

Borough of Cape May Point



2021 Annual Report

**Department of Public Works,
Parks & Public Property**

Commissioner Catherine Busch

Box 490, Cape May Point, NJ 08212-0490

609-884-8468

www.capemaypoint.org

Our exemplary Public Works staff provide a wide range of services, maintenance, and repairs led by Supervisor Bill Gibson. Our Water and Sewer Utility staff are led by Superintendent David Carrick.

Some of my department's accomplishments over the past year are listed below.

Parks

Lake Lily. We engaged Clean-Flo to service the bubblers that oxygenate the lake. Clean-Flo also applied a series of biological, natural treatments to reduce algae growth and accumulated decayed vegetation. Over time, these treatments will rebalance the ecosystem of the lake. New Jersey Audubon continues to remove invasive plants in the wooded areas around the lake. Public Works seasonal staff maintained the lake's south-end garden.

The Borough established a new Lake Lily Stewardship Trust Fund

The Borough established a new Lake Lily Stewardship Trust Fund. The Friends of Lake Lily contributed some of their funds to the trust in support of the Borough's maintenance of the lake. Bill Gibson and I completed a Rutgers "Lake Management" course, and I am pursuing funding sources to carry out what we learned from the course.

Pavilion Circle. Public Works is assisting the Environmental Commission in removing invasive plants from the horseshoe bed near the sewage pumping station. The Environmental Commission plans to install native plants that benefit wildlife. Public Works will start removing invasive Callery (Bradford) Pear trees in the circle. We will consult an arborist before planting replacement trees.

Triangle Park. New Jersey Audubon began the first of a three year contract to remove invasive plants in the wooded area. This year, Public Works seasonal staff will help community volunteers maintain the butterfly garden as needed.

Dunes. Additional "Keep Off the Dunes" signs were installed on the beach-side as recommended by the Environmental Commission. Where feasible, we are removing invasive trees and shrubs along the street side of the dunes and entrances. The initial targeted species are Tree of Heaven, Callery (Bradford) Pear, Silk Tree (Mimosa), Autumn Olive, and Privet.

Contents

Parks.....	1
Roads.....	2
Water and Sewer Utility	2
Buildings and Facilities.....	2

Roads

The Borough awarded a contract to reconstruct and pave Yale Avenue. We will distribute a construction schedule to property owners along Yale Avenue. We will also post the information on the Borough's website. We submitted a grant application to the Department of Transportation to help pay for repaving Harvard Avenue, which is presently the road in most need of repairs.

In preparation for the Yale Avenue road project, Public Works removed concrete sidewalks and curbs and replaced them with topsoil and grass seed. This process adheres to the recommendations of the Master Plan adopted by the Planning Board and Borough Commissioners. The sidewalk and curb removals also decreased the cost of the Yale Avenue road project by \$100,000 and reduced impervious coverage for storm water drainage. In consultation with the Borough Engineer, the sidewalk and curb in front of the Post Office and Firehouse was retained.

As roads are repaved, we will remove unnecessary concrete sidewalks and curbs on the Borough property bordering streets. We will also examine other public sidewalks throughout town for repair or removal as needed.

Water and Sewer Utility

Yale Avenue water main replacement. This essential project replaced the last known cast iron water main and lead pipe water service lines from our system. Over the coming year, staff will investigate water service lines of unknown status. We will replace any lead or lead-line galvanized connections that we find.

New water and sewer rates began in July 2021

New water and sewer rates and structure as of July 1, 2021. We changed the billing structure for our Water and Sewer Utility because the utility was projecting a deficit and was at risk of

bankruptcy. After considering various options, we chose a rate structure that restores financial solvency and will build a state-recommended surplus within three years. We balanced the Utility's requirement with consideration for members of our community deemed by the state as low-income residents. We achieved this by transitioning from an annual allotment to a quarterly allotment. Previously, we had an annual minimum allotment of 26,000 gallons per household with an annual charge for excess usage over 26,000 gallons. Beginning October 2021, we established a quarterly minimum allotment of 6,500 gallons per household with a quarterly charge for excess over 6,500 gallons. Effective January 2022, we will levy a quarterly charge for excess sewer usage when more than 6,500 gallons of water are consumed in that quarter. In addition, we revised the quarterly billing statement so that it shows the actual quarterly number of gallons consumed in that quarter. More details, including the billing schedule, are on the Water & Sewer page of the Borough website (<https://www.capemaypoint.org/departments/water-sewer.html>).

Other Improvements. We started repainting the fire hydrants to protect them from rust. We had to replace a failing sewage pump which was an unanticipated capital expense.

Buildings and Facilities

We reviewed maintenance, repair, and renovation needs for our aging buildings. We will discuss priorities and grant opportunities with our new Borough Engineer, Dale Foster of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. and our new grants consultant, Triad Associates. We hope to identify a schedule of projects in priority order by need and funding possibilities. Several of these projects have already been identified and planned for in our Capital Budget. Expect updates over the coming months.

The Public Works yard on Sunset Boulevard was partially screened with a berm, wood fence, and landscaping to decrease the impact of operations on Oak Avenue residents.