



Kent Newsletter

Issue 10 | December 7, 2021

**Note: Due to a widespread AWS (Amazon Web Services) outage which impacted our email host Constant Contact, delivery of the Town of Kent monthly newsletter was delayed a day.*

Friends and neighbors,

During the campaign, I proposed the idea of having bi-monthly meetings of the Board of Selectmen, and at our November meeting, the new board agreed to this idea. Starting in 2022, our meetings are scheduled for the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month. The first meeting of the month will be at 4:00p; the second meeting of the month will be at 6:30p. Our goal is to make it convenient for the public to attend our meetings. For more information and times, please check the [Town of Kent website](#).

As we approach the end of 2021, I wish that rising COVID numbers weren't a factor in this holiday season. As of today, however, the positivity rate in Connecticut has jumped to 8.3% (see below for more information). By now, we know what we need to do to keep each other safe and protected from the virus. Please keep up your vigilance while sharing the joy of the season.

As always, remember,
...take a breath,
...give folks a minute,
...assume some positive intent.

Stay well,

COVID-19 Updates

As of today, the state's coronavirus positivity rate has jumped to 8.3%. For the past two weeks, the positivity rate has been between 5% and 6% and as hospitalizations have been on the rise. Governor Ned Lamont announced today that hospitalizations were over 500. This jump comes as concerns have been raised over the omicron variant, which was detected in the state over the weekend.

Last Monday, Governor Lamont released a statement regarding the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 variant B.1.1.529, also known as the Omicron variant:

“Earlier this year we set up a network of labs, coordinated by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, that are conducting genomic sequencing on positive test specimens to provide understanding of the variants circulating in Connecticut. Our advance planning in this area will help us track Omicron, in addition to other variants that could appear in the future.

“The best defense against COVID-19 is a good offense. This news of the Omicron variant reminds us about the importance of being vaccinated and getting a booster. We have now entered the winter holiday season and still need to mask while in indoor public places, practice proper hand hygiene, get tested, and stay home if you feel sick. That cold may be more than just a cold. It is particularly important to take extra precautions when visiting with older or immune-compromised friends or family who are at higher risk from COVID.

“There’s a reason why Connecticut has garnered national recognition during this pandemic and that’s because of our residents. With your help, we will get through this next stage, as well.”

Up-to-Date Information: For graphs and tables containing detailed data, including a list of cases in every municipality, visit ct.gov/coronavirus and click the link that is labeled, “Connecticut COVID-19 Data Tracker.”

Vaccines and Booster Shots: if you are eligible and have not yet been vaccinated, it's easier than ever to get it. Third "booster" doses of COVID-19 vaccines are now available and recommended for everyone age 18 and over. Click the button below the State of Connecticut Vaccine portal for more information:

CT Vaccine Portal

Testing Continues: Free COVID19 testing is available at the Town of Kent Transfer Station.

- FREE drive-through testing is open to all
- No appointment needed
- PCR test results available in 24-48 hours
- CT residency is *not* required
- Insurance is *not* required
- Must have an email address to get test results
- Priority lane for First Responders

Mondays and Thursdays | 4:00-7:00p | until further notice

NOTE: During the weeks for Christmas and New Year’s, testing will be on Monday (December 20/27) and Wednesday (December 22/27) to accommodate for travel.

Download forms to bring: [Consent form](#) | [COVID Testing form](#)

[Getting My Test Results FAQ](#)

Forms are also available on our [website: www.townofkentct.org](http://www.townofkentct.org)

Upcoming Dates of Interest

Thursday, Dec 9 | Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting | 7:00p

Tuesday, Dec 14 | Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting | 6:30p

Wednesday, Dec 15 | Board of Finance Regular Meeting | 6:00p

Wednesday, Dec 15 | Conservation Commission Regular Meeting | 6:30p

Friday, Dec 24 | Town Hall closed for Christmas Eve

Friday, Dec 31 | Town Hall closed for New Year's Eve

Visit the [Town website calendar](#) for details and a complete schedule of meetings and locations/Zoom links

Civic Engagement

Thank you to everyone who attended the Town Meeting on Friday, December 3rd, at which the following was approved:

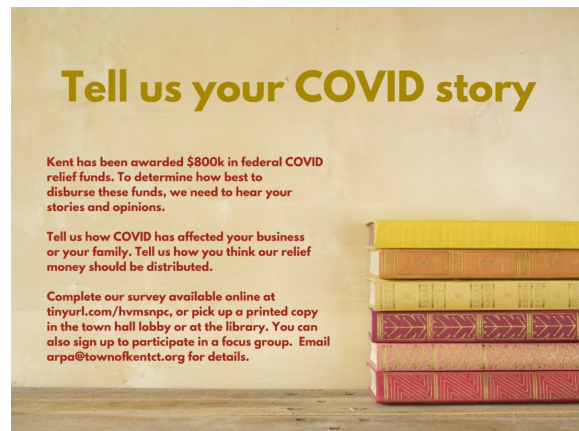
Upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, as acted upon at their regular meeting held 10/20/2021; transfer \$46,000 in unexpended funds from DPW Staffing GL# 040-101 to Litigation GL# 051-413. Said action is referred to as Budget Transfer "Six" for Fiscal Year 2020 – 2021.

More information is available on the [Town of Kent website](#).

Freedom of Information & Public Meetings in the Zoom Age are the topics of a special meeting on Wednesday, January 5 at 7:00p. via [Zoom](#). It's for newly minted and returning public officials, and the public is invited to attend. State FOI Commission Public Education Officer Tom Hennick and town attorney Randy DiBella, who is also an FOI subject-matter expert, will talk.

