

TOWN OF SUFFIELD

97 Mountain Road, Suffield, Connecticut 06078
www.SuffieldCT.gov



Melissa M. Mack
First Selectman
MMack@SuffieldCT.Gov
860-668-3838

The Suffield Observer First Selectman's Column November 2020

Last month, I noted the enormous sacrifice made by our veterans to protect our right to vote. This month, I pay tribute to the courageous heroines who fought for that very right for women. 2020 marks the 100th Anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment, establishing a woman's right to vote. In the short span of my grandmother's generation to mine, these trailblazers enabled today's women to achieve leadership positions in the highest offices and courts in the land. As we head to the polls this November 3rd, remember our matriarchs and the slogan often attributed to the suffrage movement: "Forward Out of Darkness, Leave Behind the Night, Forward Out of Error, Forward Into Light." VOTE!

In my opening remarks for the 350th Anniversary Commemoration, I mention the event as welcome good cheer in the face of an exhausting 2020. Outstanding fireworks, a festive car parade and a meaningful commemoration certainly delivered. The breathtaking Field of Flags marks the importance of our revered veterans in Suffield's history and honors them on this Veterans Day. All of this took place alongside pandemic challenges that created numerous obstacles. The Town of Suffield congratulates the 350th Anniversary Committee for a job well done and extends our heartfelt gratitude for their tireless efforts. Special thanks to Chairwoman Kacy Colston who energetically spearheaded the work, which continues into 2021. Planning is now actively afoot for the in-person traditional parade and associated events scheduled for October 7-16, 2021. The Committee currently needs organizations interested in participating in next year's parade – start planning your float today! For more information visit www.Suffield350.org.

The Board of Selectmen formed a Pedestrian and Traffic Safety and Infrastructure Committee and seeks residents from all parts of town to act as neighborhood liaisons. The initiative follows ongoing issues plaguing the town for decades and exacerbated by commercial traffic originating from the expanding Bradley International Airport and the many State roads traversing Suffield (e.g.; Routes 75 & 159). Sadly, a 2002 BIA Transportation Study recommendation for the creation of a "Northern Bradley Connector Roadway" to bypass Suffield altogether went unheeded. The Connecticut Department of Transportation makes clear that State roads exist expressly for transportation and have been unwilling to allow traffic-quieting measures short of expensive roundabouts. These challenges await the new Committee.

The Committee will engage:

- Residents
- Town Departments including all Emergency Services, Planner, Engineer and Public Works

- Local Traffic Authority members (Police Commission subcommittee)
- Traffic engineer consultant (RFP underway)
- State and possibly Federal legislators

Goals consist of a multi-discipline approach for evaluation, creation of comprehensive plan and budget on a town-wide basis while avoiding pushing traffic/pedestrian issues from one thoroughfare to another, as historically has been the case.

To date, our municipal team implemented the following measures:

- Monitor traffic impact as outlined via 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development
- Signage review and remediation (with UConn Circuit Safety Rider) addressing 400+ incorrect/illegal signage issues
- Sidewalk projects
 - Mountain Road Multiuse trail (April 2021 estimated construction)
 - Mapleton Avenue/ Thompsonville (RFP underway)
- Remington Street Bridge designed with traffic quieting
- Traffic studies using “Your Speed” sign trailers in various hot spots
- Updated crosswalks, pavement markings, centerline rumble strips
- State of CT Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Unit inspections of commercial vehicles
- SPD traffic blitzes with adjacent towns
- Police Commission (as local traffic authority under CT law) asked to consider traffic issues stemming from recently removed South Stone Street speed tables

Residents interested in serving on the Committee/having specific neighborhood concerns may contact me at MMack@SuffieldCT.gov.

Thanksgiving promises to be bittersweet as we limit our gatherings and simultaneously cherish the togetherness. Wish you a blessed, healthy and happy Thanksgiving.