



# Town Bulletin

[www.washingtongrovermd.org](http://www.washingtongrovermd.org)

301-926-2256

March 1, 2024

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## Table of Contents

- **Town Council News**
  - **News from Grove Boards and Commissions**  
*Historic Preservation Commission | Planning Commission*
  - **News from Grove Committees**  
*Emergency Preparedness and Safety | Forestry & Beautification | Gateway | Lake | Lighting | Meadows | Racial and Social Equity | Recreation | Sustainability | Woods*
  - **News from Other Grove Organizations**  
*Film Society | WG Cares | WG Methodist Church | Woman's Club*
  - **Other Notices**
  - **Coming Events Calendar**
- 

## Town Council News

**Next meeting: Monday, March 11, 2024, 7:30 pm.**

**[Join Zoom meeting](#)** (or dial in to 301-715-8592 using meeting ID: 297 850 640 and password 074385).

### **Actions at the February 11, 2024 Town Council Meeting**

- Amended and approved minutes of the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-08 and of the January 8 Town Council meeting.
- Approved the RFP for audit services.
- Approved Refuse and Recycling RFP as amended.
- Scheduled the Town Council work session on the FY25 budget for March 25 at 7:30 pm. Access info same as above.

### **Actions at the February 27, 2024 Special Town Council Meeting**

- Discussed plans for road repair work in June.
  - Received the **[data and analysis report from RASEC on the 2022 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey of town residents \(PDF\)](#)**
-

## Mayor's Kudos

- **To Steve Werts** for stopping a weekend flood in the furnace room of McCathran Hall, saving a private event in progress. Kathy called and Steve came!
- **To organizers Peggy Koniz-Booher, Arlene McCrehan and the Woman's Club** for the Chili Supper on February 17th. This traditional heart- and body-warming event brings us out and together in mid-winter and is a welcome harbinger of spring on the way.

## Looking for a New Historic Preservation Commission Member

The Mayor and Historic Preservation Commission extend their greatest appreciation to Jeff McCrehan for his recent service as Commissioner. We are now looking for a resident to replace Jeff on the HPC. If you have an interest in historic preservation in Washington Grove or would like to become more knowledgeable and are ready to get more involved and help your Town, please contact the Mayor, the Town Office or one of the current HPC members.

## Playground Survey Underway

Residents are encouraged to fill out the [Woodward Park Playground Survey](#) to give their thoughts on what repairs, additions, and/or improvements should be made. More under Recreation Committee news below. **Please complete [the survey](#) by March 15!**

## Road Work Suggestions

The Town welcomes suggestions from residents about where road work should be performed. Please [email the Mayor](#) or [Town Clerk](#).

## Annual Town Elections and Town Meeting News

We are dependent on citizen volunteers to govern. On **Saturday, May 11**, we will elect a mayor to a one-year term and two Councilors to three-year terms. There is no more essential volunteer opportunity. The work is rewarding, collegial, and an excellent way to get to know the town and its workings while making a significant contribution. Please consider running or nominating a willing and worthy neighbor. Nominations are made in writing and close April 8. They require the signatures of two residents as nominators as well as a signature of acceptance from the nominee. They can be submitted to the Board of Election Supervisors directly or given to Kathy in the Town Office. If you have questions, the Board members are Mary Blake, Margo Cavenagh, Dave Hix, and Nick Suzich at [nicholassuzich@gmail.com](mailto:nicholassuzich@gmail.com).

Candidates for Mayor must have resided in Town for two years immediately preceding the election. Candidates for Council must have resided in Town for one year immediately preceding the election. A qualified voter is defined as anyone registered to vote in Montgomery County at a Washington Grove address. Thanks to all who serve or participate in any way!

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## News from Grove Boards and Commissions

### Historic Preservation Commission News

**Next meeting: Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 7:30 pm.** The public is invited to attend this virtual meeting via ZOOM. For a copy of the agenda, email Chair Bob Booher at [booherfamily@comcast.net](mailto:booherfamily@comcast.net).

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 344 019 9688

### An Analysis of the Viewshed of the Town of Washington Grove

As part of its work in preparing the Town's updated National Register nomination, Robinson & Associates produced viewshed documentation for Washington Grove, complete with photographs and maps. Here's their introduction – followed by a link to the complete document.