Check your mailbox!

The ARPA Needs Assessment Committee has created a survey to hear from our community how the COVID19 pandemic has affected you, your business or organization, and your thoughts on the best way to spend the \$800,000 allocated to Kent.



[Click to take the ARPA Needs Assessment Survey](#)

Job Opportunities: There are often opportunities for employment with Kent Town governments. All openings are posted to our [website](#) / www.townofkentct.org

Are you an organization in Kent looking for volunteers? We are working to compile a list to make available to the residents of the Town looking to get involved. Please email the [First Selectman](#) with the name of your organization and a contact person.

Happenings Around Town

Gingerbread Festival! Kent is once again home to one of the largest Gingerbread Festivals in Connecticut! Locally made

gingerbread creations are on display for the month of December in two locations: Kent Town Center, 27 North Main Street, and 5 Bridge Street, as well as a few individual shops. Sponsored by the Kent Chamber of Commerce, Foreign Cargo and Heron American Craft Gallery.

For the holidays and throughout the year, remember to **SHOP LOCAL!** Kent has so much to offer, including diverse and locally owned shops, fantastic eateries, and amazing outdoor recreation. More information is on the the [Chamber of Commerce website](#).



Stuff-A-Truck: Kent Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Toy Drive is December 11. Toys and non-perishable food items will be collected for the Kent Food Bank and Kent Santa Fund at the Kent Firehouse (28 Maple Street) from 9:00a - 3:00p.

Santa's Breakfast: Kent Education Center & Nursery School is excited to welcome Santa to town! Enjoy a pandemic-safe breakfast to-go and photos with Santa on Saturday, December 11 from 9:00a-noon. More information is on the [KECNS website](#).

Letters to Santa may be dropped off at a special mailbox at the Kent Town Hall (41 Kent Green Boulevard). Letters with names and addresses will be responded to by Santa's elves!

Did You Know?



A new seatbelt law went into effect on October 1 : all vehicle passengers- including those riding in rear seats- are now required to wear a seatbelt. Pre-existing law only required rear-seat passengers under 16 to buckle up, even though proper restraint use is effective for all ages. Between 2017 and 2020, there were more than 12,589 injuries of rear seat occupants in Connecticut. During this same period, there were 61 fatalities. Read more on the [State of Connecticut website](#).

Town Updates

Birch Hill: There continues to be no updates regarding the proposed 85-bed substance use disorder treatment facility on the property at 46 Maple Street. The Town of Kent continues to monitor developments.

Streetscape: The Town has received one of three permanent easements needed to move the project forward. The last two (from the same property owner) should be in hand soon. I am happy to report that grant funding has been extended for the project.

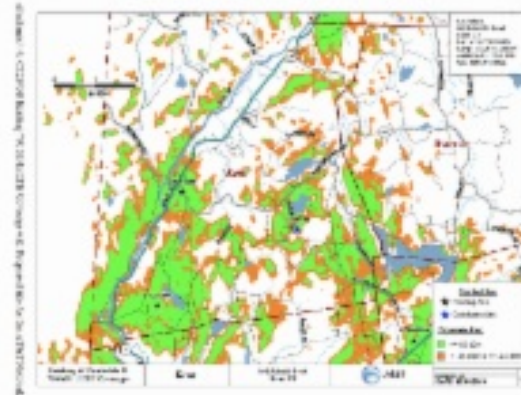
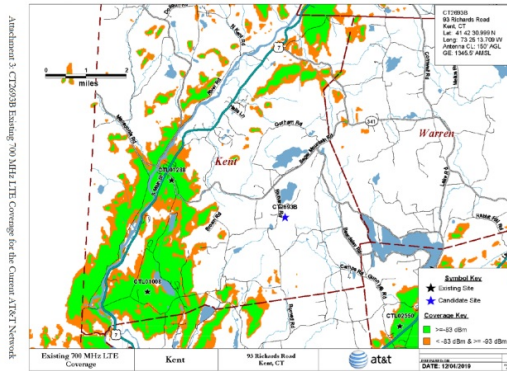
Federal Tribal Recognition: Currently, there are no updates to report.

Cell Tower Construction: Homeland Towers has received approval for their Development & Management Plan and plan to have the tower up by summer of 2022. What does this mean for Kent?

The tower facility will provide reliable wireless communications services to the central portion of Kent, along Segar Mountain Road (route 341), Richards Road, and in surrounding areas. In addition, AT&T will be providing FirstNet services, which is the first broadband network dedicated to emergency services (police, firefighters, and emergency medical services). Plan documents can be found on the [Docket 488 page](#) on the Connecticut Siting Council website.

Before and after coverage maps (below) can be found in *Attachment 1: 'Statement of Public Need with Coverage Plots'*. Please note: two sites were initially proposed for consideration-Bald Hill Road and Richards Road. The tower will be constructed at 93 Richards Road, which is described in the second half of the *'Statement for Public Need'* report.

Click on the map images to see larger PDF versions of the before and after coverage:



Quick Links

[Town Of Kent](#) | [Discover Litchfield Hills](#) | [Kent Affordable Housing](#) | [Kent Chamber of Commerce](#) | [Kent Center School](#) | [Kent Community Fund](#) | [Kent Emergency Management](#) | [Kent Historical Society](#) | [Kent Land Trust](#) | [Kent Memorial Library](#) | [Kent Park & Rec](#) | [Kent Volunteer Fire Dept](#) | [Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy](#) | [NW Hills Council of Governments](#) | [Region 1 Schools](#)

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visit our website: www.townofkentct.org

