



Dear Friends & Neighbors:

We grieve the lives tragically lost in this week's plane crash at Reagan Washington National Airport, killing all 67 people on board the domestic passenger flight and Black Hawk helicopter. At this moment, our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the victims, their families whose lives have been forever changed, and all those affected by this heartbreaking and tragic mid-air collision.

This past Monday, **January 27th was Holocaust Remembrance Day**. The Governing Body, joined by all in attendance, observed a moment of silence at our Mayor & Council meeting to commemorate the day. Holocaust Remembrance Day is an international Memorial Day that commemorates the victims of the Holocaust in which 6,000,000 Jews, along with countless numbers of individuals of other minority groups, were murdered by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. January 27th was selected for the annual commemoration because on this day in 1945, the Red Army liberated the **Auschwitz concentration camp**.

The County Mandated Borough-wide reassessment/revaluation—

I want to thank all of the residents who came out on a chilly Monday evening to attend the Council meeting to ask questions and obtain information related to the 2025 Reassessment. **On the very next morning**, I spoke to both our tax assessor, Jason, and to representatives from ASI to obtain answers to many of your questions. At the Council meeting, we discussed whether issues such as flooding and zoning restrictions unique to a property would be considered in the assessment. Both ASI and Jason confirmed that such information is exactly the kind of information that should be brought to the attention of ASI so that it can be considered. In this regard, one resident shared that his property was subject to flood damage on multiple occasions. To that homeowner and others like him, please provide documentation to ASI if you have it, such as insurance claims for flood damage.

Additionally, a question arose on Monday night that I was not able to immediately address. The issue was related to newer homes or homes that received an **added assessment recently due to a renovation or large improvement**. A few people wondered if they were assessed recently, how could their assessed value have changed so drastically? A good question! Our assessor Jason advised me that these added assessments were calculated using cost parameters that were established for the last borough wide evaluation in 2003. That method ensures that new houses aren't assessed at full market value while their neighbors in existing homes are below market value. **Parity should be achieved when the 2025 Revaluation is completed. I am advised by our assessor** that thus far, it appears that approximately 40% of the properties received an increase to their assessed value, 40% received a decrease and 20% were close to neutral.

As a homeowner there is undoubtedly information unique to your home that wouldn't necessarily be apparent upon an inspection that can help ensure your property is assessed properly. There is of course no guarantee that the information you provide will change your assessment, but it

may and is critical to make the assessors aware of all of these issues so that they can be considered.

I strongly urge everyone with questions or concerns to schedule a meeting with ASI and I have asked ASI to again **extend the time to hold these informal hearings** with residents, so everyone has time to attend an informal hearing. They will now be **scheduling informal hearings through February 14**. Please take a moment to visit their website, as well. There is a lot of useful information that you can review ahead of your scheduled meeting that may assist you in asking the right questions and providing the right information, including all of the comps they used in arriving at the reassessment values. This is the link to the page on their site that contains the Demarest information [here](#).

I can't stress enough how important it is to take the time to review the website, request your property record card (email to demarest@asinj.com with your block and lot numbers and address) and schedule a meeting. This is the best way to make sure your assessment is accurate and fair. The number to call between 9:30 am – 4:00 pm [weekdays] to schedule that meeting is **201- 493-8530**.

News from the Demarest Volunteer Ambulance Corps

In 2024, the **Demarest Volunteer Ambulance Corps (DVAC)** responded to approximately **350 calls with 67% of the calls related to Demarest residents and 33% for mutual aid assistance to surrounding towns**. DVAC transported patients to eight hospitals with Englewood, Pascack Valley and Hackensack representing the majority of our transports. The majority of the calls can fit into seven categories: Respiratory issues; Cardiac issues; Abdominal issues; Syncopal episodes/falls; Traffic accidents; Behavioral; and Trauma related. In the past year, DVAC had an extraordinary response rate, our call response statistics are the envy of the Valley, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We treat every call as a serious call and DVAC's response from time of dispatch to Patient contact was approximately five minutes. **We are staffed with only a handful of in-town residents and several high school and college students. WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS DURING THE DAY!** You can give back to our town and, more importantly, learn lifesaving skills that will be with you as a parent and grandparent. These are skills you hope you will never need; but if you do, you will be glad you learned them. **It is never too late to join – we need your help!**

Certificates of Appreciation

It was an honor to recognize and present **Certificates of Appreciation** to the **Korean Demarest Parents Association** and the **Demarest Chinese Families** for their contributions to the community and promoting inclusion through education.

Thanking the **two rock stars** for their gracious thanks to the Governing Body for supporting the upcoming Ramadan celebration. I must say, it is the Governing Body that says, "Thank you" to **Umar Munawar** and **Afan Munawar** for their presentation.

News from the Demarest Library

To celebrate Black History Month, the library is having an African Drum Circle at the United Methodist Church tomorrow, Saturday, February 1 from 12 - 1 pm. Adults and families are welcome to come participate or just come to watch & listen! Please register [here](#).

The library is hosting an Adult Paint & Sip Night on Thursday, February 13 from 7 - 8 pm. Brandy will guide you through a cherry blossom painting while you sip on a mocktail. Register [here](#).

For a complete listing of library events visit demarestlibrary.org.

The Board of Health reminds you that **pet licenses are due by February 28, 2025** to avoid a late fee. The Borough is holding a **free rabies clinic on February 8 from 10:00 am – 11:30 am at the DPW garage on Wakelee Drive. All dogs must have a current rabies vaccine that is valid through November of 2025 to be licensed.**

Tax Reminder: First Quarter 2025 taxes are due February 1, 2025, with an adopted 10 Day Grace period. The last day to pay property taxes without accruing interest is Monday February 10, 2025. **Please note, late payment will accrue interest from February 1st!**

Have a great weekend and let's hope **Punxsutawney Phil** doesn't see his shadow on this Sunday 2/2, so spring can arrive early!

Mayor Brian K. Bernstein

*My Friday emails to the residents are now reaching **1,095 people!** My goal is for every Demarest resident to be up to date on what is going on around town, please help with that goal by forwarding this email to your friends so they can visit demarestnj.gov and sign up for my weekly emails! The link can be found about halfway down the homepage.*

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