*The purpose of this viewshed documentation is to identify and record the historic properties and landscapes that comprise the broader setting of the Washington Grove Historic District and contribute to its visual character and historic context. The National Register of Historic Places defines setting as the physical environment of a historic property that illustrates the character of the place. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a resource was built or developed and the functions it was intended to serve. The physical features that constitute the setting of a historic resource can be either natural or manmade, including such elements as topographic features, vegetation, buildings, structures, or open space. The integrity of a historic district's setting can be retained if there are visual buffers that block or screen intrusions into viewsheds, such as modern or incompatible development. This analysis does not address the internal setting of the historic district, which is also crucial to its historic integrity. With the goal of documenting baseline conditions to help protect the historic district and preserve its broader setting, ... please find:*

- a) photographs of each property/landscape that comprise the historic setting of the historic district,*
- b) a map detail showing each of the viewshed areas and the sightlines between the photographer and the subject of the photographs, and*
- c) a short narrative describing the property/landscape and the significance of its relationship to the historic district.*

[See the entire document here \(PDF\)](#)

[Return to the top of the document](#)

### Planning Commission News

**Next meeting: Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 7:30 pm.** The public is invited to attend this virtual meeting via ZOOM. As part of the Town's response to the COVID-19 crisis, this Planning Commission Meeting will be conducted online, rather than in person. Residents and the public may access these meetings [by Zoom videoconference](#), or dial in to 301-715-8592, meeting ID: 881 3713 5118 and following the audio instructions.

Please make sure your name is associated with your Zoom device in order to be admitted from the Waiting Room.

### **Building Permit Submission Deadline**

The deadline to submit a building permit application for approval by the Planning Commission and review by the Historic Preservation Commission is **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month** prior to the PC meeting at which the permit will be reviewed (this will be in the following month). This timing ensures the HPC will be able to complete a formal review before the PC meeting as this review is required for the PC to approve the permit in a timely fashion. If you are considering any renovation or building project at your house, be sure to get a copy of the procedures to apply for a Town Building Permit which will help you through the Town's process.

### **Building Permits Approved in March 2024**

- 405 Brown Street – Location of A/C Unit

### **Public Ways & Property Permits (PW&PP) Approved in March 2024**

- None

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## **News from Grove Committees**

### **Emergency Preparedness and Safety Committee News**

Next Meeting: TBD

[Return to the top of the document](#)

### **Forestry & Beautification News**

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 7:30 p.m.

[Join ZOOM Meeting](#)

We will start planning for the spring tree planting. Think of how beautiful Washington Grove is, full of beautifully blooming trees in the Spring! If you have a suggestion for where a new decorative tree/s, or any tree at all, are needed, please contact one of the F&B Co-Chairs: Georgette Cole ([georgettewg@gmail.com](mailto:georgettewg@gmail.com)) or Audrey Maskery ([trees.beautification@gmail.com](mailto:trees.beautification@gmail.com)) or our Council Liaison Barbara Raimondo ([councilorbarb@gmail.com](mailto:councilorbarb@gmail.com)).

[Return to the top of the document](#)

### **Gateway Committee News**

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 14, 2024, 7:30 pm.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

The Gateway Committee hosts a road cleanup near the end of each month to pick up trash along Railroad St. and Washington Grove Ln. We also have adopted both roads.

On February 24th we hosted a cleanup which resulted in the removal of 68 pounds of trash from the roads and diverted from our waterways! We had 12 wonderful volunteers help picking up trash. The group is always looking for volunteers and hope to see you at the next cleanup event at the end of the month. Stay tuned for the next date on the listserv.

The Committee meets the 2nd Thursday of the month. Our next meeting will be March 14th, where we will discuss ongoing projects to make our boundaries more reflective of our unique Grove aesthetic.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Lake Committee News

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 12, 2024, 7:30 pm**

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

### Meetings

The Lake Committee has hybrid meetings -- in-person in the old Council Room and by Zoom. Come join us. New members are welcome and encouraged! Call Tom Land if you have any questions or suggestions.

