



Town of Avon Newsletter

ISSUE LIV

January 2018

FY 2018/2019 Budget Process

The process is well underway to prepare the FY 2018/2019 budget that takes effect on July 1, 2018. All town departments have submitted their capital and operating budgets, and Town Council will review the Town Manager's proposed budget at a workshop scheduled for February 24th. Residents who are interested in participating in the process are encouraged to attend the following meetings, during which details of the budget will be discussed:

Town Council Budget Workshop: The workshop will be held on Saturday, February 24th in the Selectmen's Chamber at Town Hall beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending by 1:00 p.m. The complete budget calendar is available on-line at: www.avonct.gov.

Board of Finance Meetings: The public hearing on the budget will be held on Monday, April 2nd at 7:00 p.m. at the Avon Senior Center. Residents wishing to provide the Board of Finance with input about the budget are welcome to attend.

Town Council Celebrates Streetscape Improvements

On December 7th, the Town Council celebrated the completion of Phase IV of the Village Center Streetscape Improvement project with a ribbon cutting held at dusk at the entrance to Sperry Park on Simsbury Road (Route 10). Since 2008, the Town has been awarded over \$1.1 million in state grant funding to complete projects aimed at strengthening the Village Center and making it a destination for residential and retail growth in Avon, as recommended by the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. Phase IV included the installation of sidewalks and decorative carriage lighting along the east side of Simsbury Road. Much of this work was completed in-house by Department of Public Works staff over the course of a year in an effort to reduce costs. The end result of these improvement projects is a more unified and cohesive Village Center area that is welcoming to pedestrians and draws on Avon's unique history and character.



Christmas Tree Pick Up

The Public Works Department began picking up Christmas trees on Tuesday, January 2, 2018. There is no established schedule with this pick up. Multiple passes will be made throughout the Town until all trees have been picked up. Last day for pick up will be January 31st.

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Avon Recreation Summer Program Registration will begin at the end of April. More detailed information will be sent out soon.



Avon Village Center Update

The Avon Village Center (AVC) development effort continues to move forward. In November 2015, the developer, the Carpionato Group of Johnston, RI, was granted a Master Site Plan approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission for the proposed development located on approximately 97 acres previously owned by Ensign Bickford Industries. Since this approval was granted, a number of design development activities have occurred which will make for a more attractive, well-defined development.

You may have noticed that site work on Phase I of the AVC project began in fall 2016 with the excavation of the property bordering West Main Street (Route 44), Climax Road, and Bickford Drive adjacent to the Avon Town Hall office complex.

Throughout the autumn months of 2017, the Carpionato Group developed plans to relocate a portion of the Farmington Valley Greenway trail out of the Avon Town Hall parking lot and onto AVC property. The new trail segment will have an improved surface, new safety fencing and landscaping. This project is expected to begin in March 2018 and we anticipate that it will continue through the spring. The developer has also agreed to add a few, much needed, parking spaces to the Town Hall parking lot adjacent to the project site.

Though work has occurred on the project site, much of the progress that has been made in the last year has involved the development of the project's design. Since the approval of the Master Plan, frequent meetings have been held with the Carpionato Group, Town staff and the Town's peer review engineer and architect to develop schematic design plans for review and determination by the Planning and Zoning Commission. These schematic designs will specify the proposed locations of infrastructure, roads, and individual buildings.

In recent months, much of the design team's time and effort has been spent ensuring that the AVC development looks, feels and functions as the Planning and Zoning Commission has always intended: a development that embodies the spirit of the Town of Avon and creates a very unique sense of place. For example, the existing historic brownstone buildings and the natural beauty of the Nod Brook will be featured in the design, and public gathering and performance spaces will be integrated into Phase I alongside the retail and residential construction. Another high priority for the design team is to improve connectivity and access to the development for all modes of transportation from both the Town Hall complex and Route 44. All of this design work is being completed in coordination with relevant state and federal agencies to ensure that all regulatory requirements are met to keep this complex project in compliance as it moves forward.

Though this process is a long one, we anticipate that the final product will be well worth the wait. While planning continues, periodic status updates will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission as they become available. Ultimately, the schematic plans presented by the design team will be subject to official review and determination by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Additionally, a public hearing is required as part of this process under current zoning regulations. Should the schematic design be approved by the Commission, the developer anticipates moving forward with "vertical development" in spring 2018.

