



# The Borough of Newtown



Fall/Winter 2020-21

## TAKE THE NEWTOWN SURVEY!



Newtown Borough is in the process of updating its comprehensive plan, and we need your help in determining the future of the community. A comprehensive plan is the borough's primary land use planning document, which sets a community development strategy for the next ten years.

The update process is taking place at regular Planning Commission meetings, which are listed on the Borough website, along with the agenda for the upcoming meeting. We carefully look at the issues, changes, attitudes of our constituents, and ideas for improvement for our community. This will be the foundation for our vision to keep Newtown strong and vibrant now and into the future. The public is welcome to attend.

We are seeking input from residents and businesses to incorporate in our planning process. We have created two surveys: one for residents and one for businesses. This is your initial chance to weigh in and voice your opinion. We ask that you take a few minutes to complete the survey(s). Some of you are both residents and Borough business owners; we are looking for your perspective from both sides. Though we ask for one survey per business, multiple household members are welcome to weigh in as residents; our online process requires each survey be completed from a separate device. Please answer each question carefully, to the best of your knowledge and with your honest opinion. All responses to this survey will be anonymous.

Time is of the essence so that we can make the best use of your input. Please complete your survey by December 11, 2020. If you are unable to complete electronically, contact the Borough at 215-968-2109.

Go to this link to complete the business survey:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewtownCompUpdateBusiness>  
or scan this QR Code



Go to this link to complete the resident survey:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewtownCompUpdateCommunity>  
or scan this QR Code



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## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome everyone to our next edition. Together we have made it through another summer. Now that fall and winter are here, we will enjoy the colors of Fall and the change of seasons to Winter. This is the time of year to give thanks and to be grateful for the community we live in and the blessings we enjoy. Thank you for the support you contribute to Our Town by shopping local with our business community and working with the volunteer organizations.

*Mayor Charles F. Swartz, III*

### Newtown Borough Year 2021 Meeting Schedule & Annual Request for Volunteers:

*Meeting locations will resume as follows once we are no longer hosting via Zoom:*

- Borough Council and all Boards, Commissions and Committees of the Borough of Newtown conduct their meetings in calendar year 2021 in Borough Council Chambers, 23 North State Street, Newtown The semi-monthly meeting of Council is held offsite as noted below.
- The Council meets monthly on the Wednesday prior to the second Tuesday for Work Session at 7 PM in Council Chambers.
- The semi-monthly meetings of the Council are held the second Tuesday at 7 PM in the auditorium at The Chancellor Center, 30 North Chancellor Street, Newtown and when applicable, the fourth Thursday at 7 PM in Council Chambers at 23 N. State Street, Newtown.
- The following meetings are adjusted each year to avoid holiday conflicts:
  - The meetings of the Environmental Advisory Council shall be held every 2 months at 7PM on the second Monday.
  - The meetings of the Historic Architectural Review Board shall be held at 7:30 PM on the fourth Wednesday.
  - The meetings of the Newtown Joint Historic Commission shall be held at 7:30 PM on the fourth Monday.
  - The meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held at 7 PM on the first Monday of each month.
  - The meetings of the Recreation Board shall be held quarterly at the discretion of the chair.
  - The meetings of the Shade Tree Commission shall be held quarterly at the discretion of the chair.
  - The meetings of the Traffic Committee shall be held at the discretion of the chair.
  - The Zoning Hearing Board meets the third Thursday at 7:00 PM, if necessary.

**Volunteers Needed:** Want to meet neighbors and help your community? We'd love to have you join one of our volunteer boards or committees! For a complete list of Boards & Committees, see <https://www.boroughofnewtown.com/boards-committees> and to apply to current vacancies, see <https://www.boroughofnewtown.com/volunteers-needed>. If you're interested in serving in a particular capacity but don't see a current vacancy listed, please contact Nicole Rodowicz at [nicolerodoboro@gmail.com](mailto:nicolerodoboro@gmail.com) to inquire about pending end-of-year vacancies.

