

Dear Fairfielders,

It's hard to believe that summer is nearly over, and our students headed back to school this week. The beginning of a school year always brings with it anticipation and excitement for a new and fresh start.

I want to acknowledge and thank Fairfield's teachers, paraprofessionals, nurses and all the staff that work in all of Fairfield's schools for everything they do to create a thriving educational environment for students.

I also want to give a warm welcome to new and returning students at Fairfield University and Sacred Heart University. Fairfield is unique in having two flagship universities with their students adding vibrancy and a boost to many local businesses who welcome them to fill jobs and internships.

Many families with young children also appreciate the many new students who help Fairfield families with caring for their children.

With the start of the school year, I would like to take this opportunity to offer important back-to-school travel safety tips.

Drivers, especially in school zones, should remain alert while driving near playgrounds and in residential areas. Similarly, students walking or riding bicycles to and from school should always be distraction–free. Walkers should remain on the sidewalks at all times and cross at crosswalks or intersections. Those riding bikes should go with the flow of traffic and wear a properly fitted helmet for safety.

Our Community also plays a part in the safety of our students and everyone who shares the roads with cars.

Please remember to never pass a school bus when it is stopped with its lights flashing and stop sign out as children may be boarding or exiting the bus. Likewise, parents are encouraged to teach their children to be cautious when entering or existing school buses or while walking or biking to and from school.

While our town continues to grow and our community has experienced the loss of precious lives of pedestrians, I sincerely ask every Fairfielder to take the responsibility of driving to take into account the power a vehicle can have.



INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

As part of the Fairfield Police Department's promotion of internet safety, SRO Chance Wilkie's best piece of advice is to avoid "sharenting," the practice of oversharing your child's life on social media.

SRO Wilkie would like to remind parents that what is shared has a permanent digital footprint and that oversharing potentially exposes children to cyber threats and risks having sensitive information about saved, shared or exploited.

To avoid this from happening, parents should:

- Be Discreet About What They Share: whereabouts, recent purchases, phone number, etc.
- Use a Strong Password: A simple but often overlooked part of ensuring your online safety.
- Be Selective with Friend Requests: If you don't know the person, don't accept their request as it could be a fake account.
- Remember Anything They Post can be Shared: Even with strong privacy settings in place, it's important to remember that what you post online is never really private and can be re-shared.

See more safety tips from the Police on their <u>Facebook page here</u>.

NAVIGATE TO: TOWN GOVERNMENT NEWS COMMUNITY NEWS FIRST RESPONDERS COMMUNITY EVENTS NEW BUSINESSES UPCOMING EVENTS

TOWN GOVERNMENT NEWS

NOISE ORDINANCE PASSES RTM

A new town noise ordinance passed the RTM on Monday evening. The redlined version of the approved ordinance can be found in the RTM backup <u>here</u>. There were multiple amendments offered at the RTM meeting, which passed unanimously. You can watch the meeting <u>here</u>, read coverage from the Fairfield Citizen <u>here</u>, and the CT Examiner <u>here</u>.

TOWN ROAD PAVING & SIDEWALKS

Residents often write in with questions about paving and road or sidewalk repair. When I became First Selectwoman there was no real plan for DPW and it created challenges for budgeting and for prioritizing the roads most in need.

In 2021, I included funds in my budget for a consultant for Fairfield's first independent analysis of all town roads and the majority of sidewalks. Each road was assessed and ranked based on condition and amount of use. This analysis is now the foundation for the Town's 5 year road paving and sidewalk improvement plan.

This year's milling and paving began last week. To see the list of roads, please <u>click here.</u> For residents who live on streets scheduled for paving, you will be notified when your street will be impacted by roadwork if you are enrolled in the Town's Emergency Alert System. To enroll in the Town's notification system, please <u>click here</u>.

We recently asked the same company to update the analysis to include all sidewalks throughout the town. My goal is to properly fund these five year plans to catch up on our paving and repairs/replacement of old sidewalks. Once we reach that point, the cost each year in the operating budget will just be for maintenance.

