

SEVEN VALLEYS BOROUGH



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Fall 2023 Newsletter

October 31, 2023 (6:00—8:00 p.m.) - **Trick-or-Treat**

November 7, 2023 (Tuesday) - **Election Day**

Municipal Election

- * Tuesday, November 7, 2023
- * Polls open 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- * Polling location is Liberty Christian Fellowship, 7 Maple Street.

PERMITS...PERMITS...PERMITS...

Permitting for zoning and construction can be confusing because there is no *"one answer fits all."* Depending on the project, you may need only a zoning or building permit, and in some instances you may need both permits.

Zoning permits are generally related to land use and are issued by the Zoning Officer.

A permit is required for any change, rearrangement, enlargement, addition, moving, relocation, removal, or demolition of any structure or parts thereof; or any modification that may change the valuation for tax assessment purposes.

A permit is not required for the replacement of existing worn or damaged materials with equivalent materials for the purpose of routine maintenance and upkeep; but not including any alteration. A few examples include painting, replacement of floor coverings, door and window replacements (unless the opening is being altered), deck/porch/step boards (a permit is required for repair/replacement of the structure).



Building permits are generally related to construction and are issued by the Borough's 3rd party agency, known as the Building Code Official (BCO).

TRICK-or-TREAT

Halloween Trick-or-Treating will be held **Tuesday, October 31st** from **6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** Residents who want to treat children are asked to turn on the porch light to let borough youngsters know where they are welcome.



In addition, there will be a drop-in at The Valley Tavern south parking lot, along the Rail Trail, where children will be treated to free hot dogs, snacks, and drinks. This event is a partnership between The Valley Tavern and the Borough. Be sure to include this stop in your Trick-or-Treat planning.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS



Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00 a.m., Sunday, **November 5th** when you turn your clocks **BACK one (1) hour**.

It is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke & carbon monoxide detectors.

The Borough's BCO is Kevin Hertzog, owner of Dependable Construction Code Services. The BCO reviews and approves all building construction plans, as well as all electrical, plumbing, and HVAC permit applications. The reviews and approvals must comply with the PA Uniform Construction Code (UCC), a state law. The BCO also has the responsibility of inspecting all work for the plans/applications that he approves. Upon final approval of all inspections the BCO issues an Occupancy Certificate.

It is **strongly recommended** that you **ask** the Zoning Officer if any permits are required **before** you begin. Questions should be directed to Todd Zeigler at 717-309-8033 or email contact@sevenvalleysborough.com.

SNOW REMOVAL FROM SIDEWALKS

The Seven Valleys Borough Code mandates that **snow removed from your property shall not be thrown into the street**. Please be considerate of motorists who already facing hazardous road conditions. The addition of snow thrown into the streets is dangerous and illegal.

When it is apparent that there will be an accumulation of snow or ice, residents are asked to park their vehicles off the street so that the snow removal equipment operators can do an efficient job of clearing the streets. Your cooperation is appreciated.

The Snow Removal Ordinance also requires that all property owners and tenants remove snow and ice from the sidewalk and walkway within 24 hours from when the frozen precipitation stops falling, and keep it clear. Enough snow and ice shall be removed to allow a clear path no less than two (2) feet wide for pedestrian traffic.

Failure to comply will result in the Borough removing snow and ice from sidewalk where the snow and ice has not been cleared by the owners/occupants to a width of at least two (2) feet within 24 hours from when the precipitation stops falling or ice stops accumulating. The Borough will then collect the cost of remedying and correcting the violation from the responsible person, together with a \$35.00 administration fee. An invoice will be sent to the owner/occupant. If the invoice is not paid within the specified time of 10 days, the invoice will be collected through a municipal lien, which will include filing fees and legal costs. In addition, a complaint could also be filed in District Court seeking civil penalties.



GREAT PUMPKIN WALK

The York County Rail Trail Authority has decided to forego the 2023 pumpkin walk, and indications are that the event will not return.

Instead the Authority is considering new and interesting ways to invite people to the rail trail.

Christmas Magic - A Festival of Lights

The York County Park's will celebrate its 40th season of this year Rocky Ridge County Park.

The events includes a variety of amazing holiday lights, as well as trains, hot chocolate, and a Bricker's food truck.

The attraction will be open November 24th through December 30, 2023, and will be closed December 24th & 25th.

Hours are 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. Friday through Sunday.

Advance ticket purchase is required through ChristmasMagicYork.com. Walk-in admission is not available.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE

The Valley Tavern is hosting a toy drive from November 9—December 9, 2023. The collection is for new toys and books for newborns through 10 years of age, plus newborn infant needs.

Cash or checks will also be accepted and The Valley Tavern will shop for you.

All items can be dropped off during regular business hours. If you have any questions, call Meg Fullerton at 717-428-2611.



BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Borough Council meetings are always open to the public. The meetings are typically held the first Monday of each month at 11 Main Street, at 7:00 p.m.

Cannot attend the meetings? You can always watch live through the Borough's YouTube Channel, or at a later time as the meetings are also recorded and posted on the channel.

EXCERPT from the September 7, 2023 Borough Council meeting minutes.

