bridge fabricated by the Wrought Iron Bridge Company in Canton Ohio. Constructed in 1888, it is one of the least altered metal-truss highway bridges in the county and is now a pedestrian-only bridge.

#### **Raritan Station, Thompson Street**

Constructed in the early 1890's, the station is a fine example of Richardsonian Romanesque style with Gothic elements.



### SOMERVILLE

#### **Daniel Robert House (Somerville Borough Hall)**

Constructed in 1888 in the Gothic Revival style, the Daniel Robert House was designed by architects Lambert and Bunnell of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

#### **Old Dutch Parsonage, 65 Washington Place**

Built in 1751 for the Reverend John Frelinghuysen, theological classes taught in the building were the beginning of Queens College and later Rutgers University. It is now a State Historic Site.

#### **St. John's Episcopal Church Complex, 154-158 West High Street**

Constructed in 1895 in the Early English Gothic Style, it features elaborate ironwork on the front and side doors and stained glass windows by Tiffany.

#### **J. Harper Smith House, 228 Altamont Place**

Constructed in 1880, the three -story High Victorian Eclectic house was home to the superintendent of the Raritan Mills and is privately owned.

#### **Somerset County Court House Green, 35 East Main Street**

The Green is composed of three structures; the Court House, the Lord Memorial Fountain, and the First Dutch Reformed Church. The 1909 Court House is a fine example of Beaux-Arts Classicism with a coffered dome rotunda with lead glass oculus. The First Reformed Church is a free interpretation of

## HAMPTON INN OPENS IN REGIONAL CENTER

A 133-room Hampton Inn and Suites has recently opened on westbound Route 22 in Bridgewater.

The hotel is designed with amenities to meet the needs of business travelers, residents and their families, and visitors including a heated indoor pool, fitness center, meeting space, business center, 24-hour snack shop, and Wi-Fi throughout the hotel.

## AMAZING THINGS TOOLKIT PROVIDED TO MUNICIPALITIES

The Amazing Things Toolkit, a comprehensive marketing initiative that focuses on the benefits, amenities, and advantages available to Somerset County businesses and residents in and near the Somerset County Regional Center, has been provided to the three municipal governments for use at their discretion.



Prepared on multiple DVDs and thumb drives, the Toolkit “Amazing Things” is a marketing tool to support the business attraction and retention needs of developers, realtors, human resource professionals, educators, residential and commercial real estate professionals, economic development professionals, and others who desire to explain the benefits of the county and communities in the heart of Central New Jersey.

## REGIONAL CENTER ALIGNS WITH HEALTHIER SOMERSET

Rebecca Perkins, President & CEO of The Perkins Partnership, a public policy consulting firm, addressed the Regional Center Partnership on the subject of Healthier Somerset, a coalition created seven years ago to improve the health and well-being of everyone who lives and works in Somerset County.

Healthier Somerset consists of 50 members representing various public, private and non-profit entities and organizations including Sanofi, RWJ Barnabas Health, Somerset County Library, Somerset County Business Partnership and Somerset County government. The coalition’s goals are to engage Somerset County in active participation in good health habits; increase access to choices that promotes healthy lifestyles; and promote policy changes that improve health, including physical, mental and emotional health and economic well-being.

Healthier Somerset has had an integral role in preparing the annual Somerset County Community Health Plan (CHIP) and Somerset County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Additionally they have developed a three-year strategy to combat obesity; mental health and addictions; chronic diseases; and barriers to health and wellness resources.

Healthier Somerset administers two grant programs for municipalities that have adopted a complete streets policy. Somerville has used grants to purchase and locate bike racks at strategic locations. Bridgewater, also a recipient of a grant, will use the grant funding for a bike repair station and bike racks at Chimney Rock Park.

At the conclusion of Ms. Perkins presentation, the Regional Center Partnership unanimously agreed to join Healthier Somerset.

For information visit Healthier Somerset at <http://healthiersomerset/org>.