We also used \$1 million of ARPA funding to examine the 15 intersections with traffic signals that the Town maintains. These installations were done over many years and as such, obsolete parts and availability for parts impact repairs. Controllers do not match and present problems for maintenance. A Traffic Engineer was engaged to determine the most vulnerable locations, prioritize projects and design improvements. These changes will help improve traffic safety and the flow of traffic in Town.

RE-TIMING OF FAIRFIELD TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Several traffic signals in Town will be evaluated and recalculated to update timings. The following signals will be studied for potential timing changes:

- Fairfield Woods Rd & Palm Drive
- Fairfield Woods Rd & Melville
- Black Rock Turnpike & Commerce Drive
- Black Rock Turnpike & Bullard Square
- Brentwood Avenue & Commerce Drive
- Chambers Street & Commerce Drive
- Grasmere Avenue & Kings Highway East
- Grasmere Avenue & Home Depot Driveway
- Kings Highway East & Access Road
- Kings Highway East & Commerce Drive
- Mill Plain Road & Fairprene Drive, Ludlowe Road
- Park Avenue & Jefferson, Old Town Road

According to the State Department of Transportation, studies have shown that proper timing can reduce crashes by as much as 14%. If residents would like to provide input on the above traffic signals, they can email the Project Manager at <u>Jonathan.Corilla@ct.gov</u>.



BOARD OF EDUCATION REDISTRICTING

The Board of Education met again this week to discuss the school redistricting. You can watch the August 29th meeting where SLAM presented a new scenario <u>here</u>. I previously shared an update about my experience with redistricting you can read <u>here</u>.

CAPITAL PLAN WORKING GROUP

Last year, I created a bipartisan Capital Plan Working Group made up of varying stakeholders, to assess and prioritize the many needs the Town, Water Pollution Control Authority and Board of Education have on the horizon. Over the course of eight public meetings last year, the group heard from department heads and the School District and explored many projects from pickleball courts, to sewer infrastructure, flood prevention, dog parks and new schools, to name a few. This process is new for our town but I believe it is helpful in an effort to take a deep dive into the many competing needs Fairfield faces. It's not an easy task and I want to thank all those who participated and provided helpful and genuine input. I also implemented a bonding cap in consultation with the town's financial advisors to control the amount the town puts on its credit card, to protect our fiscal health and guide the capital planning process.

This week we held our first meeting for the new fiscal year, which you can watch <u>here</u>.

The portion on school capital projects discussion starts here.

ROOSTER RIVER MEETING

On Tuesday, September 12, I will be hosting a public meeting to provide an update on the Town's Rooster River flood mitigation plans at Fairfield Warde High School Auditorium.

Rooster River Flooding has been a long standing problem, especially for residents and businesses in the river floodplain areas.

The town has been working on the Phase I portion and thought it would be helpful to share where the town is in the process. I will also be sending the meeting information to residents in the Rooster River area who have reached out to join us. I hope those who haven't reached out but are interested will mark their calendars to join us on the 12th.

DRAFT PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD) FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Town Planning and Zoning Department is pleased to present, for public review and comment, the draft <u>Plan</u> of <u>Conservation and Development (POCD)</u>. The plan is reflective of the robust public engagement that was undertaken in the update effort. This process began in 2018 with initial outreach to Town Departments and other Boards and Commissions. We had very well attended public workshops in the winter of 2020 prior to the COVID pandemic. A presentation of the plan will be shared at a September Board of Selectmen meeting.

As we emerged from COVID, the Town approved the use of ARPA funds to hire a professional planning consultant firm to help us take the work we had previously done, re-engage the community and complete the plan. We had a successful virtual workshop in the Fall of 2022 and a well-attended open house in April of 2023 that resulted in positive feedback for the proposed plan organization and concepts. Our goal is to hold a TPZ public hearing in October aimed at adoption in early November by the Plan and Zoning Commission. Public comments are welcome and can be directed to TPZCommission@fairfieldct.org.

METROCOG PUBLIC MEETING - COMMUNITY INPUT ON NATURAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Town of Fairfield is pleased to partner with the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG) in the update of the Region's Multijurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP).