William H. Stiles, II, Councilmember, 79 Church Street

W. Stiles read aloud a prepared statement to address allegations and misinformation circulating within the community and on social media. He asked if any Council member does not agree with his statements to make that known at the end of his comments. The topics he addressed were as follows:

1. Borough Council is Operating at a Deficit. – This is not true. The independent audit by a CPA reported that the Borough’s total cash balance as of December 31, 2022, was \$401,741. The total cash balance on hand as of August 31, 2023, is \$461,232, which is a very healthy fund balance for a Borough of this size. A summary of the Audit is published in the Newspaper and posted on the website, and it is filed each year with the PA Department of Community & Economic Development.
2. Zoning and Code Enforcement is a “Racket.” – Zoning permits are not a money maker. Administration and enforcement of ordinances costs more than permit income, and fines are few and far between because of the Borough’s policy to seek compliance before fines.
3. Poor Communication with Residents – A Borough newsletter is hand-delivered in the Spring & Fall of each year, there is a Borough website (since 2010) with meeting dates, meeting minutes, email/telephone number contact information, upcoming Borough events, financial reports, and the annual budget, which is advertised in the newspaper, placed on the website, and included on the meeting agenda for action. The website also provides access to applications, including information on the Jr. Councilperson program. Subjects, such as sidewalk snow removal regulations are included in the newsletter.
4. Public Comment Implemented to Control Public Input – The public is always welcome to attend meetings and to offer public comment. However, public comment rules are not uncommon and are for the purpose of conducting an orderly meeting. If questions can be answered during public comment periods, they will. Not all questions can be answered at that time. The intention, under PA law, is for public comment and not Q & A. While the suggested and common time is to allow 3-minutes per person to comment, consideration may be given to extending the public comment period to 5 minutes in the future. The rules are also for the benefit of the speaker as they are designed to stop interruptions and outbursts from other members of the public.
5. 150 Church Street is Not Allowed to Rebuild – This is a false statement. There have not been any plans received to rebuild, and when they are, the Borough will work with the owner within Borough ordinances. The details obviously have not been worked out, but the property owner can rebuild on the property.
6. Ray Kinard Fined \$12,000 – This is a false statement. Mr. Kinard’s tenants failed to respond to violation notices, resulting in a civil complaint being filed in District Court. He reached out to the Zoning Officer and Borough Council, and worked with the Borough to achieve compliance, which he did prior to the scheduled hearing date. The Borough then withdrew the civil complaint and Mr. Kinard paid no fine.
7. 2005 & 2008 Zoning Ordinance Amendments - Last month the statement was made that the 2005 & 2008 amendments made the blanket statement that anything you do on your property requires a permit. That is incorrect. The December 2005 amendment deleted that blanket statement in subsection 701.a. and replaced it with language that does not require a permit for in-kind repairs, etc. It also deleted the definition of “Alterations” and “Alterations, Structural” and added a new definition for “Alteration and Repair.” The 2008 amendment deals solely with signs and has no bearing on zoning permits. Both

amendments were reviewed by the York County Planning Commission, advertised in the newspaper, and posted on the former website as attachments to the zoning ordinance. Our current website designer received all amendments which are currently posted on the new website. Copies of the current permit regulations can be picked up off the front table at the end of the meeting. The Fall newsletter will include detail explanation of a zoning permit and a UCC building permit, and what the difference is between the two. There will also be an explanation of the difference between zoning and all other ordinances , such as overgrown grass, storage of junk, snow removal, which are not under the zoning ordinance.

8. Public Attendance is Very Telling – This comment was made at the last meeting. There were 36 visitors at the July 14th meeting and 19 at last month’s meeting. Their perception is that all attendees were there because they are dissatisfied with Borough Council. That is an inaccurate assumption. Following the July 14th meeting there were many who approached various council members and mayor telling us they were there because they could not understand what Brian Brenneman’s letters/postcards were about, and to express that they do not want zoning eliminated because it helps to protect their property value and their quality of life. At last month’s there were several known attendees who were present for reasons other than to support elimination of Borough ordinances.
9. Fire Company and Ambulance Company are under Borough control – The Seven Valleys Fire Company and the former Tri-Community Ambulance Association are independent of each other and independent of the Borough. The Borough supported both through an annual donation from the Borough’s general fund.
10. Zoning Officer is looking for violations – Most zoning violations are driven by resident complaints. If a violation is observed while driving through the Borough, or while investigating a complaint, that violation will be acted upon. Photographs will be taken to document a violation, and the progression of a violation. Borough Council’s policy is compliance before fines. Violators are given ample notice and time to comply.
11. Borough Council’s Authority – Contrary to the belief of many, Borough Council cannot do whatever it wants. Boroughs, as with all other political subdivisions of the Commonwealth, must follow the laws and limitations placed upon it by the state legislature. We must follow the Pennsylvania Borough Code, which dictates what we can and cannot do. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, known as the MPC, is another state law that we must follow, which mandates what we can do regarding planning and zoning.
12. Respectful Disagreement & Working Together – Not everyone will always agree, and public comment is welcomed to express that disagreement, but public comment can also be useful and positive tool for the benefit of the Borough Council and its citizens. The key is avoiding personal attacks and being respectful of those with differing views, as well as not interrupting any other person who is speaking.

President Stiles follow-up and asked if there is any Councilperson who does not agree with the statement just read. There were no objections by any Councilperson.”