



SUMMER 2020

Town of Historic Sykesville NEWSLETTER

www.townofsykesville.org
town@sykesville.net

TOWN OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Joseph Cosentini
Town Manager
410-795-6390

Craig Weaver
Town Treasurer
410-795-8959

Kerry Chaney
Town Clerk
410-795-8959

Mark Onheiser
Project Coordinator
410-795-8959

Jana Antrobus
Executive Assistant
410-795-6390

Michael Spaulding
Chief of Police
410-795-0757

Barbara Prawdzik
Admin. Assistant/Police
410-795-0757

Derek Shreves
Public Works Director
410-795-3186

The Town House
Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mayor and Town Council
Second & fourth Mondays
of the month

Planning Commission
First Monday of the month

Historic Commission
Fourth Tuesday of the month

Board of Zoning appeals
Monthly as necessary

Parks &
Recreation Committee
Fourth Thursday of the month

PANDEMIC HISTORY AND OUR FUTURE

As we move from the most challenging times in recent history here in Sykesville due to the novel coronavirus pandemic toward a new normal in Town, perhaps history will provide a bit of solace and guidance. The Town survived the pandemic of the 1918 Spanish Flu somewhat similar to the fashion we are experiencing today. Our agricultural and economic engines have grown tremendously over the years in Carroll County, but many of the reasons we as a Town have experienced fewer casualties in the past are likely the same reason we have today as well. Being away from more densely populated areas has provided additional time to prepare and a buffer from intense outbreaks, with the exception of many of our senior living facilities which have become quite attractive over the years for seniors here in Carroll County.



Obviously, this crisis has exposed many things to us that perhaps we may not have thought of prior to this pandemic. For instance, the need for a more robust electronic meeting format and video both for us as your representatives and for you to view and participate. We will be making those changes as soon as possible. The immediate needs of businesses that are so crucial to our thriving Town has us all thinking of creative ways to be safe and survive economically, and many creative ideas and help have emerged from that too and will likely be a road map for the future. What will future plans look like for housing density and how could that affect us all as a result will also be on the minds of us all going forward.

This crisis, while devastating to so many, has exposed many areas that need attention, as well as many heroes who live among us every day.

We will be moving forward with our 10 Year Master Plan update this year despite the pandemic. We will need all of our residents' input to shape the Town's future over the next ten years. Don't be a victim of planning - be a participant! We will make every effort to involve our residents and encourage you to communicate and participate in this important process. Our professional facilitators will gather all of the input to help us shape our future into one that is most prosperous, safe and enjoyable for us all. It will be important to let them know what our hopes and dreams are for the future of our Town. So stay tuned and participate when possible!

I want to take a moment to thank all of you who have taken steps to stay home as directed, follow directions and instructions on closures, as well as for your compliance with local orders to help our staff stay as safe as possible during these challenging times! - THANK YOU! - It has made a difference!

A special thanks to all of our frontline workers and residents who have had the courage to go out every day and risk their safety so that we can live as normal a life as possible in the face of a hidden enemy. We can't thank you enough either!

Please sign up for the Newsflash - Like our Facebook Page - Get the Nixle - and consider sharing your Ring Camera access with our Police by texting "StaySafe" to 555888. All of these measures will help you stay updated and informed as we begin to return to a new normal here in Town. Bless you all, be safe, Ian Shaw, Mayor

Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste!

TRASH AND RECYCLING CHANGES 2020

Veterans Day – November 11 – trash regularly picked up on Wednesday, November 11, will be picked up on Friday, November 13

Thanksgiving – November 26 – recycling regularly picked up on Thursday, November 26, will be picked up on Monday, November 30

Christmas Eve – December 24 – recycling regularly picked up on Thursday, December 24, will be picked up on Monday, December 28.
There is no change to pick up on New Years' Eve, December 31.