The Town and MetroCOG are hosting a public meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 6:00 pm for Fairfield residents and businesses to learn about the plan and share their knowledge of, experiences with, and concerns about natural hazards, vulnerabilities and opportunities for mitigation. The meeting will take place at the Rotary Room of Fairfield's Main Public Library, 1080 Old Post Road.

Please <u>click here</u> to read more.

• The on-line survey can be found <u>here</u>. A paper version will be provided upon request To share comments, click <u>here</u>.

• Updates will be posted to <u>www.ctmetro.org</u> and social media (<u>https://www.linkedin.com/company/metrocog/</u>).

PENFIELD PAVILION REPAIR

Updates on the project at Penfield Pavilion are provided monthly at the BOS meeting. As we move forward on remediation and repair at this site, the Town will share information we receive on the Penfield Construction Project webpage you can read <u>here</u>.

INTERNSHIP

My office had the pleasure of working with Fairfield Warde High School Senior, Aaryan Chitnis, who interned for us over the summer. I am grateful for all of Aaryan's assistance and glad that he learned about how his local government operates.

I hope you all will join me in wishing Aaryan all the best in his senior year!



COMMUNITY NEWS

UI | FAIRFIELD TO CONGRESS SUBSTATION BRIDGEPORT RAILROAD TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILD PROJECT

United Illuminating (UI) is proposing removing their existing 115-kV lines and infrastructure (bonnets) from the CT DOT-owned railroad catenary structures along the Metro-North Railroad tracks in both Fairfield and Bridgeport. Ul's proposal is for 115-kV lines to be rebuilt on new single or double-circuit monopoles, which will be located within or near the CT DOT railroad corridor.

Various town departments including Zoning, Conservation, Engineering, the Tree Warden, Parking Authority, and my office, met with UI before their submission to offer input and concerns for the proposal. The Town's Conservation Commission composed a letter to the CT Siting Council you can read <u>here.</u>

The Connecticut Siting Council holds exclusive authority over utility proposals statewide. To ensure the Town's interests, I engaged outside legal counsel to apply for, and we received, intervener status with the Siting Council. You can read the letter we submitted <u>here</u>.

The Town also requested an additional evidentiary hearing so that we can present expert witnesses and cross examine any witnesses introduced by UI.

If you would to share feedback on the project, you can send a letter to <u>siting.council@ct.gov</u>. Please feel free to copy me on your email to the siting council.

I will continue to provide updates as they become available in my newsletter. The UI project website can be found <u>here</u>.

YOU COULD HAVE UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

Many Connecticut residents are unaware that the CT Treasurer's office runs a "Lost and Found" database that goes by the name "Unclaimed Property Program." You may have unclaimed money owed to you in the State Treasury account.

To find money that may belong to you, click here. For more details click here.

CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Each September, Childhood Cancer Awareness Month is nationally recognized to bring awareness to this disease and the need to support diagnosed children and their families. Did you know that in Connecticut alone there are an estimated 200+ children diagnosed with cancer each year?

I have issued a proclamation declaring September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Fairfield, CT in partnership with local childhood cancer organization, Circle of Care, highlighting the importance of bringing awareness to this disease.

This month "GO GOLD" with Fairfield and Circle of Care to highlight the color of childhood cancer awareness and the need to support these families. "We Care" lawn signs are available for purchase (\$20) through Circle of Care for you to display at your home or business.

Inspired to get involved? Call Lisa Williams at 203-663-6893 or visit at <u>thecircleofcare.org</u> to learn more.

FAIRFIELD'S FIRST RESPONDERS

SWEARING IN NEW CAPTAINS

I had the honor of swearing in two of Fairfield's finest into their new positions as Police Captains. I hope you'll join me in congratulating <u>Fairfield Police Department's</u> newest Captains, Hector Irizarry and Felix Esposito. Both men have a long and honorable record of serving and protecting the people of Fairfield.



