

News Update from Mayor Mark Kaczynski

The following are updates related to **COVID-19** and some other Town news that you may find useful. Since my Newsletter last week, the number of Berlin residents who have been tested positive for the COVID-19 virus has gone up to 128 and sadly 10 have passed away.

For additional information on the State's as well as the Town's COVID-19 cases, please click on the link below that will take you to the Town's webpage <https://www.town.berlin.ct.us> and then click on Breaking News to access the State of CT COVID-19 updates, Central CT Health District COVID-19 Resource Hub and the UConn Department of Geography – CT Dashboard on COVID-19.

As part of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project, the Town Council approved revisions to its contract with Newport Realty Group LLC regarding the **sale of 861 Farmington Avenue**. The Town of Berlin is in the process of selling 861, 889, 903 and 913 Farmington Avenue, Berlin to Newport Realty Group for use as a transit-oriented development project. The purchase and sale agreement was signed on May 23, 2019. Newport plans to construct 19,000 square feet of commercial space and 76 market rate apartment units on 889, 903 and 913 Farmington Avenue. The Town acquired 861 Farmington Avenue to help manage the plume of contaminated groundwater originating at 889 Farmington Avenue and to expand the scope of Newport's transit-oriented development project.

The purchase contract for 861 Farmington Avenue as revised requires that Newport file an Environmental Land Use Restriction on the property that will take measures to protect future development of the site from vapors that might come from the 889 Farmington Avenue groundwater plume. The Town will also retain rights for future testing and remediation at the property. The sump pump in the existing 861 location will be eliminated and this will necessitate raising the basement floor of the building, relocating the power supply, furnace and oil tank and the installing a vapor control system. This portion of the work is estimated to cost over \$97,000. In addition, Newport agreed to place a façade easement on the main building to protect its historic attributes, to demolish the garage, to renovate the first-floor commercial space to create one rental unit and to renovate the second-floor apartment. Also, Newport will be required to

cooperate in site development and maintenance with the owners of the adjacent building at 873 Farmington Avenue, subject to final approval of a coordinated site plan for the properties. In consideration of the environmental factors and other terms and conditions the Town has agreed to sell 861 Farmington Avenue to Newport at a price of \$10,000, subject to a profit-sharing arrangement if Newport resells the property in the future. The sale will also be done in concert with the sale to Newport of 903 and 913 Farmington Avenue for a price of \$460,000.

Newport Realty Group's Steele Center @ Farmington Ave is an important but complex project that has evolved over time and the construction of the boulevard is planned for this summer. Newport has agreed to adjust its plans for 861 Farmington Avenue to ensure that the Town can meet its environmental obligations and preserve the historically significant building at 861 Farmington Avenue.

Complete Sheet Metal broke ground on an 11,000 square foot state of the art manufacturing facility at 500 Four Rod Road in Berlin on May 11, 2020. The company provides their products to both the residential and commercial markets and is owned by Berlin native, Jeff Michaud. This expansion, from less than 3,000 square feet today, to 11,000 square feet will increase their manufacturing capability and allow them to hire more workers.

Berlin Social and Youth Services and the Berlin Senior Center would like to thank all our community members for their outpouring of support during these unprecedented times. If you would like to make a monetary donation, you can do so to Berlin Social Services, 240 Kensington Rd., Berlin, CT 06037. If you would like to make a food/provision donation to the Berlin Food Pantry, they will be accepting donations on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. There will be a bin at the front door of Town Hall to drop-off your donations. Donations can also be made to the Berlin Senior Center Kindness Fund, C/O Tina Doyle, Berlin Senior Center, 33 Colonial Drive. Thank you for your continued support and generosity!

Berlin Social and Youth Services will begin taking applications for the Renter's Rebate Program in June 2020. Details regarding how applications will be

processed will be stated in June's Senior Center Newsletter. If you have questions, please call Jaymee Miller at 860-828-7007.

The Berlin Senior Center continues to support and be a resource to our senior community. If you or someone you know could use help with either meal delivery, grocery shopping, medication pickup, handmade mask or would like to be put on our list for weekly automated call or wellness check-in calls please contact Tina Doyle at 860-828-7050 or Jane Sevigny at 860-828-7006 during normal business hours. If there is a critical need or an emergency outside of those hours, please contact the Berlin Police Dispatch at 860-828-7080.

The Community Center is closed until further notice. If anyone needs to come into the Parks and Recreation Department, it will be by appointment only. The status of all summer programs and pools has not been determined but they are hoping to get guidelines from the State soon and work with the Central Connecticut Health District to determine if they can safely open to the public. The health and safety of our participants, residents, and staff is of the utmost importance to us.

It's not too late to respond to the **2020 Census** while being safe and practicing social distancing at home. Once you have responded, please encourage your family, friends and loved ones to complete the census, too.

As always, the Town Manager and the Town staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

If you have any questions for me, please feel free to email me at mkaczynski@town.berlin.ct.us