

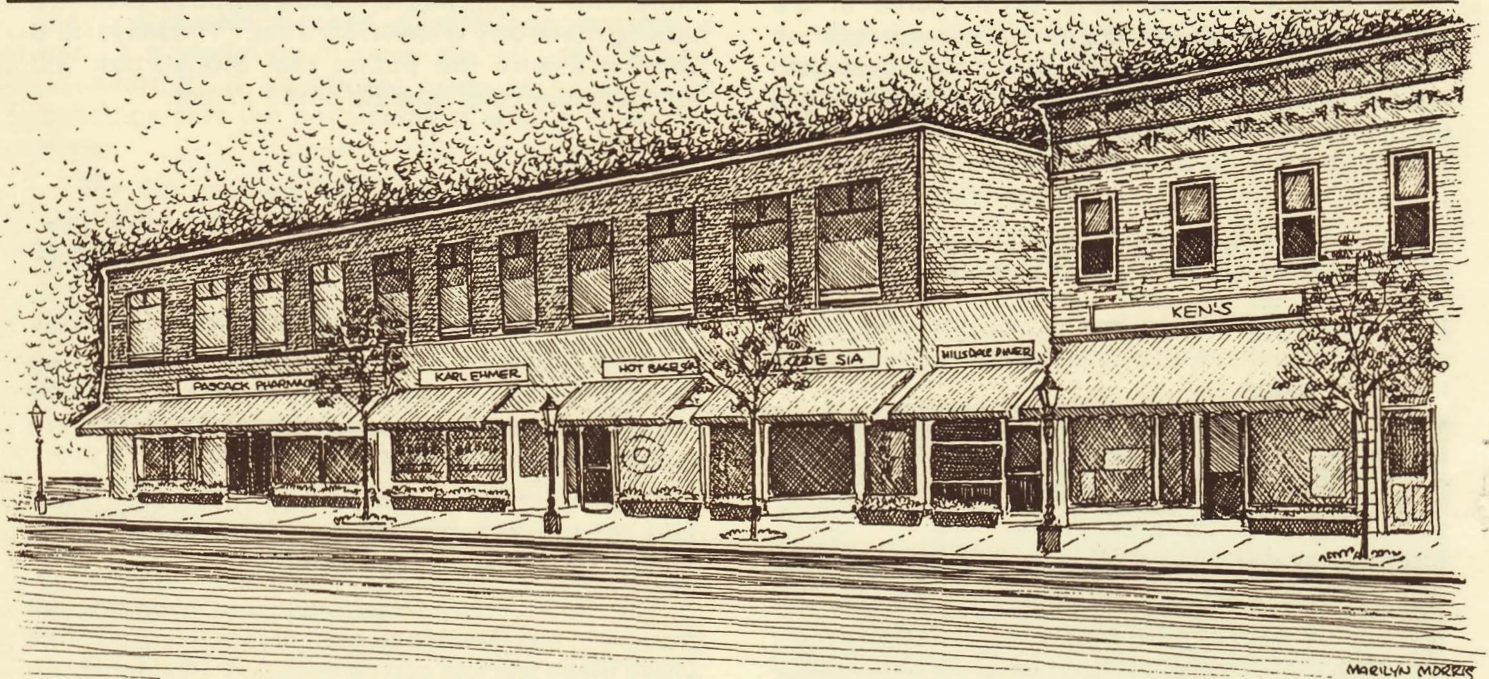
THE
HILLSDALE, NEW JERSEY

newsletter

Published by
The Mayor and Council

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1988



Consistent store and shop signage, colorful awnings, and Victorian-style street lighting reminiscent of another era, are just some of the ways to revitalize Hillsdale's business area.

THE REVITALIZATION OF THE HILLSDALE BUSINESS DISTRICT CONTINUES

Local Banks to Provide Special Funding

Since the beginning of the year, the Hillsdale Redevelopment Committee appointed by Mayor Robert Elder has been diligently working on improvements and facelifting for the Hillsdale business area. Some of these improvements are already in place. Among them are the repainting of the Hillsdale railroad station and the repaving of the East parking lot complete with new planter islands. The planting of trees along the west side of Broadway from the railroad station south to the Westwood border will begin as the season permits.