NEW FIREFIGHTERS

I had the pleasure of meeting five of the <u>Fairfield Fire Department</u>'s newest probationary Firefighters at the Fire Training School before four of them head off to the Fire Academy on Sunday. I hope Fairfielders will also join me in welcoming our new firefighters Corinne Minlionica #447; Jeff Sturges #448; Nick Santaniello #449; Andrew Ocampo #450; Chris DuBois #451

I wish all of our new Fire Fighters the best of luck in training over the next few months and in their careers.



ELECTRIC SCOOTER SAFETY

I'd like to share previous warnings about electric scooters as more young people are using them throughout the town. In recent years, electric scooters have gained immense popularity among both companies like Bird, which operates under a pilot program in Fairfield, and many privately owned scooters. To operate a Bird Scooter, riders much be 18 years old. Privately owned scooters do not have this same age requirement. I have received an increased volume of phone calls from residents concerned about the safety of very young riders on privately owned scooters.

The Bird Pilot Program was introduced with the aim of offering convenient and cost-effective transportation options for the residents of Fairfield. In April, the Board of Selectmen made the decision to extend the Pilot Program for another year, seeking to continue providing accessible and efficient transportation solutions for Fairfielders. That BOS meeting can be viewed <u>here</u>.

As a reminder, here are the rules and regulations of electric scooters from the Fairfield Police Department's Traffic and Safety Bureau:

- Electric scooters are to be ridden on the right side of city streets that have a speed limit under 35 mph. Electric scooters are also not to be ridden on highways, expressways, and streets that have a speed limit over 35 mph.
- Connecticut's electric scooter laws state that you must have a driver's license in order to ride an electric scooter. The scooter share apps require proof of a valid driver's license before use. However, you do not need a particular 'scooter' license (M endorsement) to ride an electric scooter, as long as it does not exceed 20 mph.
- Connecticut's helmet laws state that anyone under the age of 18 must wear a helmet when operating a motor scooter. If you are over the age of 18, you legally do not have to wear a helmet, but it is still encouraged.
- Electric scooters are to be ridden with traffic, which means riding on the right side of the road at all times. Stay as close to the right side of the road as possible while maintaining safety to avoid car/scooter collisions. Obey all traffic signals and signs just like a car would. Always yield to pedestrians by staying aware of where they might be at all times. Use hand signals when making a turn to inform other drivers and pedestrians that you are turning. Electric scooters are meant for one ride at a time. Only allow ONE person on a scooter at a time.

RULES FOR USING BIRD SCOOTERS

Bird has updated their verification process for use by implementing a facial recognition system prior to riding. The Bird App directs riders to take a photo of their driver's license, state identification, or passport during sign-up, followed by a selfie. The system uses facial biometric technology to confirm the rider is 18 years of age or older and their ID document is authentic and an unaltered match to the person pictured in the selfie. All new accounts will be required to use ID verification and facial recognition prior to riding. For more information on this process, please <u>click here.</u>

The quickest way to report any issues regarding **Bird Scooters** is through the Bird app, using the "Community Mode" function. You do not have to be a rider to use this feature. You can download the Bird app here: https://go.bird.co/. Community Mode is accessible by clicking the "??" in the bottom left corner of the Bird mobile app. Click this button, and you'll find three separate options: report a "Badly Parked Bird", "Damaged Bird", and "Contact Bird". This is by far the most efficient way to report issues to the Bird Team. Or you may contact their customer service email: Fairfield311@Bird.com or their 24/7 hotline: (866) 205-2442.

DONATION TO ANIMAL CONTROL

This week, Fairfield Firefighter Jeff DeNitto presented a \$500 dollar donation to the Animal Shelter.

Jeff had heard that Animal Control had a large number of animals impounded due to an ongoing cruelty case and had stopped by and asked several weeks ago how he could help.

On August 23rd, the Lantern Point Association, of which Jeff is a member, held a fundraiser and raised \$500 that will be used for dog/cat food, cat litter, toys and treats.

I sincerely appreciate Jeff and the Lantern Point Association for their generosity for our shelter animals.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

SMALL BUSINESSES

On my way home from Town Hall last week, I stopped to support local business owner Susan Hickey of Tabitha's Ice Cream who highlighted two Fairfield families illustrating the essence of Fairfield.

