



## From the Desk of Mayor Frank Nunziato

On Monday night, the Council voted to accept the Planning Board's recommendation regarding the area known as the Holman Properties. While I didn't have to vote because a tie-breaker wasn't needed, I agree with properties on Lincoln Ave being included in the redevelopment zone.

The action being taken at Monday's meeting was to accept the recommendation of the Planning Board, as the area qualifies to be considered as an area in need of redevelopment. The Borough was not creating a plan or approving a project. It is simply an early step in the process to create a redevelopment plan. This decision also gives the Borough greater control over the preservation of this neighborhood in the future.

Personally, I would like to see two single-family homes included as part of the redevelopment plan on Lincoln Ave. Over the past few years I have personally spoken to the members of the family who inherited the property, their local representative and property agent and their attorney. I have also met with residents of Lincoln Avenue, who would be most impacted by any redevelopment in that area. Based on my conversations with all parties involved, I strongly feel that single family homes should be built on Lincoln Ave in order to preserve the current aesthetics of the neighborhood.

I understand that the topic can create a sense of uncertainty, and I was glad to see it discussed in public session at our meeting. I believe it offered an opportunity for the kind of vigorous discussion that is needed for such an important issue.

I realize that as the discussion became heated between two of my colleagues, my tone became inappropriate and for that I apologize. Because I have personally spent so much time researching the Holman Properties, I became frustrated with what I felt became a circular conversation. However, I should never have allowed my frustration and exhaustion to become part of that meeting. In the future, I promise to allow all of my colleagues, and the residents to share their opinions on a particular matter, however, I will not tolerate accusatory comments that have no place in a productive conversation about an important issue.

## Borough Offices Will Be Closed Monday, February 15th In Observance of Presidents' Day

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### Important Information About Gym Capacity & Today's Executive Order:

As you may be aware, Governor Murphy has issued an Executive Order loosening restrictions on indoor sports. However this Order also gives municipalities discretion over how to roll this out safely and fairly.

In coordination with Board of Education, we are working towards assessing gym capacity and how to implement the Executive Order so that it works for Rutherford's facilities.

Although the Executive Order states this is effective immediately, the Borough feels the timing does not allow us to responsibly implement the directives outlined in it.

**There will be no parents, guardians or other spectators permitted at this weekend's Recreation basketball games. Current protocols remain in effect until a full assessment of the Executive Order can be completed by the Borough and Board of Education.**

Meetings will take place between the Borough and Board of Education early next week to coordinate the appropriate steps needed to comply with the Executive Order.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,  
Mayor Frank Nunziato

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## Council Reports

### Council President Mark Goldsack

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**Resolution No. 55 - Designating the Area - Block 110, Lots 3.01, 3.02, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 7.01 as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment and authorizing and directing the preparation of a redevelopment plan - Passed** - This resolution agrees with the recommendation of the Planning Board that the above blocks and lots (153 Park Avenue, 155 Park Avenue, 151 Park Avenue, 8 Highland Cross, 42 Lincoln Avenue, 50 Lincoln Avenue, and the rear of 153 Park Avenue) satisfy the legal criteria to be designated as an area in need of redevelopment. While I fully appreciate the concern surrounding this designation, especially as it pertains to the future of Lincoln Avenue, I supported this resolution for the following reasons. 1) Designating the area provides the Mayor and Council with control over the redevelopment plan that will ultimately have to be adopted for the area. I believe it's safe to say, after hearing all of my colleagues speak, that we all will only support a plan that includes residential homes on Lincoln Avenue. 2) As it relates to Park Avenue, the designation affords us the control to ensure that Park Avenue remains a place for small business. 3) There are historical elements to these properties that can be protected via a redevelopment plan. For those reasons, I voted yes for the designation. As for the next steps, the Mayor and Council, in consultation with our professionals, will now begin the process of formulating a redevelopment plan. The plan will then have to be reviewed by the planning board and then ultimately adopted by the Mayor and Council. Planning Board review and Mayor and Council review and adoption procedures will afford the public with ample opportunity for comment and input which, as always, we look forward to and welcome.

### Planning Board

**Resolution No. 52 - Authorizing the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether properties - Block 73, Lots 5.02, 6, 20.01, 22 & 22.01 on Chestnut Street and Park Avenue, constitute a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment - Passed** - This resolution authorizes and directs the Planning Board to conduct a study of only the properties owned by Vango Holdings (owners of the Parker and adjacent properties) to determine whether or not those properties qualify as an area in need of redevelopment in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. This resolution is an amended version of the resolution that was removed from consideration at the December 14th Mayor and Council meeting as a result of concerns expressed by both my colleagues and the public relating to the scope of the area included in the study.