**BOROUGH DIRECTORY**

**BOROUGH OFFICIALS**

Charles F. Swartz III Mayor

**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Tara Grunde-McLaughlin President

Julia Woldorf Vice-President

Marvin Cohen Councilor

Nicole Rodowicz Councilor

Robert Szwajkos Councilor

Susan Turner Councilor

*Borough Council meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in the Chancellor Center at 30 N. Chancellor Street and the preceding Wednesday at 7:00 pm in Borough Hall*

**BOROUGH STAFF**

Patricia Ours Borough Treasurer

Judy Musto Borough Secretary

James Sabath Chief of Police

Matt McCloskey Building Inspector & Zoning & Code Enforcement Officer

Judy Musto Tax Collector

Leslie Dunleavy Recording Secretary

**HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

Bucks County Visitor's Bureau: 215-639-0300

Bucks County Court House: 215-348-6000

Bucks County Department of Health: 215-345-3318

Newtown District Court: 215-968-1657

Newtown Post Office: 215-968-6697

PennDOT: 215-345-6060

Council Rock School District: 215-944-1000

Police Non-Emergency: 215-860-7835

State Representative: Perry Warren: 215-493-5420

State Senator: Steve Santarsiero: 215-736-5960

U.S. Representative: Brian Fitzpatrick: 215-579-8102

Newtown Library Company: 215-968-7659

Newtown Building & Zoning Office: 610-721-1259

Newtown Bucks County Jt. Municipal Authority: 215-968-4109

Newtown Borough Tax Collector: 215-504-1284

Newtown Fire Company Non-Emergency: 215-968-3731

Newtown Ambulance: 215-968-3500

**STAY INFORMED:**

Although these newsletters are helpful in providing relevant information to Borough residences, businesses, and visitors, we recognize that immediate updates cannot be communicated in this format. If you would you like to stay current on what is happening in Newtown Borough, we invite you to check out our website and subscribe to email news. Please visit [www.boroughofnewtown.com](http://www.boroughofnewtown.com), click on Email Updates at the bottom of the home page, and receive periodic emails pertaining to annual street sweeping, temporary road closures, Borough-wide surveys, and more. While on the website, check out all of the resources available to you including the website calendar and scrolling news on the Home page.

Because of COVID-19, the plans for the Newtown Mercantile Group's 2020 Holiday Events are still being developed. Follow the Newtown Mercantile Group on Facebook for all upcoming events and holiday activities. This year all events will be following CDC, County & State Guidelines.

The Santa House will be open giving children a socially distant visit and photo op with Santa, and as always, a special mailbox for letters to Santa to be dropped off.

December 5-6 from 2:00-4:00 pm  
December 12-13 from 2:00-4:00 pm  
December 19-20 from 2:00-4:00 pm

Newtown Borough Council is waiving parking time limit restrictions in the business district on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from November 26 through December 31. The waiver does not include the 30-minute parking spaces, which will continue to be enforced. The parking limit also will continue to be enforced Monday to Wednesday.






**KEEP OUR STREAMS CLEAN**

*Storm drains & roadside ditches lead directly to our streams, lakes and rivers.*

How can you help?

- \* Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks & driveway.
- \* Sweep fertilizer off driveways & sidewalks back onto your lawn.
- \* Keep leaves, grass clippings, trash, & fertilizers out of storm drains
- \* Do not dump motor oil, chemicals, pet waste, dirty or soapy water, or anything else down the storm drain.

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## NEWTOWN BOROUGH POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1** **Bird in Hand** *Private Residence*  
111 S. State Street  
Built prior to 1690 and one of the oldest frame houses in Pennsylvania. A marker in the garden describes a skirmish at this site in 1778 with British troops.
- 2** **County Office Building** *First National Bank Offices*  
34 S. State Street  
Built in 1796 as the County Office Building when Newtown was the county seat from 1726 to 1813.
- 3** **The Court Inn (Half-Moon Inn)\*** *Newtown Historic Association, Inc. Open to the Public*  
Court Street & Centre Avenue 215.968.4004  
Built in 1733 and originally called The Half Moon Inn. It is known as The Court Inn because it is located diagonally across from the former site of the Court House building and was a popular pub in town.
- 4** **Edward Hicks House** *Private Residence*  
122 Penn Street  
Built in 1821 by Edward Hicks. This house is constructed of Pennsylvania fieldstone and was considered a modest home at the time it was built.
- 5** **Newtown Borough Council Chambers\***  
23 N. State Street  
Built in 1854 to house the Borough offices and jail. Newtown Borough was incorporated April 16, 1838.
- 6** **Newtown Common** *Historic Marker*  
100 N. State Street (rear)  
In 1683 when Newtown was surveyed, thirty acres along Newtown Creek were reserved for free use of water and pasture land. This tranquil small park still remains public property.
- 7** **Newtown Creek Bridge\***  
W. Centre Avenue  
Built in 1796, this double-arched stone bridge is the oldest stone bridge in Bucks County and the fourth oldest in Pennsylvania.
- 8** **Newtown Friends Meeting House and Graveyard\***  
219 Court Street  
Built in 1817. Painter Edward Hicks, recognized as a leading minister of the Meeting, was often in attendance. Hicks is buried in the graveyard.
- 9** **Newtown Library Company** *Open to the Public*  
114 Centre Avenue 215.968.7659  
Third oldest library in Pennsylvania, serving the community since 1760.
- 10** **Linton Memorial Park**  
199 S. Lincoln Ave.  
Family Park features a Peaceable Kingdom sculpture.
- 11** **Brian S. Gregg Memorial Park**  
129 N. Congress Street  
Playground and park located next to the Chancellor Center.
- 12** **Newtown Theatre**  
120 N. State Street  
Built in 1831, it is the oldest continuously operating movie theater in the US.

