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**MORRISVILLE  
BOROUGH PA**

**YEAR IN REVIEW**

*Morrisville Borough*



**Project Highlight >>>**

**Update: Patriots Park at Historic Summerseat**

The demolition of the old MR Reiter School, at the corner of Hillcrest and Harper Avenues, was completed in Spring 2018. The Borough has now been awarded a \$230,000 grant for accessibility improvements around Historic Summerseat.

The improvements will include sidewalk and ADA curb ramp replacements around the park. Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2019. The Borough was also awarded a \$85,000 grant to develop a master plan for the new park to design a passive park to enhance Summerseat, one of the most historically significant buildings in Bucks County.



*Photo Credit: Justin Bowers*

**Message from the Council President  
Moving Ahead in 2019!**

Welcome to Morrisville Borough’s official newsletter. I hope you find it interesting and informative. In this newsletter we take a look at some of the Borough’s improvements and projects from 2018 and discuss 2019 as we continue moving forward.

One of the exciting projects that took a huge step forward in 2018 was the purchase and demolition of the MR Reiter property that is in the process

of being converted into a passive park. This project began in 2015 with the Borough seeking funds to purchase the property. In 2018 the Borough was awarded grants that will pay for new sidewalks and ADA curbs surrounding the property and for the plans needed to develop the land into a beautiful park that will highlight one of the Borough’s many

attractions, historic Summerseat. This is one of several projects of which I’m proud to be a part. The name, “Patriots Park at Historic Summerseat” says it all. It’s a piece of our nation’s history

preserved! Parks were not the only focus in 2018. Infrastructure repair is also at the forefront of the Borough’s priority list. For the first time in many years the Borough invested in our roads and has a paving program that will continue in 2019 and beyond. We are also seeking funding for needed upgrades for traffic signals, the Delaware River levee accreditation, and enhancements to our downtown area that will make it more “walkable”. Although there is still a lot of work to be done in the upcoming years, it’s a nice start and a big step forward.

For the first time in many years, the Borough invested in our roads and has a paving program that will continue in 2019 and beyond.

# Message from Borough Manager Scott Mitchell

I am thankful to the people of Morrisville Borough for their patience and cooperation during this past year while we have reorganized the municipal government to improve upon the delivery of municipal services and modernize our local government operations. We have accomplished a lot during this past year and we have much more to do. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as Borough Manager for this wonderful community with such a rich history. I appreciate the warm welcome that I have received from the community and the confidence that Borough Council has shown me in this demanding position.

Like most small towns, Morrisville Borough faces many challenges that we must grapple with; everything from aging

infrastructure to unfunded mandates. There is no shortage of work to be done. I believe in taking an aggressive and proactive approach to dealing with our many challenges. A bold approach to our vision for 2020 will set the stage for the town's future for the next decade and for the next generation. The world around us is changing more rapidly than ever before while most of us remain naturally resistant to change. Most small towns cannot keep pace with the rate of rapid change, but we must endeavor to do so if we want to remain relevant in a modern era. This requires strategic planning, infrastructure investment, new technology, and revitalization efforts that spark economic development. This must be done in a way



Photo Credit: Virginia Cyphers

Borough Manager Scott Mitchell (center) pictured with Public Works Department employees (L to R) Wayne Richman, Bill Quill (driving) and Crew Leader Ron McDaniels

that preserves our history and protects our small town charm. We must work together to accomplish this balance and we must leverage the resources of our county, state and federal government partners.

It's Morrisville's turn.  
It's Morrisville's time.

Now, more than ever before, we must put our best foot forward and lean into it. The future of the town depends on it.

All The Best,  
*Scott Mitchell*

Photo Credit: Justin Bowers



## Robert Morris Plaza

You may have noticed changes at the Robert Morris Plaza in the heart of Morrisville at Bridge Street & Pennsylvania Avenue. Public Works, in conjunction with the Beautification Committee, recently had lighting installed to illuminate the Robert Morris Statue and highlight the plaza. Lighting was originally planned when the plaza was constructed but never came to fruition. The lighting was paid for through previously dedicated funds in the budget for plaza maintenance. Additionally, the Beautification Committee has been working hard to maintain the landscaping and also was able to have a cobblestone border installed behind the plaza through donations!