### Looking for a Swim Instructor and Lifeguards for Summer 2024

Lifeguards are needed for Maple Lake this summer. Hours are from 12 noon – 6 pm, seven days a week (including a ½ hour break). The pay for a lifeguard starts at \$17/hour. Lifeguards must be certified in Lifesaving, CPR, and First Aid (we can help pay for the training.) Call Tom Land for details.

We also need a swim instructor for the month of July in the afternoons, and the pay is \$20/hour. The Town offers free swim lessons for kids. If you'd like your kid to learn to swim for free, please help us find a swim instructor. If you can suggest someone, please call Sung Chang.

### Lake Cleanup is Scheduled for April 20

Join us for Lake Clean-Up on April 20<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am to 12 noon (rain date the 21<sup>st</sup>). Please add it to your calendars. Bring a rake, shovel, gloves, wheelbarrow, and all your good, helpful muscles. It's fun to help get Maple Lake ready for the 2024 swim season

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Lighting Committee News

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 7:30 pm**

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 961 798 0177

Questions, ideas or concerns? Please contact Virginia Quesada at 301 706-7933 (cell) or [vq@qmediainc.com](mailto:vq@qmediainc.com), or Robert N. Johnson at [rnj@elecdev.com](mailto:rnj@elecdev.com).

We meet the fourth Wednesday of every month. All are welcome to attend!

The Lighting Committee is working with other Maryland Municipalities to allow the option of municipal streetlight ownership.

Our streetlights are currently owned by Pepco.

If the Town owned its street lights, we would not be in repeated danger of Pepco trying to pass a tariff that would allow them to replace all our street lights with some ugly options and then charge us a lot for them in perpetuity.

Owning our own street lights will allow us to maintain the savings that we have gotten from two conversions of our street lights from an annual cost of approximately \$20,000 to \$5,000. It will give us the opportunity to control the aesthetics and functionality of our street lights and walkways. Additionally, if we owned our lights, we would be eligible for [grants like SOLE from the State of Maryland](#).

We are close to a deal that will make municipal street light ownership in Maryland a cost-effective reality!

Questions, ideas or concerns please contact Virginia Quesada at: 301 706-7933, cell [vq@qmediainc.com](mailto:vq@qmediainc.com), or Robert N. Johnson [rnj@elecdev.com](mailto:rnj@elecdev.com).

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## **Announcing the Meadows Committee**

The Town Council recently approved creation of an *ad hoc* Meadows Committee to ensure and enhance the health of both the Upper and Lower Meadows. To this end, Committee members intend to work with the Montgomery County Parks' [Meadow Management and Restoration Program](#) to take steps to ensure the ecological health of the meadows. [View background information on the meadows and the committee.](#)

The new committee held its organizing meeting on January 31 and walked the meadows to assess current conditions on February 10. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held via Zoom at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, starting March 20. [Here's the Zoom link.](#)

If you wish to join the committee, offer help, or share your thoughts or concerns, please contact Bruce Daggy or join us at the March 20 meeting.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Racial and Social Equity Committee News

**Next meeting: Sunday, March 10, 2024, 2:00 pm.**

[Join ZOOM Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 874 1892 4038

Passcode: 228324

RASEC has made several recommendations to the Town Council, which can be found on the RASEC page of the Town website. RASEC also submitted a written statement about the benefits of allowing Accessory Dwelling Units and suggestions regarding the Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance. All testimony can be found on the Town website. Both of these items may be taken up at the March Town Council meeting, Monday, March 11, 7:30 pm.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Recreation Committee News

**Next meeting: Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 7:30 pm.**

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 874 5119 2670

We will be planning events for 2024. Come join us to help plan 2024 Town events like Music Weekend, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Halloween.

P.S. The Rec Committee especially needs help planning Fourth of July, Labor Day, and other events! **Interested but not sure you can attend the next meeting?** That's okay! Reach out to committee chairs Lisa Bielen ([lvbielen@gmail.com](mailto:lvbielen@gmail.com)) or Kristina Kough ([KKoughWG@gmail.com](mailto:KKoughWG@gmail.com)).

The Recreation Committee will be sending out a survey to gauge interest and gather opinions about upcoming Town events. Watch the listserv for the link to the survey.