*\* Listed on the National Register of Historic Places*

*For a more complete listing of historical sites in the Borough, stop by Borough Council Chambers or The Court Inn for a free walking tour brochure.*



- 1** Points of Interest (see listing)
- 🏛️** Places of Worship
- ♿** ADA/Handicap Parking
- 🚻** Public Restrooms
- 💰** Automatic Teller Machines
- ➔ One Way Streets

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# Winter is Coming!

Please consult the Borough website [www.boroughofnewtown.com](http://www.boroughofnewtown.com) for information regarding snow and ice related incidences in the winter months. Ordinances are now available online in [www.ecode360.com/NE0784](http://www.ecode360.com/NE0784). See Chapter 126 Snow and Ice Removal and Chapter 146 Article IV Snow and Ice Emergencies

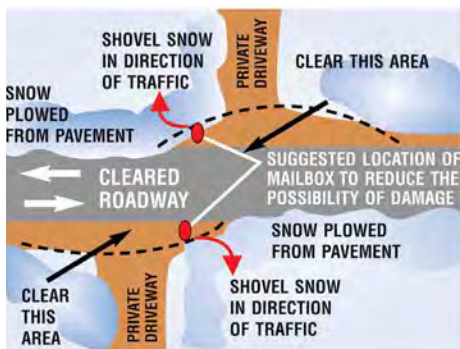
## Water Quality Tips for Winter

Below are some tips to help the Borough improve the water quality in our streams, lakes and rivers:

- Shovel early. The more snow and ice you remove, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it can be.
- More salt does not mean more melting. Apply appropriately, salt takes time to work.
- Fifteen degrees Fahrenheit is too cold for salt. Most salts stop working at this temperature. Use a traction agent as needed, but remember they do not melt ice.
- Sweep up excess. Salt or sand on dry pavement is no longer doing any work, sweep it up before it is washed away.
- Try an alternative for traction. Sand and kitty litter are effective but can clog sewers and degrade stream habitat when washed away. Cracked corn can be an alternative to try that is more environmentally friendly.
- Understand what's in it. All de-icers will melt the ice but some have less of an impact on the environment. Instead of sodium chloride or calcium chloride use products containing an acetate, potassium chloride, or magnesium chloride.



For any questions regarding stormwater or if you observe pollutants entering the storm sewer or stream, call the Newtown Borough Office at 215-968-2109.



## Snow Shoveling Tips

After a snowstorm, how many times have you shoveled your driveway or sidewalk only to have it plowed in? Public Works suggests that you wait until the street is cleared before you shovel the last five feet of your driveway or your sidewalk. Always clear an area to the right of your driveway (as seen in the diagram) to give the snow on the blade of the plow a place to empty before it gets to your driveway. This way you won't have to do the same job twice.

Public Works also reminds you that it is illegal to push snow from a parking lot or driveway onto a township roadway.