These important improvements are the first step in a three-year program dedicated to bringing Hillsdale back into the business mainstream and making our town an attractive destination for shopping and commerce, transforming the main business district and other commercial areas into more desirable places to shop and stroll, visit and enjoy.

Many communities in New Jersey have suffered

at the hands of the giant shopping centers along the highways. These communities have watched their business districts suffer from critical revenue loss, often unable to recover. Many shop owners have been forced out of business from lack of trade or have been forced to move to the malls where much higher rents prevail.

However, more and more of these communities have decided to fight this exodus from downtown shopping by initiating major revitalization plans designed to repair and refurbish the business area, to keep local ratables and employment up, and to maintain the economic fiber of the community.

Hillsdale is among those who are resisting the trend to the highways. In an effort to preserve and protect its business district and to encourage local shopping, it has set up a joint project between local government, local financial institutions, and local business and property owners in the commercial sector. Together, they have devised a three-year plan

(continued on page 3)

STONYBROOK SETS ITS SIGHTS ON THE FUTURE

After more than 18 months of study by a Select Committee of Council members, Stonybrook Commission Members, the public, and a municipal planning consultant, the Council has agreed that the sale of a portion of the 19 acre Stonybrook grounds will assure the facility's debt-free existence well into the future.

By selling approximately seven acres at the extreme western edge of Stonybrook enough revenue should be realized to retire all indebtedness and almost completely redevelop the facility, turning it into a year-round operation that will benefit the entire

Borough of Hillsdale in many ways. Plans call for extensive demolition, renovation, and construction that will add a full-service snack bar, meeting rooms, and possibly a health club. One large room will be suitable for teen dances and civic get-togethers.

The property zoned for single family homes will be presented for sale at public auction in the near future. The Council has rejected a proposal to build a nursing home on the seven acre tract. The Mayor and Council assure the public that Stonybrook will definitely open and operate next summer.

RADON INFORMATION AND TESTING KITS AVAILABLE

Recently, the Board of Health has received many calls from residents interested in having their homes tested for radon.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas found in low concentrations everywhere. However, if indoor radon concentrations become too high, they can be hazardous to your health.

Anyone interested in having their home tested for radon can obtain a do-it-yourself test kit. This test can provide a means of measuring radon concentration but it is important for those using it to understand the tests' limitations. Long-term measurements have shown that the level of radon can vary from room to room and can change over time. Other variables which can influence radon levels are atmospheric conditions, time of year, ventilation, and heat. Therefore, the best approach is to take a few readings throughout the course of one year to provide a

meaningful measure of occupants' exposure to radon.

There are two basic types of radon measurement devices. These are, the activated charcoal canister and the alpha track detector. Both of these tests are supplied with directions.

Exposure time for the devices varies from a few days for the activated charcoal canister to a few months for the alpha track detector.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has developed a list of radon testing firms where these test kits can be obtained. Residents can obtain this list at the Hillsdale Health Department by calling 358-5027. The cost of each test varies from \$10.00 to \$50.00.

For additional information, call the radon information line of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection at 1-800-648-0394.

FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The local Police and Fire Departments maintain a "**CONFIDENTIAL**" list of physically disabled persons in the Borough of Hillsdale. Both of these departments are very sensitive to the special needs and safety of those who are handicapped or disabled.

If you have a family member, or a friend or neighbor, who is disabled or handicapped, please call the Police Department at 664-4200 so this list may be kept up to date. All information is kept strictly confidential, but it is essential to...

Help us help you. Please call 664-4200.

NEW RECYCLING SITE, NOVEMBER 1

The site of the Recycling Center, which is now located off Patterson Street on Prospect Place, will be relocated to borough property effective November 1, 1988.

The new site is at the D.P.W garage area behind King's shopping center and can be used for disposing of all recyclables. A Hillsdale parking sticker is required for access to the Recycling Center. Any resident who does not have a parking sticker may acquire one at the Hillsdale Police Department.

Hours for recyclables to be dropped off at the Center are as follows:

Monday to Friday 6:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
Saturday 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

If you have any questions, call the D.P.W. at 358-5053.