Tabithas hosted a local McKinley mom - Siobhen Gamble's <u>new book</u>, <u>There's Nothing Small About Me</u>, about her son who's going to be a 1st grader at McKinley and 11-year old, Valencia Falco, Fairfield Woods Middle School student, turned entrepreneur selling <u>handmade bracelets</u> to donate the proceeds to ALS and Make A Wish.

It was the perfect way to end the week supporting a local Fairfield Mom and small business owner and her daughters supporting Fairfield Moms and their children.

I bought a lovely bracelet made by Valencia and two books complete with capes and masks from Siobhen to use and donate when visiting our schools for read a loud days.

PS. The lavender honey ice cream is a must try!







LOGAN BIELING LEMONADE STAND

Kudos to Logan and his parents Danielle and Donald for hosting another successful Lemonade Stand event benefiting <u>Kevin's Afterglow</u> & <u>Operation Hope of Fairfield</u>.

It was so heartwarming to see the crowds of people supporting Logan's efforts to make a difference for our community. This event was especially fun for me because Logan's home was where we raised our son and brought back so many warm and happy memories.



CAR WASH HABITAT FOR HUMMANITY

On Sunday, August 13th, Pedro Espada, a Notre Dame Senior organized a car wash that raised over \$3,000 for <u>Habitat for Humanity.</u> Thank you, Pedro, for your excellent work in giving back to the community.





NEW BUSINESSES

SMALL MEDIUM LARGE

The Town is excited to welcome <u>Small Medium</u> <u>Large Coffee Co</u> to Fairfield with a ribbon cutting ceremony. As a long-time small business owner with my husband, I know first-hand that it takes determination, faith, long hours and putting all the capital you can muster to open a small business.

Located at 2480 Black Rock Turnpike, Small Medium Large Coffee Co serves freshly brewed hot and iced coffees, teas and smoothies, along with doughnuts, muffins, bagels and other treats.



FAIRFIELD SPORTS

FAIRFIELD NATIONAL 10U BASEBALL TEAM

It was my honor and so much fun to welcome and recognize the Fairfield National 10U Baseball team at the Board of Selectmen meeting last week. You can watch the reading of the proclamation presentation <u>here</u>.



SOFTBALL CHAMPSIONSHIP

Congratulations to the Lanese Construction women's softball team for winning the championship in the Parks & Recreation league at Thomas Hayden field.



UPCOMING EVENTS

FAIRFIELD OKTOBERFEST | SEPTEMBER 23

I am excited to announce a new event for our community to enjoy in our downtown, incorporating live entertainment in an outdoor setting. The Town's first Oktoberfest will take place on September 23 from 2:00 – 6:00 PM in the FTC & Sanford St Lots. In our effort to plan more community events for our residents to enjoy, I want to thank our Parks & Recreation and Economic Development Departments for working together to put together a festive and fun event this September. I am looking forward to it and think we will have a great turnout.



GREENFIELD HILL FARMERS MARKET

Located at 65 Hillside Road, the Greenfield Hill Farmers Market will be open Saturdays from 10:00am to 1:00pm now through October. Be sure to stop by to check out their many local vendors.

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET

The Market is held every Sunday 10AM-2PM, rain or shine, on Sherman Green. Over 30 local farms and small batch food producers participate. This year the market offers live music and story time for children. For more information, including a list of venders, please visit the <u>Fairfield Farmers Market</u> webpage.



CENTER FOR FAMILY JUSTICE EVENT SEPTEMBER 6

The Center for Family Justice will hold its 26th Annual Speaking of Women event on Wednesday, September 6, at The Waterview, 218 Roosevelt Drive, Monroe, CT. Registration begins at 11am, followed by a 12pm Program start. This year's featured survivor is Chanel Miller, artist and author of the New York Times bestselling memoir, "Know My Name." For more information <u>click here</u>. To purchase event tickets <u>click here</u>.

