



**MONTHLY REPORT to the BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 2021**

During February the Community Development office moved forward Select Board consideration of two items to come before the voters in a Special Town Meeting on March 30 to include the creation of a Tax Increment Finance District and Development Program for Woodlands Memory Care of Bridgton. The development program would expand the wastewater system on North High Street to the intersection with Route 93, improve walkability and accessibility along North High Street through new sidewalks and intersection improvements at the Civil War Monument, and provide maintenance and improvements to the playground at the Recreation Center. A second question for the voters will be the rezoning of a commercial building in the Downtown Village Neighborhood for inclusion in the Downtown Village District I. This zoning change will correct an oversight that currently prevents the continuation of specific commercial services for that building.

A regional broadband initiative gained traction through consideration of a fixed wireless proposal by the towns of Bridgton, Naples, Denmark, Harrison and Fryeburg. This regional effort will identify short- and long-term options to establishing widespread connectivity throughout Bridgton and its neighboring towns. This is an incredibly important initiative now and going forward for businesses, elderly and school-aged children, families, and for the growth of all our communities.

Also in February an important opportunity to join in on a recent net energy billing program established by the Maine Public Utilities Commission that would tie renewable energy credits generated by new solar farms in the state to town electricity billing could result in over one million dollars in savings for the town over twenty years. This option has been reviewed by town counsel and will be considered by the Select Board in early March.

A sampling of other initiatives and programs being developed includes a second round of a project canopy grant that will support new tree plantings throughout town; discussions surrounding mapping of town properties, parking lots, trails walking paths and other assets for consideration of future developments and improvement projects to enhance aesthetic beauty of town and village areas and increase walkability in these areas; and the restructuring on community development website pages to include news on economic development initiatives, milestones and achievements. More to come on these projects going forward.

In addition to these projects the community development office is working with our local engineers on bid documents for the upper Main Street parking lot project and the Oak Street sidewalk project under the 2020 CDBG funding season. Both projects are slated to begin this spring or early summer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda L. LaCroix
Community Development Manager

Office of the Community Development Director