



# Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ



September, 2020

## Raritan Launches Downtown Economic Development Initiative

Downtown Raritan is asking the community for input as it develops the Downtown Raritan Sustainable Economic Development Plan. The Plan will include actionable steps to promote commercial activity, enhance residential development and better leverage the natural and open spaces.

With a completion date of July, 2021, residents are invited to take an online



*Outdoor dining on Somerset Street, Raritan*

survey, and attend an online public workshop. Details are available at [www.DowntownRaritan.com](http://www.DowntownRaritan.com). Funding is provided by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority.

## Rain Barrel Rebate Program

The Somerset County Regional Center Partnership, utilizing a grant from the NJ Water Supply Authority, announced that the 2020 Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate program for homeowners in Bridgewater, Raritan, and Somerville is accepting rebate applications for the 9th consecutive year.

Rebates are available in the amount of \$50 for new 40- to 70-gallon rain barrels and \$100 for those that hold more than 70-gallons. Detailed information can be found at [www.rcpsomersetnj.org](http://www.rcpsomersetnj.org), or by email to [rainbarrel@raritanbasin.org](mailto:rainbarrel@raritanbasin.org).

## One-Seat Ride Report Presents Options

NJ Transit commissioned a study of the Raritan Valley Line (RVL) "one-seat" ride to New York Penn Station.

The final report presented five scenarios for establishing the "one-seat" ride during morning commute hours. Currently, commuters on the line have to change trains in Newark.

**#1** - Allow three RVL trains to enter New York Penn Station before 7:00 A.M. or after 9:20 A.M.

**#2** - Have three Northeast Corridor and two North Jersey Coast Line trains end at Newark to allow three RVL trains to provide direct service between 7:00 A.M. and 9:20 A.M.

**#3** - Have two Northeast Corridor trains end in Newark to allow four RVL trains between 7:00 A.M. and 9:20 A.M.

**#4** - Same as #3 with the addition of weekend service.

**#5** - Full implementation of the Gateway Tunnel Plan.

Capital costs of the programs range from \$125 million to \$30 billion. The report will continue to be vetted by NJ Transit and government officials.

## Superfund Clean-Up Progresses

The preliminary stages of clean-up of acid tar has been completed at the American Cyanamid site off East Main Street in Bridgewater. Approximately 500 tons of the estimated 44,700 tons of toxic material has been removed.

In addition, about 2.3 million gallons of contaminated liquid will be collected and treated. The project is expected to take three to four years to complete.

## Somerville Expands Al Fresco Dining

Outdoor dining in Somerville has expanded beyond the curb with the installation of "parklets," raised platforms erected in front of many local restaurants.

Parklets currently are located in front of de Martino's, da Fillipo, Kyma, Arusuval, Savor, Cafe Picasso, Venetial Grill/Central Pizza, and Alfonso's.

## Regional Center Company Has Major Impact on COVID-19

Regional Center of Somerset County corporate neighbor, Raritan-based Ortho Clinical Diagnostics, introduced its coronavirus antibody test that detects antibodies that can be used to indicate an immune response to the virus. The test may be used to better track and understand the spread of the virus and may aid in the diagnosis of suspected Covid-19 patients.

## PM Pediatrics Opens in Bridgewater

PM Pediatrics, a pediatric urgent care provider treating children and young adults exclusively, has opened its newest location at 966 Route 22 East in Bridgewater.

The new office features a child-friendly jungle theme with colorful murals and designs, and televisions with children's programming in each room.

Staff is experienced in Pediatric emergency and urgent care medicine.

## Somerset County is Best to Raise a Family

Somerset County has been selected as the “Best County to Raise a Family in New Jersey” by Stacker.com, a quality of life, data driven web site. The selection was based on a review of diversity, populations, abundant natural recreational beauty, education, and more. Stacker.com selects one county in each state.

## Bridgewater Renames Park

The Bridgewater Township Council adopted a resolution renaming Somerville Manor Park (aka Hobbstown Park) on Monmouth Avenue to David and Phillip Miller Park.