ROCK FOR HOPE: A BENEFIT FOR OPERATION HOPE | SEPTEMBER 7

Operation Hope is hosting a benefit concert on Thursday, September 7 at 7:30pm featuring Band Central, at StageOne at Fairfield Theatre Company. Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased <u>here</u>. Band Central brings you rock legend Joe Bouchard, former member of Blue Oyster Cult, for a concert to support Operation Hope and its programs to eliminate hunger and homelessness in our community.

FAIRFIELD PADDLE FEST 2023 | SEPTEMBER 9

The Fairfield Rotary Club announced it will host Paddle Fest on Saturday, September 9th at Jennings Beach, Fairfield, CT. The family-friendly paddle event features four opportunities for Stand-up Paddlers (SUP) and Kayakers to compete, or simply enjoy time paddling on the lovely Long Island Sound. For elite paddlers, there will be a 6-mile competitive race to test their skills; for recreational paddlers, there is a 3-mile course, and ½ mile course for youth to try out their skills and have fun. New this year is a one mile "Paddle For Fun" event. Checkin/registration opens at 8:30 am and races start at 9:30 am. There will be music and fun for all ages. For more information and to register, <u>click here.</u>

FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL | SEPTEMBER 10

The Friends of Fairfield Public Library will hold the annual Food Truck Festival on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Jennings Beach. Admission is a \$5 donation and kids age 12 and under are free.



GREATER BRIDGEPORT TRANSIT OPEN HOUSE | SEPTEMBER 12

The Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) is hosting several open houses this September and October to learn more about current projects and to receive feedback on bus services in the region. The Fairfield Open House is on September 12th from 4:30pm-6:00pm.

PARENTING TEENS IN THE AGE OF ANXIETY - HOW WE CAN MAKE WORRY WORK | SEPTEMEBER 13

We welcome you to an enlightening session within the Fairfield Collaborative for Youth Mental Health series. Join us on Wednesday, September 13th, from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM at Fairfield Warde High School, located at 755 Melville Avenue. Dr. Dana Dorfman, MSW, PHD, will draw from her extensive clinical practice spanning over 30 years, engaging with children, adolescents, parents, and adults. This session promises to offer valuable insights into the intricate landscape of youth mental health. Your participation will contribute to a deeper understanding of this crucial topic. For more information, please click here or e-mail FairfieldCollaborative@fairfieldct.org.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DOGWOOD GOLF CLASSIC | SEPTEMBER 25

The Chamber of Commerce will be hosting its 3rd Annual Dogwood Golf Classic on September 25th, 2023. Register onli at <u>FairfieldCTChamber.com</u> or call the office at 203-255-1011. For more information, please <u>click here.</u>

LIBRARIES/FAIRFIELD MUSEUM

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Main Library/1080 Old Post Rd Branch Library/1147 Fairfield Woods Rd

Please view our online calendar of events on our website to see the offerings and reserve your spot: <u>fairfieldpubliclibrary.org</u>

The Library offers 24/7 access to its digital collection of books, music, magazines, movies and databases. Information services are available in person, by phone (203-256-3160), by email at eref@fplct.org, and via text messaging (text askfplct to 833-232-4100).

Please note that both branches of Fairfield Public Library are now CLOSED ON SUNDAYS through Labor Day.

PEQUOT LIBRARY

720 Pequot Avenue/Southport

Pequot Library offers an exciting lineup of programs for all ages, all of which are free and open to the public. Please <u>click here</u> for more information.

A few highlights in the coming weeks is the Teen Advisory Board (TAB), a virtual chat with award-winning television host and bestselling author Lidia Bastianich, and the annual Sasquanaug Block Party takes place on September 9 starting at 3:00 p.m. This treasured community event will feature fun snacks, bouncy castles, and activities for the whole family to enjoy. For more information, visit www.sasquanaug.org.

FAIRFIELD MUSEUM AND HISTORY CENTER

370 Beach Road



The <u>Fairfield Museum and History Center</u> believes in the power of history, art, and humanities to inspire the imagination, stimulate thought, and transform society. To view upcoming events, <u>click here.</u>

I hope you take some time to enjoy and relax over the Labor Day weekend.

Brenda L. Kupchick Fairfield First Selectwoman