A MESSAGE FROM PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, DEREK SHREVES

YARD WASTE

- ◆ The Town will pick up yard waste on your regular trash day. It will occur after trash pick up
- ◆ Carroll County prohibits yard waste from being mixed with standard household refuse
- ◆ Yard waste pick up will begin on April 7, 2020 and will end on December 2, 2020
- ◆ Please have your yard waste in the brown yard bags or bundle sticks together no more than 4 feet long
- ◆ Yard waste must be placed in paper lawn bags
- ◆ Plastic bags will not be picked up
- ◆ Dumping of yard waste in the parks and other wooded areas in the Town or along the Linear Trail is prohibited

GRASS TRIMMING

- ◆ Remember to keep your grass trimmed to less than 12 inches
- ◆ Do not put grass trimmings in the street



STORM DRAINS

Grass clippings and yard waste that gets into storm drains causes many problems. The clippings will break down in the storm drains and the nutrients released can be harmful to the water quality. The clippings can also clog the drains, potentially causing storm drain failure and flooding.

PLASTIC BAGS ARE NOT ACCEPTED IN CURBSIDE RECYCLING.

All recycling should be loose in the bin. You can recycle plastic bags at local grocery stores. Plastic bags will not be picked up in curbside recycling. Please visit www.recyclecarroll.org for more information on recycling.



Sykesville Police Department

It is our sincere hope that, by the time that this newsletter is published, our country will be emerging from the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has certainly wreaked havoc on our nation, state, and even here locally in our town.

We are hoping that life, as we know it, will return to some level of normalcy. With that being said, the Sykesville Police Department urges residents return to safe driving habits. During the height of the Coronavirus, with unprecedented numbers of people working from home and unemployment hitting levels not seen in this country since the Great Depression, traffic volumes fell dramatically.

Emptier streets and highways resulted in a significant surge in reports of drivers reaching speeds of 100 miles per hour or more in major cities and less populated ones, according to CNN (April 17, 2020). This increase in speed is not only a threat to the drivers and other motorists, but particularly to pedestrians, which we have our share of here in Town. "If you are a pedestrian and you get hit at 25 mph, you've got about a 90% chance of survival. It drops to 35% when you're hit at 40 miles per hour (Guckert, Maryland Matters, April 26, 2020)".

We strongly urge our residents to return to "normal" safe driving habits as the traffic volume increases during our nation's recovery from the Pandemic. Our officers will be out in force actively patrolling our roads in an effort to enforce traffic laws here in Town.

In addition, we will continue to stage our mobile radar speed trailer at various locations in Town in an effort to determine those locations which require focused enforcement of speeding and aggressive driving. We urge you all, for the safety of our residents, children, and pets, to please abide by the speed limit, wear your seat belt, and refrain from distracted driving and driving under the influence of alcohol.

Please continue to report any dangerous drivers, as well as any suspicious persons or vehicles in and around town at unusual hours, to us at 410-795-0757.

As always, in an emergency, dial '911'. We wish you all a safe, healthy, and enjoyable summer!

Gate House Museum

Due to the health emergency, the Gate House is closed and will remain closed most likely until the end of June, at which point, hopefully it will be safe to reopen. Space is tight inside the museum, and it's difficult to maintain the safe distancing that might be required into the foreseeable future.

Most likely, and sadly, we will cancel this year's porch talks, which were fun and educational, but also quite crowded.

The museum is more than just the building, however. It's our responsibility to explore, conserve, and explain the history of the town, while also educating and entertaining. Right now, we are studying the challenge of moving some of our events online. It won't be as much fun as sitting on the porch, and it will require a screen of some sort to join, but hopefully we can make it worthwhile and fascinating in its own way.

We have also begun a new website. You can view it at "thegatehousemuseum.com". Although it's in its early stages, it already includes a few interesting stories, some movies, and quite a few very good pictures of Sykesville and Springfield through the past. It's a place you can actually explore.

No, it's not the same as going to the museum, but we hope to keep adding to it and building a website that's as entertaining and informative as the actual museum and a place worth visiting from time to time for a more intimate connection with the area's past.

Take care. Be safe.
Hopefully, we'll see you soon.



A MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL MEMBER LINK

My previous newsletter correspondences have been born out of my passion for a safer, cleaner, and more enduring environment and what it means to be good stewards of our natural resources and protectors of Mother Earth. Amidst all of the awfulness and trials dealt to us these last few months, I believe it might be prudent, if not at least temporarily relieving, to focus on some positive outcomes of our unfamiliar routines and to be aware of an unintended consequence of all this social distancing.