## HISTORIC SITES IN THE REGIONAL CENTER (cont.)

an English Gothic church. The Fountain was designed by John Russell Pope who also designed the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC.

### Somerville Fire Museum, 15 North Doughty Street

Constructed in 1888, it housed the West End Hose Company. It features the original colored glass window, one-over-one sash windows, and brick arch with granite keystone engraved “West End Hose, 1888.”

### Wallace House, 38 Washington Place

The eight-room Dutch framed Georgian dwelling, built in 1776, was General Washington’s headquarters from December, 1778 to June, 1779. Visitors to the home included James Monroe, General Knox, Benedict Arnold, Alexander Hamilton, Baron Von Steuben, and Lord and Lady Stirling. It is now a State Historic Site.



## **STEEPLECHASE CANCER CENTER CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY**

The Steeplechase Cancer Center, located at 30 Rehill Avenue in Somerville, is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2017.

An affiliate of RWJ Barnabas Health, the Center provides comprehensive cancer services within a calm, compassionate, patient-focused environment.

## **MUNICIPAL UPDATES**

### **BRIDGEWATER**

Zoning changes are in place to move forward on an 8-story executive Marriott AC hotel on the Somerset Corporate Center fronting on Route 202/206 across from the Bridgewater Commons. Plans are for a rooftop lounge. Also on the site will be a Lifetime Fitness Center fronting on Commons Way.

The former Fudrucker restaurant on Route 22 west will be converted to a Hunterdon Healthcare drop-in medical center.

### **RARITAN**

A proposal has been submitted for construction of a 9,710 square foot retail building on Route 202 northbound between North 2nd Avenue and Anderson Street.

The Borough has launched a new and more easily navigated website at [www.raritanboro.org](http://www.raritanboro.org).

### **SOMERVILLE**

The Planning Board has approved the Litco site plan calling for 179 rental units south of Fairview Avenue. Also approved and under construction is the 69 rental unit development on South Bridge Street at the former Richard Fuel Oil site. The four-story development will include studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments.

The New Jersey Water Supply Authority and local Boy Scout Troops completed a planting project along Peter's Brook.

Somerville has received a \$140,000 Green Acres grant for improvements to Arthur Chambres Park on Southside Avenue.

## **2017 REGIONAL CENTER PARTNERSHIP**

Chair: Troy Fischer  
Vice-Chair: Jason Dameo  
Treasurer: Freeholder Deputy Director Patrick Scaglione  
Secretary: James Ruggieri (non-voting position)

### **At-large Private/Institutional Sector Representatives**

Troy Fischer, Chair, Senior General Manager,  
Bridgewater Commons\*  
Jason Dameo, General Manager, Dameo Companies\*  
Anthony Tufaro, Site Facilities Manager, Ethicon,  
Somerville  
Victoria Allen, Vice-president, Strategic Marketing,  
Southern Region, RWJ Barnabas Health

### **Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders**

Freeholder Deputy Director Patrick Scaglione\*  
(Patricia Walsh, Freeholder Alt.\*)

### **Somerset County Planning Board**

Bernie Navatto, Chair, Somerset County Planning Board  
Walter Lane, Director of Planning, Somerset County

### **Bridgewater Township**

Mayor Daniel J. Hayes, Jr.\*  
Councilman Filipe Pedroso  
Scarlett Doyle, Township Planner  
Henry E. Reynolds, Jr., local private/institutional  
representative

### **Raritan Borough**

Mayor Charles McMullin\*  
Councilman Nicholas Carra  
Angela Knowles, Borough Planner  
Local private/institutional representative - vacant

### **Somerville Borough**

Mayor Brian Gallagher\*  
Councilman Jason Kraska  
Lisa Werner, Planning Board Vice-Chair  
Rick St. Pierre, local private/institutional representative

### **Somerset County Business Partnership**

Michael Kerwin, President/CEO  
(John Maddocks, Alternate)

### **Somerset County Park Commission**

Ray Brown, Secretary/Executive Director  
(Cynthia Sullivan, Alternate)

\*RCP Executive Committee member