

## MEMORANDUM

To: Residents of Lower Merion Township, Ward 3

From: Michael McKeon, Ward 3 Commissioner (email: [mmckeon@lowermerion.org](mailto:mmckeon@lowermerion.org))

Re: Lower Merion Township, Ward 3 Report #36

Date: Dec. 1, 2019

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### CURRENT EVENTS

#### ST. JUSTIN CASE (?)



*The plans call for overnight parking of buses and vehicles (fenced with gates) and a 1,500 sq foot trailer building. The former Church building will remain in place.*

On Nov. 18, the LM School Board voted to fund a \$40,000 exploratory plan to provide potential overnight bus parking at the site of the former **St. Justin's Church** by Welsh Valley Middle School. The School District stated that the parking may be required to accommodate the additional busing needs (12-20 buses) which would be necessary if new school start times are implemented in the Fall of 2020. The School Board rejected the Penn Valley Civic's request to delay the vote pending further investigation of busing needs. **The Penn Valley Civic supports new school start times** but is concerned about the impact of a large bus depot on the community. The LM School District purchased St. Justin's in 2013. The LM School District issued a study in 2014 which concluded "Welsh Valley is not recommended for bus parking," although at that time new start times were not contemplated. **NO** plan is before the Township at this time.

#### BELMONT HILLS LIBRARY UPDATE

The Belmont Hills Library has been open 5 days a week. All other Township libraries are open 6 or 7 days per week. **I am excited to report that the Township has authorized a pilot program in the 2020 budget whereby the Belmont Hills Library would be open for a 6<sup>th</sup> day.** This would likely entail 5 hours on **Friday afternoons**. The total cost for the year is projected to be slightly more than **\$6,250**. Based on the framework, children will be able to use the library as a safe haven after school on Fridays. The Township has received numerous communications from civic associations and residents expressing their support for this plan. Please continue to support this plan. The final budget vote will occur on December 18, 2019.

#### SLOWER MERION!

Belmont Hills residents are submitting a traffic calming petition for **Ashland Avenue** to reduce speeding and increase safety. **MORE SIGNATURES ARE NEEDED**. If you live **on Ashland** and have not signed the petition but want to sign it, please contact me ASAP!

**FIRE BOMBER CAUGHT!**



On Nov. 20, the Township presented commendations to **Norristown Fire Chief Thomas O'Donnell** and his **K-9 partner Kindle**, for catching the person responsible for two firebombing incidents in Belmont Hills and Bala Cynwyd. Thank you for getting this dangerous person off our streets!

On Nov. 20, 2019 the Board of Commissioners voted to amend the Ardmere MUST height ordinance to generally **limit building height to 39 feet**. The prior limit was 78 feet. The goal is to reduce residential overdevelopment. Although we are in the process of adopting a new zoning code, we previously adopted ordinances to reduce residential overdevelopment in City Ave (Dec. 2018) and Rock Hill Rd (Jan. 2019) and we are hopeful that these three ordinances will reduce future residential overdevelopment. By law, the ordinances can only be applied to plans which are made *after* the ordinances are adopted.

**FLAT ROCK ROAD PARKING**



Due to significant resident feedback and safety concerns of crowded streets, the Township installed “No Parking” signs on **Flat Rock Rd** last year to restrict parking. If you live or park on Flat Rock, **please observe parking rules**. The police have limited resources to patrol this area to enforce the signs. If you view violations, I recommend that you contact the police. It is human nature that people park by each other, and one violation can lead to dozens.



**HARB MEETING RE: 38 WEST LANCASTER AVE- ARDMORE THEATRE**



The Historical Architecture Review Board (“HARB”) will convene on Dec. 3 to review a colossal 7-story apartment application for the former Ardmere theatre. Public comment is permitted but should address historical issues. Comments can also be emailed to: [GPrichard@lowermerion.org](mailto:GPrichard@lowermerion.org). Meeting details are:

**Lower Merion Township Building  
75 Lancaster Ave., 2nd Floor Board Room  
December 3 at 8:15a.m.**



Sad news, as Belmont Hills Elementary School 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher **Michelle Florian** passed away during the weekend of Nov. 23 at the age of 52. Ms. Florian joined the LM School District in 1999. Ms. Florian loved reading and discussing literature and will be remembered for her random acts of kindness. She is survived by her husband and two children. Ms. Florian’s obituary is here:

<https://www.stretchfuneralhome.com/obituary/MICHELLE-MARIE-FLORIAN/Havertown-Pennsylvania/1862987>

**GAS MAIN WORK:** Beginning on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, **N Woodbine Avenue** will be **closed** for new gas main and service installations. Work will be between Conshohocken State Rd and the Township Transfer Station driveway between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm. Emergency vehicles, residents, and school buses will not have through access during the work hours. However, residents and vehicles will have access to all properties on N Woodbine from either side of the work zone. The main pipe installation should take about 3-4 weeks with new services being connected once all main work in the area is completed.

In the early morning hours of Nov. 27, firefighters from Belmont Hills and Gladwyne were dispatched to the Schuylkill Expressway at Belmont Ave to assist an ambulance. Once on the scene, firefighters found a worker who had fallen approximately 30-40 feet from a bridge. Now a rescue, Penn Wynne and George Clay fire companies were called to assist. More than 40 firefighters, policemen, and paramedics worked together on a system of ropes and ladders to rescue the worker.