I've seen for the first time not just one but both a male and female yellow-shafted flicker. There are at least three red-bellied woodpeckers that have taken up residence in my neighbors' black walnut trees, and the Eastern bluebirds have returned threefold of last year's count. Now if only I could refill my feeder quickly enough to serve the booming cardinal and blue jay population on Spout Hill.

But as our bird population is seemingly soaring and air quality has been reportedly improving worldwide, our Main Street's health and wellbeing has been suffering. Ed McMahon, Chair of the National Main Street Center Board of Directors, has said that "Downtown is important because it is the heart and soul of a community. And if you don't have a healthy downtown, you simply

don't have a healthy town." It's the collective success of our small businesses that provides the oxygen needed for our desirable quality of life and lends itself to our strong property values. Our total property assessment, the combined values of all residential and commercial property in Sykesville, has gradually increased \$12-16 million each year since 2015. Coincidentally, 2015 is the first year of five consecutive years that we have touted no storefront vacancies on Main Street.

Investment in our downtown is an investment in our strong property values. Strong property values are what make a town attractive to home buyers in the hunt for a place with a sense of community. Town pride is contagious and lends itself to social engagement, fosters neighborly support, and volunteerism which cyclically promotes an even stronger community. Strong property values optimize the equity in your home. Strong property values afford low crime, education, and opportunities for our youth. Strong property values mean fewer vacant homes and negligible derelict properties which makes your property more likely to sell quickly when it is time for you to do so.

Unless, perhaps you can't part with what I know will be another unintended consequence of this trialing time: an even stronger sense of an even stronger community... and Eastern blue birds.



Sykesville Parks and Recreation Committee

Summer is approaching, and the Sykesville Parks and Recreation Committee (SPARC) is busy adjusting our scheduled events in response to COVID-19. In the history of SPARC, we have not experienced anything quite like this. Our goal this summer is to provide the community with fun events while adhering to state and local regulations and protecting our guests and volunteers.

Summer Events

We are discussing ways to continue our summer events, but they may be a little different. We are looking into adjustments that will ensure our events comply with all regulations and make it safe and comfortable for guests and volunteers to attend.

Please follow us on Facebook and sign up for Town emails for up to date information.

Changing regulations and best practices regarding COVID-19 may affect our events. Please check Facebook prior to attending any of our scheduled events. You can find us at www.facebook.com/Sykesvilleparksandrecreationcommittee. We also highly recommend signing up to receive emailed notifications from the Town of Sykesville at www.townofsykesville.org. Make sure you subscribe to receive notifications from Sykesville Parks and Recreation.

Thank You for Understanding

It was hard for us to cancel the annual SPARC Easter Egg Hunt due to COVID-19 concerns. We love hosting this event every year. Thank you for your understanding.

We are rescheduling the Park Clean-Up and BBQ, which is typically held in April, to August 29. Bring your gloves and energy to help us clean up one of the parks! Please check Facebook for more information.

Stay Safe While Enjoying Our Parks

We are thankful that we have been able to keep our parks open for safe outdoor activities (walking, bike riding, etc.) the past few months. Our parks have been a great source for exercise and a chance to get out of the house for a bit. As the weather warms, we anticipate more people at our parks. Please continue to follow all Town regulations. There are signs at each park with additional information. We ask that you continue to wear masks and maintain 6-foot distance from others. These simple acts will help keep our community safe and healthy.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

Enjoy our events? Help us continue to put on these fun free events by donating some of your time. SPARC is a 100% volunteer group. Whether you would like to help a few hours once or are looking for an ongoing opportunity, there are plenty of ways you can make a difference! If you're interested in learning more, please email parks@sykesville.net, reach out to us on Facebook, or ask us about volunteer opportunities when you see us at an event.

SPARC typically meets at the Town House on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7pm. Due to regulations and safety concerns, meetings may be held virtually or canceled. Please check Facebook or sign up for Town emails for up-to-date information.

ALL EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE. PLEASE CHECK FACEBOOK PRIOR TO THE EVENT DATE

Sykesville Cinema

Second Saturday of each month from
July – October

July 11 | August 8
September 12 - *Reserved Rain Date*
October 10 - *Halloween-themed Movie*

Check Facebook closer to the event date to see the scheduled movie.

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Yoga in the Park

Second Sunday of each month from
June – October

June 14 | July 12 | August 9
September 13 | October 11

You will need to bring your own yoga mat. Check Facebook for location.