## Borough Ordinance for snow removal on private walkways

In the winter, conditions can create hazardous situations for pedestrians. You play an important role in making travel routes safer for everyone, and especially for our children and seniors. Chapter 26 of the Borough ordinances sets the following standard: *The owner, occupant, or tenant is required to remove all snow and ice from sidewalks within eight hours after snow has ceased to fall or ice to form, except when snow has fallen or ice formed after 6 p.m., in which case it must be removed before noon the next day.*

## OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FIRE SAFETY

As the weather becomes colder and we are both at home more than usual and may want to socialize safely outdoors, many of us will be investing in and finding that we more often use outdoor fire pits and fireplaces. When you gather around a cozy fire with your loved ones, be sure to keep your property safe!



The International Fire Code Section 307 requires that recreational fires, such as those in a fire pit, shall not be conducted within 25 feet of a structure or other combustible material. For a bonfire, please obtain a permit. Portable outdoor fireplaces, such as chimineas, shall not be placed within 15 feet unless it is being used at a one or two family dwelling, in which case it can be closer if the manufacturer's specifications indicate that it can.

Maintain a portable 4-A rated fire extinguisher or other approved on-site fire extinguishing equipment such as dirt, sand, or water. In all cases, follow the manufacturer's instructions, supervise for loose sparks and loose children, and enjoy!

# LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS IN PENNSYLVANIA

## **What is a native plant?**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) defines a native plant as one that occurred within Pennsylvania before European settlement. Native plants include ferns; grasses and sedges; annual, biennial and perennial wildflowers; trees, shrubs and vines that covered “Penn’s Woods” when English, Dutch, German and Swedish settlers brought their agricultural plants and associated weeds to the colony. More than 2,100 plant species make up the native botanical heritage of Pennsylvania.

## **Why should I care about native plants?**

Native plants create beautiful landscapes that provide native wildlife with the diverse habitat and food they need to survive. Plants are the foundation of local ecosystems. As such they maintain the unique natural heritage of a region. Pennsylvania’s native plants give a sense of place that is recognized and enjoyed by citizens and visitors from all over the world. Native plants form the basis of the food chains that support bees, butterflies hummingbirds and songbirds inhabiting our backyards. Supporting our favorite birds requires more than seed-feeders for the adults. Bluebirds, chickadees, warblers — in fact over 90 percent of the birds that share our suburban neighborhoods raise their babies on a diet of insects, especially caterpillars. By providing plant foods for the butterfly and moth caterpillars, we help adult birds feed the next generation of songsters.

Goldenrods, asters, sunflowers, bonesets and other plants support hundreds of species of butterflies and moths that have co-adapted to feed on their leaves, pollen and nectar here in the eastern United States. These insects in turn support birds and other wildlife in the ecological network.

Because Pennsylvania’s native plants are adapted to grow here, they thrive with less maintenance thereby reducing the labor and expense of watering and fertilizing. As wildlands are developed, paved or planted to biologically impoverished grass lawns, our community and residential gardens become increasingly important to sustaining the natural beauty and wildlife that define the region.



## **The Newtown Fire Association NEEDS YOUR HELP!!**



Facing added responsibilities caused by world events and local demographics, as well as an ever increasing populace, the Newtown Fire Association needs more volunteer members to supplement its staffing to better protect YOU and YOUR FAMILY. No experience is required for new members, as all needed training will be provided by the NFA.

While the hours can vary and the work is hard, the feeling of accomplishment and pride make it all worth it. But to add to that, the NFA offers a number of other benefits to its members including life insurance, training classes in most lines of emergency services, a paid per call system, and an in house fitness center. So, if you think you can make a difference, join your friends, neighbors, and local businessmen and women in protecting all you and your family have worked for. JOIN THE NEWTOWN FIRE ASSOCIATION!

If you have any questions, or want to learn more about the fire service in Newtown, feel free to stop by one of the two stations, call, or email the NFA at [newtownfireassn@gmail.com](mailto:newtownfireassn@gmail.com).

Learn more at <http://newtownfire.com/>, and download an application at [http://newtownfire.com/become\\_a\\_member/Membership%20Application%202020.pdf](http://newtownfire.com/become_a_member/Membership%20Application%202020.pdf) !

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## Thank You to the Businesses!

The Borough of Newtown would like to thank the businesses that appear in this newsletter and to recognize them each as supporters and cornerstones of our community. For it is with their contributions that this newsletter has been produced at no charge to our residents. The Borough would like to further request that citizens, in response, patronize these businesses first when given a choice as these businesses are saving each citizen tax dollars.

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YEARS IN A ROW!**