The Planning and Zoning Commission meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Chamber. Every meeting and public hearing is open to the public and we encourage members of the public to attend and to ask questions.

Please contact the Department of Planning and Community Development at (860) 409-4328 with questions.

Hiram W. Peck III, AICP, CFM
Director of Planning and Community Development
Avon, CT



News from Social Services

- **CT Energy Assistance Program:** The State of Connecticut can help households pay for primary heating bills (i.e. oil, propane, electric, and gas). To be eligible, a household income must be less than 150% of the federal poverty income guidelines and the applicant must meet a certain limit for assets. If you have never applied and/or are interested in receiving more information on this program, please visit our website, www.avonct.gov, click "Social Services" under Departments and use the "Energy Assistance & Renters Rebate" links, or call our office at (860) 409-4346 to see if you may qualify. **Applications are by appointment only and the deadline is April 30th.**
- **Operation Fuel** may be able to provide one-time assistance with heating bills for those households who have applied for the CT Energy Assistance Program and were found to be slightly over income/asset limits. All those interested must apply for the CT Energy Assistance Program before contacting Operation Fuel. More information is available through Gifts of Love at (860) 676-2323.

Tax Relief For Elderly and Disabled Homeowners

In January 2017, the Town Council approved a two year extension of the Town's Elderly Property Tax Relief Program and raised the income limit from \$55,000 to \$57,500. Homeowners who are age 65 or older or totally disabled may be eligible for up to \$2,225 (for a married couple) or \$1,975 (for an unmarried individual) in property tax relief through the Town's Elderly Property Tax Relief Program. To be eligible, you must have been 65 or older by 12/31/17, your adjusted gross income plus social security has to be \$57,500 or less, and you must have owned your home on October 1, 2017. The application filing period is February 1 through May 15, 2018. If you have any questions or feel you might be eligible, please contact the Assessor's Office at (860) 409-4335 for further information.



2017 Holiday Basket Program

Avon Social Services and Jim Martino of the Avon Food Pantry would like to thank all of our wonderful sponsors who helped create food baskets for both Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays. Thanks to the generosity of our Sponsors who helped to brighten so many families' Autumn and Winter Holiday celebrations with presents, food and gift cards!

The Digitization Station at the Avon Free Public Library

Don't let your home movies and family photos get stuck in the dark ages!

Perform digital alchemy at the Avon Free Public Library's digitization station. Convert VHS, audio cassettes and vinyl records into digital files. Scan photos and documents. Transfer files from floppy disk and edit image, video and audio files so you can share them online. Call the reference department at (860) 673-9712 x4 for more information or to reserve the digitization station before you visit.





Free Tax Assistance Offered by AARP at Avon Senior Center

Need help filing your 2017 tax return? The AARP Tax Preparation program is here to help! The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax assistance to middle and low income tax payers. Special attention is given to those 50 and older. The program will be held on Wednesdays from February 7 to April 11 at the Senior Center. Please call the **Avon Senior Center at 860-675-4355 to schedule an appointment.**

Real Estate & Supplemental Motor Vehicle Taxes

The second installment of the real estate and supplemental motor vehicle taxes, which came due January 1, 2018, must be paid by February 1st to avoid State mandated interest charges. The Revenue Office is open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Town Offices will be closed January 15th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Payments can also be made online. Go to www.avonct.gov and click the green button, "Pay Taxes Online" in the middle of the home page. Any questions? Please call the Collector of Revenue Office at (860) 409-4308. Thank You!

From the Avon Volunteer Fire Department

AVFD Celebrates 75th Anniversary in 2018

The Avon Volunteer Fire Department (AVFD) began a full year of commemorative events celebrating its 75th anniversary on January 13 with a special presentation entitled "We Don't Just Fight Fires." Featuring a panel discussion, the special event marked the opening of a two-month exhibit at the Avon Free Public Library where residents can visit and learn more about the history of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department. The exhibit features photographs of AVFD members, incidents, and apparatus, and much more throughout the years.

