

**For Immediate Release**



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## **North Arlington Focuses on Redevelopment in 2023**

**NORTH ARLINGTON – May 11, 2023** – A consistent agenda item for the Borough Council this year will be redevelopment, as four distinct locations have been a focus among borough leaders.

North Arlington has four established redevelopment zones – both large and small – that borough officials are eager to improve. Some areas are residential neighborhoods, creating a balancing act for North Arlington leaders to ensure that any redevelopment effort enhances the local quality of life.

“For many years, there were parcels of property in North Arlington that sat unused, with dilapidated buildings and litter,” said Mayor Daniel H. Pronti. “The Borough Council is methodically looking at each and every property and assessing if redevelopment opportunities exist that can benefit the at-large community and our visitors.”

The mayor noted that municipal taxes have not increased in North Arlington for six years; ongoing redevelopment efforts – and the new tax revenue that has been generated – have been a prime reason.

Here is a summary of the four ongoing redevelopment initiatives:

- **Ridge Road Development Area**

North Arlington officials are eager to redevelop the Ridge Road corridor, recognizing the enormous benefit of development in the downtown.

The mayor noted that survey results of residents and business owners indicate the need for more foot traffic on Ridge Road. Creating a vibrant business corridor will address concerns of vacant storefronts and allow new businesses the time they need to develop a strong customer base.

Restaurants, bars and coffee shops are succeeding on Ridge Road. Still, borough officials are eager to create a more diversified mix, including retail, to create a genuine, mixed-use destination. Adding a new residential component is also key to enhancing the customer base.

New residential construction has replaced parcels that had been blighted for years, such as The Ridge, at 235-241 Ridge Rd., a 30-unit, four-story apartment complex, replacing an abandoned lumber yard in 2018. There is also The Opus, built in 2021, a 49-unit development at 77 Ridge Rd., featuring a rooftop terrace and a lounge for tenants, replaced an abandoned, overgrown lot.

“These types of developments bring people to town,” the mayor said. “They are spending money in our local businesses and are helping the southern portion of Ridge Road flourish.

New vibrancy encourages more investment, Pronti said, adding that a new doctor’s office has opened, and The Tavern took over a bar that was out of business for 12 years. “It’s all dressed up now,” the mayor said, noting trendy artwork is the décor on the outside of the building.

On River Road, the focus is to create a river walk from the Belleville Turnpike to Riverside County Park. The effort also focuses on redeveloping parcels that are now either abandoned or maybe contaminated. The Borough received a grant to clean up the contaminated properties.

- **Porete Avenue**

Since 1989, the Borough has targeted Porete Avenue for redevelopment, determining the area is blighted after years of industrial use from factories. Since then, the Borough has constructed a new road to ease traffic and divert truck traffic from neighborhoods. A redevelopment plan will be done in stages, the mayor said, to ensure smart growth and a limited increase in trucks.

- **Hughes Redevelopment Area**

The area at Sherman Avenue, Canterbury Avenue and Schuyler Avenue, in the northeast of town, was deemed a redevelopment area last May. The Borough wants to make the land more economically viable, invigorate underused parcels and redirect trucks.

“It is an abandoned auto repair and car dealership that has been stagnant for years,” Pronti explained. “It is an eyesore. There are now concept plans we are considering, working out the kinks. I think this land is ideal for redevelopment.”

The mayor noted that residents live on Canterbury Avenue; any redevelopment must consider the surrounding neighborhood bordering Lyndhurst.

“We are not looking to encourage truck traffic,” the mayor said. “We envision commercial use, restaurants and on-site parking. We want any enhancements to be contained on the parcel, with no parking spilling over into the neighborhood.”

- **Belleville Turnpike Redevelopment Area**

The Borough has deemed the area in need of redevelopment, but a plan has not yet been created. Pronti said town officials are seeking ideas from investors to make the property between Ridge Road and Rutherford Place more attractive. It is the site of Pizza Land, 260 Belleville Turnpike, and other established businesses, which would be incorporated into any project.

A clear priority is parking, the mayor said, adding that the development area comprises an entire city block, and space would need to be allotted for shopper parking.

“The redevelopment area features the first group of businesses in North Arlington when motorists enter from Kearny,” the mayor explained. “We want this to be a gateway project, in which people immediately are welcomed to North Arlington and know they have crossed over into our town.”

Other aesthetic improvements are underway, such as the planting of 55 more trees on Belleville Turnpike that occurred this spring. The town is also painting utility boxes with murals and other local art, showcasing some of the iconic images of North Arlington.

“Our goal is to make the gateway have more of a suburban feel,” the mayor said. “We want it to be a more tranquil area, with plenty of trees, attractive restaurants and retail, new homes and an attractive streetscape.”

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