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Farmers Market

Second Sunday of each month from
June – October

July 12 | August 9
September 13 | October 11

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Concerts in the Park

SPARC has planned to schedule the Concerts in the Park series in the fall. Please look for more information later this summer.

September 19
September 26
October 3

www.DowntownSykesville.com
www.facebook.com/sykesville/
DowntownSykesvilleConnection@gmail.com
7307 Spout Hill Road
Sykesville, MD 21784
410-216-4543



LOOKING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

The beginning of this year has been difficult. Our organization faced rescheduling multiple events, including our second largest fundraiser: the Sykesville Art & Wine Festival, assisting business owners finding adequate resources, creating a “Here for good” campaign to fundraise one t-shirt at a time, joining the Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD), and coordinating a drop-off and pick-up site for emergency needs in downtown Sykesville.

Sykesville made it to the Best Main Street in America's quarterfinals!



It was tough. Tough to see so much work vanishing, so many of our community struggling with access to food, resources or programs' and funds' eligibility and availability. It was tough to see our favorite places to meet or shop closed. It was tough to be alone, sheltered, and not knowing what to expect.

But there was some good as well. We met new and great partners at the Freedom District Citizen Association (FDCA), got some amazing work done with Commissioner Ed Rothstein and Senator Katie Fry Hester.

There was so much laughter, full on belly laughter, awarding the prizes for the “Disco-rona Dance Off” videos (still available on our website). There was so much pride in the race for the Best Main Street in America Contest, after making the quarterfinals out of 160 entries. There were some deep and fruitful collaborations

with the Town of Sykesville to sustain our small Main Street businesses, until they can safely re-open, with a grant program. There were moments, in the eye of the storm, where we saw the true Main Street heroes rise. We learned so much about what we are capable of and what really matters.

And finally, there is still so much good to come, that will feel immensely better post-pandemic:

We are working on ways to re-open the Downtown Sykesville Farmers' Market.

We have gorgeous pole flags about to be hung downtown. We're working on a fabulous 2021 calendar of events and programs. We will start small gatherings at the community garden when deemed safe and organize our volunteer meetings very soon.

We are hosting a golf tournament in August, in memory of a great lady – Donna Carol Box – and to sustain our organization that suffered greatly this first quarter. We would truly appreciate your support: consider signing up for or becoming a sponsor of the Coolest Golf Tournament (check our website for registration form or sponsor options)!



We will plan to be together soon. And if it takes a bit of time, it's ok, you can still wink with a mask on.



#Together

www.DowntownSykesville.com

www.facebook.com/sykesville



Town of Sykesville is recognized as the lead sponsor in all that we do and will assist our Board of Directors in conducting our group on the path of continued success, innovation, and commitment to serve our community. The DSC administers the Main Street program in Sykesville.



MASTER PLAN KICKING-OFF FOR SYKESVILLE – *GET SYKE'D AND MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD!*

The Town of Sykesville is excited to announce the kick-off of its Master Plan Update, a community planning initiative that will identify and prioritize the Town's top challenges and opportunities for the next 10 years. As a local initiative, Town staff and its technical consultant, Michael Baker International, will be collaborating with residents over the next year to understand what makes Sykesville great and where investment is needed to make the Town an even better place to live, work, play, and visit.

The master planning process is being overseen by the Sykesville Planning Commission and a Citizens Advisory Committee to review and update the Town's 2010 Master Plan. The review and update cycle is critical to ensure the Plan and supporting zoning regulations are current and relevant to the community's vision and goals, and to provide a solid foundation for the community's future growth and sustainability. Recommendations in the Master Plan will also be framed around an implementation strategy that will help inform Sykesville's capital planning and budgeting, general expenditures relative to capital improvements, infrastructure investments, and general expenditures required to accomplish the visions and goals of the Plan.

Be sure to like the "Town of Sykesville" Facebook page and be on the lookout for opportunities to provide input beginning this August. We will be launching a public survey and hosting several events to collect community input. Please visit www.townofsykesville.org this summer to learn more!

For more information check out:

www.townofsykesville.org • www.downtownsykesville.com • [#getsyked](https://twitter.com/getsyked)

Note: Events are subject to change. Please visit the websites listed above for the most up-to-date information.