### Shade Tree Commission

The Shade Tree Commission met for the first time this year on Tuesday 2/9. I'd like to congratulate Frank Sasso on being elected Chairman and I'd also like to take a moment to welcome our new member John Trosky.

### Councilman Tom Mullahey

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I'd like to remind everyone that at Monday night's Mayor and Council meeting, we weren't voting on any plan. We were simply referring it to the Planning Board for a study. I truly believe my colleagues and I all share the same desire to maintain the integrity of the Lincoln Avenue neighborhood as well as the need for responsible redevelopment.

In light of the Executive Order issued today regarding indoor sports capacities, as a parent and coach I'd like to thank the Board of Ed, Rec Department and Borough Administrator Bob Kakoleski for making difficult decisions in the best interest of our children and families.

### Councilwoman Maria Begg-Roberson

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### The Green Team

The Green Team is in the process of figuring out socially distant events for residents this year. Please stay tuned for future plans. It is the intention of the Green Team to ensure that they are planning events that will encourage environmentalism and conservation in a socially distant and safe way. Thank you to for all the hard work of our diligent members.

### The Civil Rights Commission

The Civil Rights Commission is planning its first book club meeting. The book of choice is *The Promised Land* by former President Barack Obama. This meeting will be via zoom on February 17th at 8pm. Please go to the Rutherford Civil Rights Commission Facebook page for more details.



### Councilman Ray Guzman

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#### DPW:

I'd like to thank the Superintendent Chris Seidler and the DPW for their hardwork during what is becoming a very busy snow season.

As a fellow resident, I realize it may be frustrating to not see immediate snow removal on your street following a major storm. However, I'd like everyone to know that the DPW continues to work hard at their mission of keeping the streets of Rutherford as safe as possible.

As a Council member, I'm privy to information that I think it's important for residents to know, so that reasonable expectations can be set.

Did you know that Rutherford has 43 miles of road? For reference, it took 10 trucks and several hours to clear 200 feet of snow on Irving Place between Union Ave and Franlin Place.

This was the first 20 inch snow since 2015 and it's important to know that the DPW continues to prioritize the narrowest roads efficiently as possible. The snow is being removed to Veterans Blvd.

Please bear with with the Borough and DPW as they continue to remove snow during what may be a difficult winter.

### Councilman Matthew Cokeley

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**Fire:** Mayor and Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 53-2021 which pertains to the filing of the 2020 USDHS-FEMA Firefighters Assistance Grant. This grant application is intended to procure financing to upgrade the communications systems which Rutherford's Bravest rely on. Their current systems are more than a decade old in some instances and the primary radio models are being phased out by the manufacturer, Motorola.

The Rutherford Fire Department's Junior Firefighter's program is now open to 16 and 17 year olds youths. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Rutherford Volunteer Firefighter - youth or adult - email [recruitment@rutherfordfd.com](mailto:recruitment@rutherfordfd.com).

**Social Services:** Families in need of emergency food please contact the Social Services Director, Genevieve Kacmarcik, at 201-460-3028 or [gkacmarcik@rutherfordboronj.com](mailto:gkacmarcik@rutherfordboronj.com) or myself and we can connect you with the Rutherford Food Pantry.

**Arts Committee:** March is Youth Arts Month and the Borough, in partnership with the Rutherford Arts Council, is beginning a call for artwork (8.5"x11" canvas in a vertical format preferred) created by our resident children under the age of 18. The theme will be "Art Connects Us". The entry fee will be \$50 which covers the cost of printing and installation of the banners along our business district avenues. Entry forms and detailed submission information will be distributed February 23rd.

**Felician:** NJ Higher Education Presidents of Color, including Felician University's Admiral James Crawford III, presents "COVID-19 Vaccination Standing Together to Save Lives". More can be read here:

<https://felician.edu/news/nj-higher-education-presidents-of-color-covid-19-vaccination-standing-together-to-save-lives/>

**Redevelopment:** At Monday night's council meeting (2/8), I cast my vote in the affirmative as it relates to Resolution No. 55 and the preparation of a redevelopment plan for the area known as the "Holman properties". After exhaustive research and extensive conversations with the Borough's professionals over the last few weeks, my vote hinged on one final confirmation of the fact that the parcels located on Lincoln Avenue are indeed zoned as an R1 or single family residence. That information was confirmed during the open session discussion just prior to the vote and why I spoke to emphasize that fact during my time. Moving forward, for the residents of Lincoln Ave. and the entire Rutherford community, I will only support a redevelopment plan which maintains that R1 zoning designation for those properties located on Lincoln Avenue within Block 110.