**The Playground Subcommittee** is gathering information and hopes to make some improvements to the playground in the coming year. We encourage residents to fill out the [Woodward Park Playground Survey](#) to share their thoughts on what repairs, additions, and/or improvements should be made. **Please complete the survey by March 15!**

If you would like to be involved in the playground improvements committee or have further thoughts/concerns, please contact Eva Patrone at [counciloreva@gmail.com](mailto:counciloreva@gmail.com).

## Yoga in the Grove!

Certified yoga and fitness instructor **Ingeborg McCright** offers an all-levels yoga class on **Tuesdays from 6 – 7 pm in McCathran Hall**. Ingeborg has been teaching yoga and exercise classes for many years and is able to give modifications for those just starting out and those looking for extra challenge.

Please bring your own mat and feel free to bring blocks if you use them. The class ends on our backs with a cooling relaxation, so consider dressing in layers. If this is your first Grove Yoga class, be sure to print out and complete this [waiver form \(PDF\)](#) and bring it to class. Yoga is free for Washington Grove residents with a suggested \$5-10 donation. Non-residents may attend for \$10 a class. Ingeborg accepts cash or check.

### **Invitation to a St. Patrick's Day Ceili on Saturday, March 9**

What is a Ceili? Come and find out at McCathran Hall from 7 – 10:30 on Saturday, March 9. Get an early start in celebrating with the Blackthorn Ceili Dancers. Try out those dance steps while listening to live music by Joe DeZarn and Tina Eck. Don't want to dance? Just come and enjoy the music. A potluck supper is served about halfway through so don't forget to bring a dish to share. Free to Grove residents though contributions to pay the musicians are always welcome.

Sponsored by the Blackthorn Ceili Dancers and the Washington Grove Recreation Committee.



### **Art Night Spring Session Starts April 3**

Bring your pencils, creativity, and love of fun to Art Night in Town Hall!

We'll meet weekly to experiment with unique activities like Drawing Night Fever (drawing to music), Plagiarism is Fun (finish your neighbor's drawing), Drawing from the Wine Side of the Brain, and more.

Spring session runs April 3 to May 1, 2024 and will be held Wednesday evenings 7 to 9 pm in Town Hall. Attendees provide their own art supplies (you decide, but paper, pencils, and a large drawing board would work). We will provide drawing easels and/or tables.

Art Night is organized by Marida Hines and sponsored by the Recreation Committee. There is no fee, but advance registration is required so we know how many easels are needed.

RSVP to Marida Hines ([maridahines@gmail.com](mailto:maridahines@gmail.com)) by March 15<sup>th</sup>.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## **Sustainability Committee News**

**Next Meetings: Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 7:30 pm and Tuesday, April 2, 2024.**

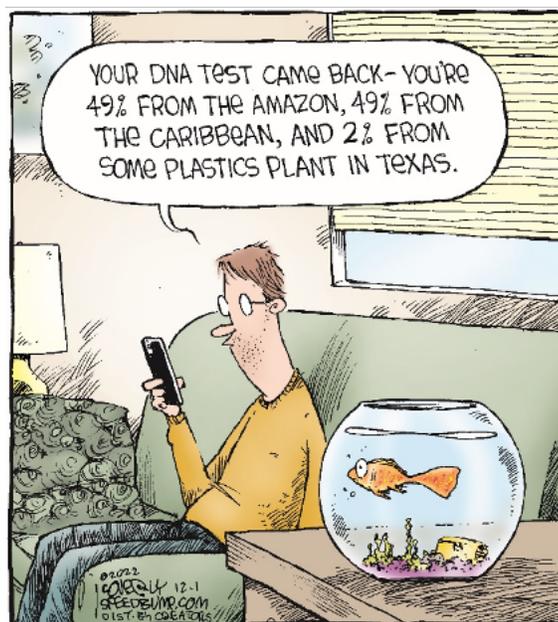
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 344 019 9688

## Minimizing Exposure to Micro- and Nano-plastics

What's found in the air you breathe, the water you drink, the food you eat, inside your brain, and even in a newborn baby's first poop? If you answered plastic, you would be correct. Recent studies have found micro- and even smaller nano-plastic particles virtually everywhere in the environment.