HILLSDALE'S HISTORY OF STONE AND WOODEN HOUSES

History is, of course, principally about people, about our distant and not very distant ancestors and predecessors. But, until well into the past century, not many of them could read or write — had they had a moment to spare. Our libraries give us the benefit of those few who could and did. For the vast number of the rest, we have to look for our clues to their thoughts and activities to what they made and what they built that still survives. Hillsdale's earliest story is told by a scattering of stone and wooden houses. "Scattering" is significant because each of the buildings was the homestead of a farm of 50-200 acres.

For the moment, let's look at the stone houses which are extraordinary in several respects. First, they exist only in northeastern N.J. and for a ways up the Hudson; those in eastern/central Bergen County are distinctively of brown stone. Second, elsewhere first settlers built their houses of the timber they cleared for their fields.

But the Dutch, and those who came with them from the Netherlands, sought out rock outcroppings and quarried and carefully squared stone, then hauled it by oxcart or flatboat to their homesite. Stone-walled cellars, heavy stone arches to support the fireplace and hearth, nearly two-foot thick walls — were built to stay and to last.

We have four Dutch stone houses in Hillsdale, all on the National Register of Historic Places: at 126 Werimus Rd. (before 1775), at 211 Pascack Rd. (c.1750), at 145 Ell Rd. (1767) and at 230 Broadway (c.1740). With all the solidity and inherent good insulation of their houses, our forebears did without much room. The simplest houses, like the one on Broadway, were a single room with a loft above the

ceiling beams; the most prosperous version was four rooms with a center hall. Succeeding generations added dormers, wings, second stories of wooden construction, and the front porch roofed in sweeping continuation of the main roof. The simple gable roof was often replaced with a gambrel roof (the realtors' "Dutch" roof) to gain upstairs room — anticipating the Mansard roof of a later age.

Our other three stone houses are examples of the larger types and show differing evolutionary changes. Two of them, Ell Rd. and Pascack Rd., are unusual: they do not face south as do most Bergen stone houses — generally ascribed to an effort to absorb maximum winter-sun heat.

If, after seeing these houses, you want to know more, their individual histories and specifics are detailed in the Historic Sites Survey of Hillsdale available in Reference at the library. We'll look at the Survey together later on.



230 Broadway

Revitalization of Business District...

(continued from page 1)

to revitalize the borough and make Hillsdale a rising star in the Pascack Valley.

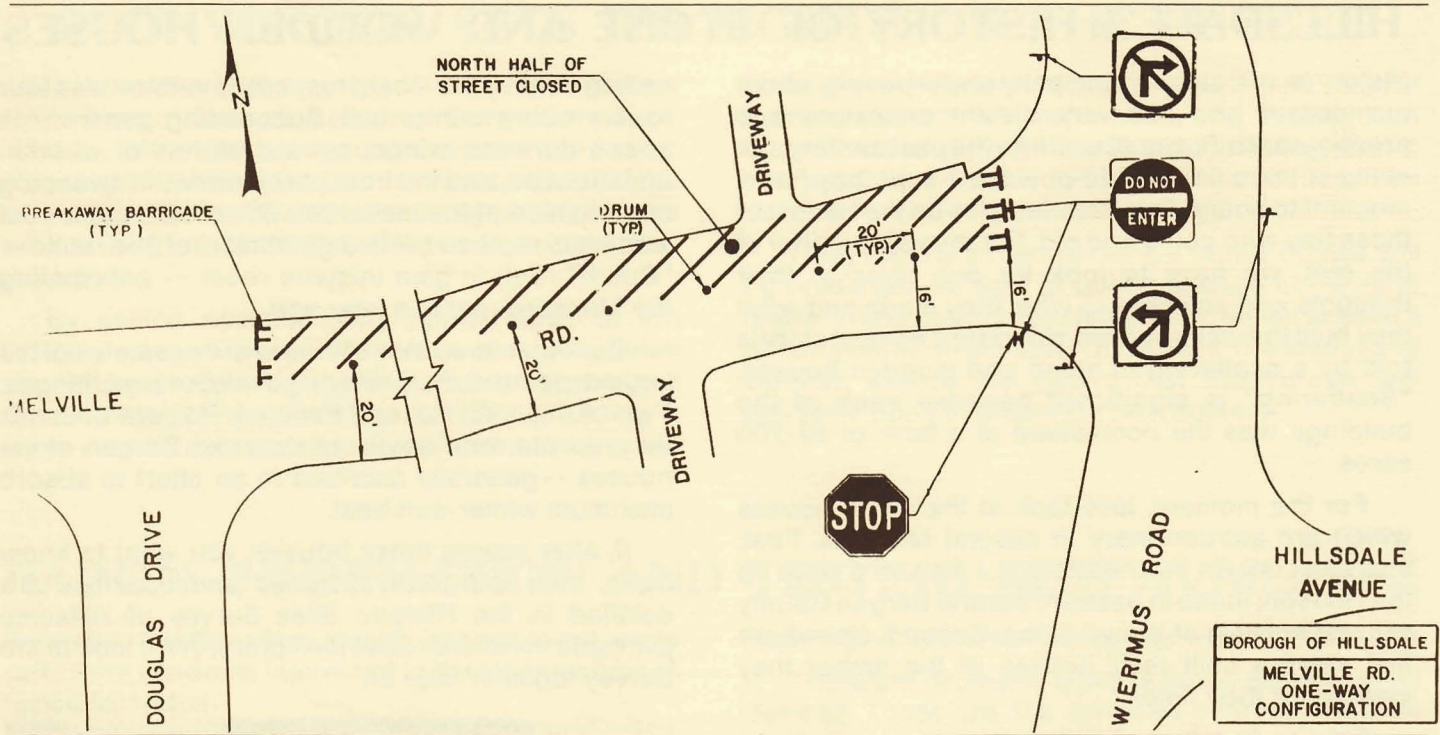
Here is a brief outline of the planned initial improvements and funding arrangements:

- A consortium of local banking institutions comprised of Citizens First, Midlantic North and Northern Valley has agreed to set aside funds to assist the Hillsdale business community finance revitalization projects. Qualified business and property owners may borrow from this special fund at **less than the market rate** for facade and BOCA (Building Officials & Code Administrators) Code construction projects.
- A traffic and parking zone study is now under way to improve traffic flow through the community and create ample parking for shoppers.
- With the assistance of the County, improvements are planned for the intersections at Hillsdale Avenue

and Broadway and at Hillsdale Avenue and Patterson Street. The plan also includes improved drainage on Broadway from Piermont Avenue to Washington Avenue.

- Victorian-style streetlights will be added to the business area, to establish a very special ambiance to the downtown shopping district.
- Civic organizations and borough Boy Scout troops will take on a beautification project that will result in dozens of flower planters along the shopping thoroughfares. Flowers will be changed regularly to reflect the season of the year.
- New and attractive refuse containers will be strategically placed throughout the business district.

These are but a few of the changes which the Redevelopment Committee and borough government officials are already beginning to implement, and will be achieved at minimum cost to the taxpayers of Hillsdale... investments, actually, in a brighter economic future for the town and its residents.



HILLSDALE AVENUE — MELVILLE ROAD WIERIMUS ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

The Hillsdale Avenue intersection with Melville Road has been considered for improvements since 1968. That improvement will begin in 1989.

The construction plans include realignment of all approaches to the intersection to provide for a signalized intersection. Area residents have recommended traffic not be allowed to enter Melville Road from Hillsdale Avenue or Wierimus Road. A concrete traffic island will be installed to prohibit traffic from entering Melville.

On recommendation from the County Engineer, a temporary westbound closure of Melville Road will be implemented shortly as indicated in the diagram. This will enable the Council to evaluate the merits of the one-way operation with input from residents using Melville Road. Alternate routes would be Royal Park Terrace and Craig Road. If the Council finds the one-way operation acceptable to area residents it will be incorporated into the construction of the project.

TASK FORCE ADDRESSES YOUTH PROBLEMS

The Hillsdale School and Family Task Force was developed from an initiative at the State and County levels of government, requesting local governments to sponsor committees within the community to address problems of its youth.

The overall goal of the Task Force is to enable the community of Hillsdale, its organizations and related agencies to help themselves in promoting behavioral

health, in reducing the incidence of drug and alcohol abuse, and in hopefully reducing the consequences of high risk behaviors.

The Hillsdale School and Family Task Force supports the development of community cooperation and communications. The membership includes representatives of the school district, parents, county and state liaisons, police, and local council representation.

Borough
of Hillsdale
Hillsdale, NJ
07642

Bulk Rate
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 6
Hillsdale, NJ

POSTAL CUSTOMER LOCAL
Hillsdale, New Jersey 07642