**ROCK HILL ROAD APARTMENT PROJECT(S)**

Two apartment projects were recently planned for Rock Hill Rd. Developer Hanover sought to construct a **332-unit, 5 story project** at **131/151 Rock Hill Rd**, but it abandoned the project. It is possible that a new project may spring up at that location, and if you are concerned about the site, please keep an eye out for activity. A **34-unit, 5 story project** is planned for **21 Rock Hill Rd**.

**COLLEGE PARK ZONING UPDATE:** The Township is in the process of adopting a new form-based zoning code, and as part of that process we are making course corrections to the draft code which our consultants proposed. Our consultants proposed MDR1 (Medium Density Residential 1) zoning for 5 homes on **Conshohocken State Rd (705, 707, 709, 711 and 713)**. This would permit homeowners to convert their single homes into duplexes/twins, which would be out of character with the block and also cause the area to be too dense. We have revised the code to convert these 5 properties to **LDR4** (Low Density Residential 4), which is for single homes, and is a better fit for the neighborhood. My home is among the 5 affected homes on this block, and I wholly support this change to LDR4.



**JEFFERSON STREET** underwent water main construction and patching this year. It is scheduled to be repaved in 2020. The Township will monitor the road throughout the winter and make repairs if needed. If you see a pot hole, large depression, cracking etc., please report the issue to LM public works.

**CRIME & POLICE ACTIVITY REPORT** Below is a summary of recent police activity in Ward 3:

Date	Type	Location	Comments
11/16/19	Dangerous Act	Maple Ave/Rock Hill Rd	Illegal Hunting
11/19/19	Vehicle Accident	Belmont & Jefferson	
11/19/19	Vehicle Accident	Belmont & Jefferson	
11/22/19	Family Disturbance	School Street	Domestic
11/24/19	Vehicle Accident	Belmont & Rock Hill	
11/25/19	Vehicle Accident	Belmont & I-76 Interchange	
11/26/19	Vehicle Accident	Hagys Ford	On private property

**PLEASE LOCK YOUR CAR DOORS!** Theft from unlocked vehicles is a big issue in the Township.

**UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Dec 2	6:30-7:45 p.m.	<b>Belmont Hills Civic Assoc. Meeting</b> , Belmont Hills Library <a href="http://belmonthillscivic.org/">http://belmonthillscivic.org/</a>
Dec 3	9-11 a.m.	<b>Coffee with a Cop</b> , Starbucks, 766 Lancaster Ave, Bryn Mawr No agenda- Just a chance to ask questions and talk to an officer
Dec 3	8:15 a.m.	<b>HARB Meeting re: Ardmore Theater</b> , LM Township Bldg <a href="https://www.lowermerion.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/11700/426">https://www.lowermerion.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/11700/426</a>
Dec 4	7:00 p.m.	<b>Penn Valley Civic Meeting</b> , Penn Valley Elementary School Library w/ State Rep Mary Jo Daley <a href="http://www.pennvalleycivic.org/">http://www.pennvalleycivic.org/</a>
Dec 4	5:55 p.m.	<b>LM Township Meetings re: Budget and Capital Improvement Plan</b> Public Works, Finance, Building & Planning Committees and Special Board of Commissioners Meeting
Dec 7	11:30 a.m.	<b>NAACP Freedom Fund Luncheon</b> , Mt Zion Church, Devon
Dec 8	Noon-4 p.m.	<b>Narberth Dickens Festival</b>
Dec 10	10:30 a.m.	<b>Music Time w/ Erin</b> , Belmont Hills Library (all ages)
Dec 10	7:30 p.m.	<b>Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd Meeting</b> <a href="https://balacynwyd.org/">https://balacynwyd.org/</a>
Dec 11	6:00 p.m.	<b>LM Township Meetings</b> , 75 E Lancaster Ave Special Board of Commissioners, Finance, Grants & Community Development, Building & Planning Committees
Dec 13	4:00-7:00 p.m.	<b>State Rep Pam DeLissio Holiday Open House</b> , 6511 Ridge Ave, Phila
Dec 14	2-4 p.m.	<b>Jane Austen Tea Party</b> , Belmont Hills Library. Celebrate Ms. Austen's 244 <sup>th</sup> B-day. 16+ yrs or older are welcome to come in period dress
Dec 18	8:00 p.m.	<b>LM Board of Commissioners Meeting re: Budget/Zoning Code</b> Final Township Meeting of 2019
Jan 6	6:30-7:45 p.m.	<b>Belmont Hills Civic Assoc. Meeting</b> , Belmont Hills Library
Feb 3	6:30-7:45 p.m.	<b>Belmont Hills Civic Assoc. Meeting</b> , Belmont Hills Library
Feb 5	7:00 p.m.	<b>Penn Valley Civic Meeting</b> , Penn Valley Elementary School

*The Civic Associations rely on support from members. Please pay your local civic dues*

**I maintain a Facebook page. To receive updates in your Facebook feed, like/follow my page:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/LowerMerionWard3Commissioner/>