Some results have surprised scientists. Bottled water was found to contain not only PET (the plastic used to make the bottle), but greater amounts of polyamides (from the nylon filters used to purify the water by reverse osmosis), plus polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride, polymethyl methacrylate (AKA plexiglass), and a host of other plastics of unknown origin and chemistry. Many were small enough to cross the blood-brain barrier and carry other molecules along with them. The health effects in humans are unknown, but animal studies have raised multiple concerns. Therefore, it could be prudent to avoid unnecessary exposure, especially in children.



It's impossible to avoid exposure, but here are some ways to minimize it:

- Whenever possible, use glass or stainless-steel containers for beverages and food storage.
- Never microwave food in plastic.
- Do not wash plastic containers in the dishwasher.
- Limit your consumption of canned foods – the can lining is likely made of plastic.
- Reduce your consumption of processed foods. *Consumer Reports* recently detected phthalates in 84 of 85 processed foods tested, and most also contained bisphenols. But you may want your table salt to be *more* processed; sea salt can be high in plastic contamination.
- Choose clothing made from natural materials.
- Vacuum floors using a HEPA filter.

You can also take steps to minimize the single-use plastic that you add to the environment by adjusting your daily purchase decisions.

*For further reading on this subject, follow these links:*

- [What's the Disease Burden from Plastic Exposure?](#) (Medscape)
- [Chemicals Common in Food Packaging Linked to Preterm Births](#) (WebMD)
- [How to Eat Less Plastic](#) (Consumer Reports)

- [Are Microplastics a Macro Issue? A Review on the Sources of Contamination, Analytical Challenges and Impact on Human Health of Microplastics in Food \(Foods, Nov. 2023, via PubMed\)](#)

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Woods Committee News

Next meeting: Monday, March 4, 2024, 7:30 pm.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

By Phone: 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 856 2633 3759

Passcode: 541318

Our April meeting will be on Monday, April 1. All are invited to attend. We welcome new members who want to protect our two Forest Preserves, the East and West Woods.

We have been working with the Mayor and Town Council to prepare a “Design to Build” Request for Proposals for Stormwater Management in the residential part of Town west of Grove Avenue. Hopefully this upstream work will help control some of the runoff into the West Woods. Major West Woods drainage issues will have to be addressed later.

The Woods Committee is working to complete posting of trail signs in both the East and West Woods and to prepare a digital map of the East Woods trails. When finished, this map will be posted on the Woods Committee page of the Town website.

This time of year, the Woods can be very wet, and the weather can be very windy. Please use caution when entering the Woods, especially on windy days. A reminder to please stay on the walking trails to protect understory native plant vegetation. Do not walk or bike on trails that are too wet and muddy to avoid rutting and soil erosion. We hope these precautions allow you to experience our Woods Preserves in a safer and more enjoyable way. If you discover trees blocking trails, please contact Joan Mahaffey or Patty Klein, Woods Committee Co-chairs.

As we make progress on control of non-native invasive plants and deer over browsing, we anticipate the emergence of more native ephemerals, shrubs, and saplings, especially in the East Woods. The spring explosion changes from day to day. For help in identifying your discoveries, websites such as the [Chesapeake Bay Native Plant Center](#) provide descriptions and photographs of native grasses and ground covers, shrubs, and trees. Search within the Piedmont Region for optimal results. Stay healthy and stay happy!

The Woods Committee will be discussing several projects for the coming year:

- Continue trail maintenance and signage to increase residents’ and neighbors’ enjoyment of the Forest Preserves and to protect newly sprouting trees and understory;
- Develop digital maps of trails in the East and West Woods.

- Improve stormwater drainage in the residential part of Town which drains into the West Woods.
- Continue reforestation projects.
- Finalize the Woods Committee budget for Fiscal Year 2024/25.
- Other projects which may arise from discussion.

If you are interested in working on any of these projects, please contact either Joan Mahaffey or Patty Klein (Woods Committee co-chairs) or join us at our February 5 meeting. New Woods Committee members and new ideas are always welcome.