Other events scheduled to take place throughout the year include a 5K race, open houses, and library exhibits. The main event marking the AVFD's 75th anniversary will be its hosting of the 135th Annual Connecticut State Firefighters Association Convention and Parade along with a carnival featuring food trucks the weekend of September 14-16, 2018.

Residents and local business are invited to join the AVFD in celebrating 75 years of devoted service to the community by sponsoring an advertisement in the Commemorative Anniversary Program. The deadline to purchase an ad is February 2, 2018. A flyer with additional information is available on the AVFD website at www.AvonVFD.org.

The AVFD will keep the community informed about all 75th anniversary events via its website (www.AvonVFD.org) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/AvonVFD).

Join the AVFD

The Avon Volunteer Fire Department is always looking for new members – everyone from firefighters to fire police to administrative assistants. To learn more, visit www.AvonVFD.org, call (860) 677-2644, or stop by the Company 1 firehouse located at 25 Darling Drive any Monday evening after 7:00 p.m.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER, CALL THE TOWN
MANAGER'S OFFICE, AVON TOWN HALL, AT (860) 409-4300.



The Avon Library Children's Department is pleased to announce the arrival of *The Amazing Castle* ~ a magical place where visitors can become inhabitants of a castle village! Sponsored by the Friends of the Avon Public Library, Carmon Funeral Home, with special thanks to the Avon Public Works

Department, Avon families and children can learn community values while playing in this traveling exhibit created by the Minnesota Children's Museum. They can build with "stone" blocks, create meals, don costumes, play with puppets and work in castle workshops. The interactive play exhibit will be open January 29 through May 25, 2018 on the floor of the Children's Library.

Plastic Film Recycling

Did you know that clean, dry plastic bags and the film packaging that comes wrapped around paper towels, water bottles and toilet paper **should not** be placed in your recycling bin for curbside pick-up or brought to the Transfer Station? Instead these products should be taken to a location that accepts plastic film products so that these items can be appropriately recycled and made into materials such as composite lumber, new plastic bags, or packaging materials. Please visit www.plasticfilmrecycling.org to find a drop-off location directory and other resources.

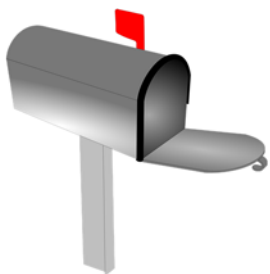


Reminders From the Avon Volunteer Fire Department

- **Snow Removal Reminder** - As the snow piles up this winter, please make sure to dig out any and all fire hydrants near your home or office. It is imperative that firefighters be able to access the hydrants quickly when needed.
- **Check Your Smoke and CO Alarms** - The AVFD talks about replacing batteries when we change the clocks, but you should test your smoke and CO alarms monthly – make sure they are working and they have not expired. To find out how old a smoke alarm is and its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. The smoke alarm should be replaced 10 years from that date (*not* the date of purchase).

Fond Farewell

We would like to recognize outgoing Town Council Chairman Mark Zacchio and outgoing Board of Finance Vice Chairman Thomas Gugliotti for their years of dedicated service to the Town of Avon. Mark served the community for a total of 19 years, including 12 years on the Town Council. For the last eight years he served as Chairman to the Council. Tom served 24 years on the Board of Finance, and for the last six years he served as its Vice Chairman. On behalf of the Avon community, we thank Mark and Tom for their outstanding service and we extend to them our best wishes for their future endeavors!



The Public Works Department would like to remind residents that, in accordance with Town Policy, the Town of Avon is responsible for mailbox damage **only** if a plow makes contact with a mailbox. ***For a complete description of the Town's Policy, please log onto www.avonct.gov.***

Annual Report & Calendar

Residents are reminded that a limited number of the Town's Annual Report and Calendar are available for pickup in the Town Manager's Office at Town Hall, or at the Avon Free Public Library, Senior Center and Landfill. Please come get one while they last!

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IMPORTANT DATES

Town Council Budget Workshop
Saturday, February 24, 2018
Town Hall - Selectmen's Chamber
8:00 a.m.

FY 2018/2019
Annual Budget Public Hearing
Monday, April 2, 2018
Avon Senior Center
7:00 p.m.