The name change is part of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Hobbstown and to honor brothers David and Phillip Miller for their influence upon generations of local youth.

## Somerset Patriots Owner Elected to NJ Hall of Fame

Steve Kalafer, businessman, philanthropist, and founding owner of the Somerset Patriots is a 2019-2020 inductee into the NJ Hall of Fame.

Inducted in the Enterprise Category, he joins Robert Wood Johnson, Leon Hess, J. Seward Johnson, Malcom and Steve Forbes, among others.

The induction ceremony will be a pre-recorded virtual event on Sunday, October 18, 2020.

## America’s Best Contacts & Eyeglasses Opens in Raritan

America’s Best Contacts & Eyeglasses has opened in the Somerville Circle Shopping Center in Raritan.

America’s Best is part of National Vision, one of the largest and fastest-growing optical retailers in the United States.

## RWJ/Somerset Thanks COVID-19 Supporters

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset has launched a “Pay It Forward” campaign to give back to the community for its supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hospital employees are encouraged to support local restaurants who supported them by presenting a “Heroes Eat Here” thank you card certificates when patronizing for take-out or outdoor dining. In addition, every Friday employees will order take-out from a designated restaurant for delivery to the hospital.

## Somerville Parc Apartments Open

The first phase of the Somerville Parc apartments off James street at the southeastern corner of the borough opened with 88 one- and two-bedroom units. The opening for Phase 2 with 92 units has been postponed due to fire.

Amenities include an indoor pool, indoor dog park, concierge service, fitness studio, a community lounge with bar, gaming tables, and a “work-at-home” lobby area.

## Business Partnership Offers Help to Local Restaurants

The Somerset County Business Partnership (SCBP) and Somerset County Tourism introduced a program to aid local restaurants that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The “Somerset County, NJ Restaurant Marketing Grant” program is providing restaurants with in-kind value of \$500 worth of marketing and promotional opportunities including • A one-hour marketing strategy consultation; • A featured listing on the Somerset County Tourism website at [www.VisitSomersetNJ.org](http://www.VisitSomersetNJ.org); • A listing in the Somerset County Business Partnership Directory; • Inclusion in marketing email blasts to the 10,000 subscriber base; • Posts to the SCBP and Somerset County Tourism social media accounts. The program is open to SCBP member and non-member restaurants operating in Somerset County.

## Somerville Auto Charging Station

Utilizing a grant from PSEG Foundation, a ChargePoint EV station has been installed in Parking Lot #1 between Maple and North Davenport Streets. Fee is \$.50 per hour with a four hour maximum.

## Community Calendar

### REGIONAL CENTER MEETING DATES

The Regional Center Partnership meetings are held virtually utilizing the Zoom application. To participate in the September 16, 2020 meeting beginning at 5:00 P.M.

#### Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86706351718>  
Meeting ID: 867 0635 1718  
One tap mobile  
+19292056099,,86706351718# US-(NY)

#### Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday, September 16, 2020 @ 5:00 P.M.  
Thursday, November 12, 2020 @ 5:00 P.M.  
Wednesday, January 20, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

### LINKS TO REGIONAL CENTER

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS & PROGRAMS

#### Bridgewater:

<https://www.bridgewaternj.gov/>  
#<https://www.bridgewaternj.gov/recreation-calender/>

#### Raritan:

[https://www.raritanboro.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/36913-Raritan-Calendar\\_Web.pdf](https://www.raritanboro.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/36913-Raritan-Calendar_Web.pdf)

#### Somerville:

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

## Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County, NJ

Bridgewater Township, Raritan Borough, Somerville Borough

Contact: Somerset County Planning Board • Post Office Box 3000, Somerville, New Jersey 08876

Phone: 908-231-7021 • [www.rcpsomersetnj.org](http://www.rcpsomersetnj.org) • [info@rcpsomersetnj.org](mailto:info@rcpsomersetnj.org)