Our volunteer Bow Hunter Fire Fighters of Maryland harvested nine deer during this archery season which began in September 2023 and ended on January 31, 2024. Please contact Joan Mahaffey or Pat Klein if you have any questions.

We hope you had an opportunity to enjoy the seasonal beauty of our pristine, snow-laden East and West Woods during January.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## News from Other Grove Organizations

### Film Society News

#### Belfast

Sunday, March 10 at 7:00 pm in McCathran Hall

*Directed by Kenneth Branagh, 2021, UK, English, shown with English subtitles, black & white, 97 minutes.*

Kenneth Branagh drew on his Belfast childhood to write this film, which looks at the beginnings of the Troubles in 1969 from the perspective of nine-year-old Buddy. A coming-of-age drama with plenty of winsome comedy, *Belfast* features Judi Dench, Caitriona Balfe, and Van Morrison on the soundtrack. Its storytelling, like the hearth of home, radiates warmth.

Tickets at the door cost \$7.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

### Washington Grove Cares News

In the last couple of months, seven Grovers have added their names to our roster of people who can be called upon to help out when needs arise, and volunteers have shoveled, climbed ladders, and given many rides. Applause for all! When neighbors help neighbors, we're strengthening connections, weaving more threads into the social fabric.

Need help? Reach out to Washington Grove Cares by calling 301- 944-2962 or emailing [washingtongrovecares@gmail.com](mailto:washingtongrovecares@gmail.com). Want to help? Complete our [volunteer form](#) to join the roster. Want a fridge magnet? Same number; same email.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## WG United Methodist Church News



Please join Minister Margie Matthews and our congregation on Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM at 303 Chestnut Road, Washington Grove, MD.

WGUMC is a reconciling congregation. We believe that each person is a precious creation of God and is of sacred worth. We welcome persons of every gender identity, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability into full participation in the life of this faith community. We celebrate the gift of love and affirm all loving relationships and marriages.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Woman's Club News

### Chili Supper

Many thanks to all who helped make this year's Chili Supper yet another rousing success! This favorite event could not happen without all of the chili donations and other helping hands!



### Upcoming Events

Next on our agenda will be our Spring event and our ever-popular Coffee and Donuts events. Stay tuned for more information about these happenings.

### Outreach Programs

#### Priscilla's House

We are again looking for volunteers to provide meals on the first Wednesday of every month for Priscilla's House. This is one of our most popular programs for both the Club and the Town to reach out to our nearby neighbors. [Please use this link to sign up for the months of April, May or June 2024.](#)

#### Our Archways Families

Our shelves are getting a bit bare, so please consider donating shelf-stable foods, snacks for the kids and non-Snap items such as toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning supplies and Pedialyte. They do not all get the same items each month because their needs are different, so you can, but do not have to, donate multiples of the same items. Any amount of something is appreciated.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Other Notices

### Leaf Collection by Green Earth

There will be a final leaf collection by close of business on Friday, March 22, 2024.

[Return to the top of the document](#)

## Coming Events Calendar

March 4	Woods Committee	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 5	Yoga	6:00 pm	ZOOM
March 6	Tai Chi	11:00 am	ZOOM
March 6	Planning Commission	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 7	Swing Time Big Band	7:00 pm	Town Hall
March 9	Ceili Dance	7:00 pm	Town Hall
March 10	Film Society	7:00 pm	Town Hall
March 10	RASEC	2:00 pm	ZOOM
March 11	Town Council Meeting	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 12	Sustainability Committee Meeting	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 12	Yoga	6:00 pm	Town Hall
March 13	Tai Chi	11:00 am	Town Hall
<b>March 13</b>	<b>Building Permit Submission Deadline</b>		
March 14	Gateway Committee	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 19	Historic Preservation Commission	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 19	Yoga	6:00 pm	Town Hall
March 20	Tai Chi	11:00 am	Town Hall
March 20	Lighting Committee	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 20	Recreation Committee	7:30 pm	ZOOM
March 21	Swing Time Big Band	7:00 pm	Town Hall
March 26	Yoga	6:00 pm	Town Hall
March 27	Tai Chi	11:00 am	Town Hall
March 28	Emergency Preparedness Committee	7:30 pm	ZOOM

[Return to the top of the document](#)