



September 2023
Office of the Mayor
BOROUGH OF STRATFORD

The Borough of Stratford is excited to share information regarding economic development in our community. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter as I am happy to share these updates with you.

Stratford Square – Former Bradlees

222 S. White Horse Pike

The Redeveloper, Brandywine Financial Services Corporation of Kenneth Square, Pa. sold the former Bradlees portion, and the new corporate owner, Velocity Ventures Partners LLC of 1 Belmont Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Pa, 19004, are in the midst of investing several millions of dollars to renovate the building and property. After 20 years of sitting vacant, we are pleased to have found a commercial tax paying entity to occupy this project.

Other projects at the shopping center are also underway. As you may have noticed, the long-awaited Royal Farms sitework is nearing completion. This work was performed in conjunction with the roadway that connects Rowan University and Jefferson Hospital to this shopping center. Mayor & Council approved these plans and projects prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and at last they are coming to fruition.

AutoZone – Former Pep Boys

10 N. White Horse Pike

A complete remodel of the old Pep Boys location is nearing completion and will be one of the largest AutoZone retail locations in the area. Pep Boys will continue to occupy all 10 bays for auto repairs. We welcome AutoZone and are pleased Pep Boys remains a part of Stratford. The AutoZone plans were approved by Stratford officials last year and they are ahead of schedule.

Stratford Commons – Ryan Homes

114 Berlin Road

This development is also nearing completion and there are many people who are looking to relocate in our community. This new development had people waiting to call Stratford their home! As of September 1st, and prior to completion, 26 of the 41 three-story homes have either settled or are under contract. The average sale price is about \$340,000.00. We are proud some of the homes were purchased by current Stratford or former Stratford residents.

The Stratford Commons project was approved by Mayor & Council prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic and will be completed and occupied ahead of schedule.

The Reserve at Laurel Mill Farms – Former Laurel Mills Shopping Center

102 Warwick Road

While this location has been an eyesore, and a source of stress and concern for over 20 years, we were pleased to have the site mostly demolished in April of this year. The property owner Maninder Sethi, operating as Laurel Mills LLC of 15 Wilkinson Avenue, Jersey City, NJ, 07305, received approvals to build a townhome community.

The plans had been in the works for several years, but it seems one delay after another. Stratford had to commence Eminent Domain proceedings, a process by which if successful, Stratford could take ownership of the property. The resolution agreed to by the owner was to demolish the whole site by April 2023.

In the meantime, we await the developer to begin this project. The Borough along with the County and State agencies are making sure the developer keeps to its agreements and maintains the site while construction begins. This includes the State, County and Local regulations regarding stormwater runoff, which the owner was derelict in, and resulted in additional enforcement actions by all the agencies.

We share the frustration, but as representatives of local government, we must ensure every action taken is legal, justifiable and proper.

The Veterans Village

1 Colby Avenue

Vacant for years, the Veterans Village received zoning approval to create 20 one-bedroom homes by a prior owner, reserved for Veterans of the United States Military. Stratford is happy to support our veterans and pleased with the enormous investment the current owner Ben Zhuang of Philadelphia has made to improve the property which underserved our town for years.

Senior Living Facility – Former Christian Academy/YWAC/Tomlinson Mansion

710 West Laurel Road

Also vacant for years, the property was purchased by ICP Stratford SPE, LLC, 550 W. B Street, San Diego, California, 92101, and plans were approved by the Borough to build a 187 Unit Facility for the continued care of Stratford citizens and surrounding communities. In 2022 the building was razed. Since then, the developer has continued the legal work to obtain New Jersey Department of Community Affairs authorization to operate a memory care/medical facility. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is also reviewing this site so that it protects our environment during major construction projects. While locally we approved the plans a few years ago, this project is of the size and scope of building Jefferson Hospital and requires a great deal more than zoning approvals and construction permits to get out of the ground. We are all excited to see the Senior Facility up and running.

Factually, we have received every assurance the project is moving forward and owners have continued all the preliminary work required to get shovels in the ground. We are looking forward to this \$30-40 million facility which create jobs, serve our senior population and be a new tax ratable bringing millions of tax dollars into our Borough and our School District.

