

MEMORANDUM

To: Residents of Lower Merion Township, Ward 3

From: Michael McKeon, Ward 3 Commissioner

Re: Lower Merion Township, Ward 3 Report #7

Date: June 19, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Ward 3 reports will be emailed on a semi-regular basis to keep residents informed of local events. If you know of anyone who would like to be included on this email distribution list, please have them email me at: **commissioner.mike.mckeon.ward3@gmail.com**

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

CURRENT EVENTS

I. School Expansion

School expansion continues to be a major topic in the Township. We have two public schools in Ward 3 (Welsh Valley MS and Belmont Hills ES) and we are very close to two others (Bala Cynwyd MS and Cynwyd ES). An overwhelming number of Ward 3 residents have advised me that those schools are overcrowded, and those residents have been advocating for the School District to construct a new middle school in the western part of the Township to accommodate expansion. They are opposed to expanding the existing schools.

The School District recently announced plans to purchase 1860 Montgomery Avenue (the Islamic Center in Villanova) for use as a third middle school. This property had been on the Township's historic inventory for several years and the commissioners tabled a prior vote to determine whether the property would be designated for class 1 historical protection.

On June 13, 2018, a motion was made before the Board of Commissioners to designate 1860 Montgomery Avenue for class 1 historical protection. The School District had indicated that they would not complete the purchase if the property was afforded class 1 protection, as, in their opinion, they would not have sufficient flexibility to demolish or alter the property to suit their educational needs. Under class 1 status, the School Board would need permission from the Board of Commissioners to demolish the property.

The commissioners voted 7-7, the motion failed because it did not have a majority, and the property was not afforded class 1 protection. I voted "**No**" to deny the motion and was on the prevailing side. I believe the vote was very close because both sides had compelling arguments. The outcome should help the School Board to move forward with plans to construct a middle school on the 1860 Montgomery Avenue property. Video of the entire meeting is available here: <https://lmtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=PlabBkOmEjWr>

(Commissioner comment begins at the 2:52:45 mark)

The School District is also searching for space for approximately two athletic fields.

II. Medical Marijuana

The Radnor Township Zoning Hearing Board will decide on June 21 whether to grant variances and exemptions to Ilera Healthcare (owned by Crotonville Holdings) for a proposed medical marijuana dispensary at 1024 E. Lancaster Ave. in Bryn Mawr. Ilera operates a facility in Plymouth Meeting which opened in May. Residents are concerned that medical marijuana facilities may open on Rock Hill Rd, but at this time the known facilities are in other portions of our region (Keystone Shops, located at 420 W. Lancaster Ave. in Devon, and TerraVida Holistic Centers located at 249 Planebrook Road in Malvern).

III. Zoning

The Township is working with the Florida-based consulting firm of **DPZ Partners, LLC** to revise our zoning code in the categories of (1) institutional, (2) residential and (3) commercial zoning.

- **Institutional zoning** (hospitals, universities etc.) will likely have a relatively limited direct impact on Ward 3.
- **Residential zoning** will affect the development of future residential properties in Ward 3. I feel it is important to preserve the character of our neighborhoods and I advocate for single family residences only in Ward 3, as opposed to duplexes, quads etc. I also would like to see restrictions on future townhouse construction throughout the Township.
- DPZ expects to make a presentation regarding **commercial zoning** (apartments etc.) in **September, 2018**. Due to the increasing number of apartment complexes in Lower Merion (Bala Cynwyd in particular) I think commercial zoning is a very important consideration for Ward 3.

DPZ will also hold a workshop in conjunction with the civic associations on **June 19** to discuss developments in residential and institutional zoning. Information is available here:

<http://www.lowermerion.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/10378/53?backlist=%2F>

IV. Misc.

The **Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd** (<http://www.balacynwyd.org/>) will hold its 102nd annual **4th of July celebration** this year. The event consists of a parade and festival in Bala Park which is a great family event for the community. I organized the event last year, and I encourage anyone who will be in the area for the 4th to consider attending and/or sponsoring it this year.

The July 4 event is looking for **several young helpers (6th-12th grade)** to work the games. It is a paid position and a great experience, so please let me know if you know of anyone who is interested.

A **water main project** is occurring from **June 17, 2018** through the **end of July**. The work will occur on Belmont Ave from the entrance to the Westminster Cemetery to a location near the intersection of Levering Mill and Belmont. Work will also occur on Conshohocken State Rd

(between Derwen and Penarth, and at the intersection with Montgomery Ave). The contractor's hours are limited to **Sunday through Thursday, from 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.**

Resurfacing work is scheduled to occur on Rock Hill Rd from 7:00 p.m.-5:00 a.m. during the week of June 18.

CRIME & POLICE ACTIVITY REPORT

Below is a summary of recent police activity in Ward 3:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comments</u>
5/26/18	Vehicle Accident	Old Belmont & Belmont Ave	
5/28/18	Vehicle Accident	Belmont Ave & Rock Hill Rd	
5/30/18	Theft from Vehicle	126 Mary Watersford Rd (McMoran Park)	Theft in excess of \$200 from motor vehicle
6/1/18	Vehicle Accident	193 Belmont Ave	
6/2/18	Disorderly Conduct	201 Jefferson St (Cotoletta)	
6/2/18	Domestic	Rock Hill Rd	
6/3/18	Vehicle Accident	Centennial & Mary Watersford Rd	
6/3/18	Vehicle Accident	55 Rock Hill Rd	
6/4/18	Domestic	Cornell Rd	
6/4/18	Vehicle Accident	Pencoyd & Park Ave	
6/5/18	Domestic	Hagys Ford Rd	

- Theft from unattended cars continues to be a problem throughout the Township. There were several car break-ins, an auto theft and an attempted auto theft in Bala Cynwyd (Ward 9). **As the weather breaks, thieves are more inclined to be active and theft escalates. Please lock your car and home doors.**
- During the month of April, a total of 814 traffic citations, 591 faulty equipment notices and 463 traffic violation notices were issued throughout the Township.
- DA Kevin Steele and the Montco DA's office celebrated a recent bust of a Main Line burglary ring which netted goods valued in excess of \$1 million from over 50 local burglaries in and around Montgomery County. The burglaries typically occurred between dusk and midnight and several homes in close proximity to each other would often be burglarized on the same night. The burglars tended to select homes which were dark and did not have a car in the driveway. This website allows residents to search for their belongings:

<https://www.montcopa.org/3021/Burglary-Website>

You can also contact Officer Dwight Kondravy (Dkondravy@lowermerion.org) directly.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

June 19 (6:00-9:00 p.m.)	DPZ Zoning Workshop, Township Bldg, 75 E. Lancaster Ave Institutional and residential zoning
June 23 (9:00 a.m.- noon)	FREE Electronic Recycling Event "Anything with a Plug!" Computers, TVs, phones, microwaves etc.
June 30	Lower Merion Little League Fall Ball Early Registration Deadline Save 25% for Fall Baseball and Softball lml.org
July 4	Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd 4th of July Celebration Parade on Union Avenue (9:00 a.m.)/Festival in Bala Park (10:15 a.m.)