## Finance Update >>>

# 2019 Budget

On December 17, Council passed the 2019 budget with no tax increase. The 2019 budget keeps the tax millage the same as 2018. Due to increased pricing in the multi-year sanitation contract with Republic Services, trash and recycling fees for residents will increase by \$20.75 for the year to a total of \$310 and fees for commercial properties will increase by \$10 to \$600 for the year.

The \$7,151,297 budget includes revenues of \$2,786,319 from Real Estate Property Taxes. Included in the budget is matching funds for grants that have been applied for and/or received, funding for the Police Department to maintain a minimum of two officers on patrol per shift 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days per year, continued funding for the Morrisville Fire Company and Capital Health Emergency Medical Services, funding for continued street maintenance and paving, and \$17,000 to work with the Bucks County Planning Commission to update our 10 year old Comprehensive Plan.

The budget can be viewed here:

<https://www.morrisvillepagov.com/2019-budget-adopted/>

# 2018 Highlights

2018 was a busy year for Borough Council. Council hired a new Borough Manager and Financial Director / Compliance Officer / Treasurer, engaged a new Auditing Firm (Barbacane, Thorton & Co.), engaged Keystone Municipal Services to act as UCC Plan/Compliance reviewers, Code Enforcement, Zoning Officer and Fire Marshal. Council also applied for and/or received several grants for future investments in our parks and infrastructure.



2018 brought many changes for the Borough. Our new Borough Manager came to us with several years of experience managing Langhorne Borough and with a wealth of government and private sector experience. With the retirement of the Code Enforcement Officer in 2017, Council engaged Keystone Municipal Services (KMS) to perform all aspects of permitting, code enforcement, zoning officer and fire marshal services. In 2018, KMS worked the equivalent of 1.4 full time employees. KMS performed an evaluation of permit fees and adjusted them to cover the actual costs the Borough incurs (which was needed to cover escalating salary & benefit costs over the years). By doing so, the revenue from permits subtracted from the cost of KMS billings cost us less than our expenses in 2017 for one employee and a third-party company.

At the recommendation of the Borough Manager, Council hired a Finance Director / Compliance Officer to assist with managing and oversight of a \$7M budget wrought with bookkeeping issues and past fines. The Borough's new professional management team was able to correct multiple problems found in this year's audit before it was finalized and still meet state deadlines. Treasurer duties were transitioned to the Finance Director, establishing operational and financial efficiencies.

Council also implemented new Roadway Standards at the recommendation of the Borough Engineer, Gilmore & Associates. These new standards set roadway, curbing, driveway apron and sidewalk specifications and require road openings to be coordinated with Public Works. It also sets specifications for roadway patching and requires any road paved within the last

five years that is dug up to be repaved at full roadway width.

The Borough was awarded the following grants:

- **\$230,000** for curbs, sidewalks, & ADA ramps around Historic Summarseat and Patriots Park
- **\$191,054** for Williamson Park Playground Improvements (Tot Lot)
- **\$187,992** to improve the stormwater detention basin on Melvin Ave (this will meet an unfunded DEP mandate)
- **\$85,000** to develop a master plan for Patriots Park
- **\$50,000** to develop a master plan for Williamson Park
- **\$16,293** WalkWorks grant to develop a plan to enhance pedestrian & bicycle access throughout the Borough.

The following grant applications are under review:

- Upgrade of traffic signals at Trenton Ave & Pa. Ave and Philadelphia Ave & Pa. Ave
- Comprehensive street signage replacement (federal requirement)
- Traffic Signal Upgrades
- Bridge Street Sidewalk Improvements

Council recently awarded a contract for installation of the tot lot playground equipment that was purchased from a 2017 grant. Construction should begin over the winter, weather permitting.

The Borough paved Plaza Boulevard and Doloro Drive. By teaming with the Morrisville Municipal Authority, E. Maple, Hillside, and Stockham Avenues were fully repaved in addition to Crown Street.

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