

# News aRound the Hill

A Community Newsletter for Round Hill, Virginia

July 2021

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## Community Garden Reopens for 2021 Season

The Round Hill Outdoors Committee held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 15 to officially reopen the Round Hill Community Garden.

Mayor Scott Ramsey and several volunteer leaders offered a brief history of the garden, which was originally organized in 2009. They spoke of the importance and impact of community gardens and acknowledged all of the volunteers who donated time and resources to restoring the Community Garden to what it is today.

The garden, located at the entrance to Falls Place, provides Round Hill residents with seasonal ready-to-plant garden plots to rent for their personal use.

Special recognition goes to Eagle Scout Ryan Stetter and Troop 961 for their efforts in rebuilding the garden fence, restoring the pathways and



PHOTO FOR NEWS AROUND THE HILL

### Participants in the ribbon cutting for the Community Garden.

other improvements. The garden provides on-site irrigation and water system, compost, and storage.

RHCG organizers continue to invest in the future of the garden and are working to establish a mentorship program to help garden enthusiasts of all experience levels.

Plots are available in small (160 sq. ft), medium (100 sq. ft.) and large (200 sq. ft.) and prices vary depending on the size.

For more information about the Round Hill Community Garden or how to get involved, please email the Town Planner, Danni Albright, at [dalbright@roundhillva.org](mailto:dalbright@roundhillva.org).

## Town Council Ends State of Emergency

On June 16, the Town Council voted to end the Local State of Emergency and to repeal the Continuity of Governments Ordinance, to coincide with the expiration of the Governor's State of Emergency on June 30. The impact of these changes on Town operations includes the following:

1) The front door to the Town Office will be unlocked during regular hours of operation (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) to allow the public to conduct Town business. Clear barriers will be installed to help separate the public from Town staff.

2) The limit on the number of staff/visitors in the Town Office will be lifted and regular staffing levels will be maintained while incorporating the continued use of remote work.

3) Staff meetings, applicant meetings and contractor meetings may be

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## Tips to Conserve Water During Summer Months

Round Hill utility customers are reminded to help conserve water during the summer months; more prudent use of water now may help to avoid mandatory restrictions later in the season.

The following measures will help lessen the demand on the utility system, save energy, and lower household bills:

- Avoid the use of irrigation systems and sprinklers.
- Use a broom instead of washing driveways and sidewalks.
- Hand-water plants and gardens as much as possible and/or use rain barrels.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.

- Spread mulch around plants to retain moisture.
- Turn the water off while hand-washing dishes.
- Do not pre-wash dishes if using the dishwasher.
- Run the dishwasher or washing machine only with a full load.
- Keep a bottle of cold drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running water until it becomes cool.
- Install water-saving shower heads, faucets and toilets.
- Take showers instead of baths and limit shower time to 5 minutes or less.
- Turn off the water while brushing teeth, washing hands, and shaving.
- Check for and repair leaks (toilets, faucets, swimming pools).

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held in person as needed (remotely if desired).

4) The Town will continue to offer contactless and paperless services for members of the public who have not received the COVID-19 vaccine and are unable to come into the office.

5) The Town Council and Planning Commission will return to in-person meetings beginning in July, using a hybrid in-person/remote model (for members of the public who have not received the COVID-19 vaccine and are unable to come into the office).

6) The moratorium on utility late fees, penalties, and disconnections will be lifted beginning with the September 2021 billing cycle (60 days after the end of the Governor's moratorium). Customers may still set up a repayment plan with the Town or seek financial assistance through Loudoun County's Residential Utility Assistance Program.

7) Town events will return in 2021, including the Hometown Festival in October and an in-person Christmas Tree Lighting in December.

## **FRANKLIN PARK TRAIL AND MAIN STREET PROJECT UPDATE**

Since last fall, the County's contractors have made progress on the infrastructure work for these projects. Work will continue throughout the summer and into early 2022. Once completed, these two projects will be connected to create a single pedestrian-friendly path to Franklin Park, including:

- Construction of approximately 1,000 feet of sidewalk along Main Street from Loudoun Street to North of High Street.
- Safety elements (ramps and striping), curbing, drainage improvements, designated parking, and streetscaping.
- Relocated water and sewer lines with upgraded valves on the water system.

Following is a recap of various aspects of the project:

- Franklin Park Trail: The contractor, Highway and Safety Services, LLC, (HHS) began construction in

## **COVID Assistance Programs Still Available for Round Hill Area Residents**

### **Loudoun County Residential Utility Assistance Program**

Residents of Loudoun County and its seven incorporated towns who have experienced a loss of wages due to COVID-19 may apply for help to pay their essential utilities. Essential utilities include electric, water, sewer, gas, propane/oil and firewood used to heat the home. Residential customers may call the County's COVID-19 Emergency Fund and Helpline at 703-669-5040.

Assistance is capped at \$1,750 per household, and households may request assistance for more than one utility. This assistance can be used to pay past due utility bills and current-month utility payments.

Eligibility Criteria:

- A household in Loudoun County that is a current utility customer.
- All utility payments must have been paid in full as of March 31, 2020. Eligible payments include past due April 2020 to current bills only.
- Can demonstrate hardship as a result of COVID-19.

All requests must be submitted by July 27, 2021.

### **Round Hill Utility Repayment Plan**

The Town of Round Hill is offering COVID-19 Repayment Plans to customers who are 30 days or more past due on their water/sewer bills and have been impacted by COVID-19.

- To be eligible for the COVID-19 Repayment Plan, a customer must attest that he/she has experienced financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Customers can pay amounts in as little as six months or up to 24 months, depending upon individual circumstances.
- Customers who qualify for the COVID-19 Repayment Plan will not be charged any new deposits, down payments, late fees, interest charges, or penalties, and none shall accrue, during the moratorium.
- Applying for the COVID-19 Repayment Plan does not mean that the bill is not due or that the amounts owed will be waived or forgiven. Rather, customers have more time to pay bills that they are unable to pay due to COVID-19.
- The payment plan charge AND the current bill charge must be paid in full by the due date to avoid cut-off. No extensions will be approved.

To apply, go to the Town's website or call the Utility Department at 540-338-4772 ext 2 or visit: [www.roundhillva.org/covid-19-dashboard/web-forms/repayment-plan-application](http://www.roundhillva.org/covid-19-dashboard/web-forms/repayment-plan-application)

Franklin Park and around Lakefield Road in September 2020. Work is ongoing and scheduled to be completed in February 2022.

- East Loudoun Street: The contractor began preliminary work on East Loudoun Street in September 2020. Work on the test pits, relocation of a short section of water line, and stormwater work began in October 2020 and will continue through the summer of 2021. Electrical conduit construction and sidewalk and curb/

gutter construction is scheduled to begin September 2021 and continue through February 2022.

- Main Street: Stormwater construction began in April 2021 and is scheduled to continue through September 2021, after which time, electrical conduit construction and sidewalk, curb/gutter, and retaining wall construction is scheduled to begin in September 2021 and continue through February 2022.

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Project-wide asphalt milling and paving is scheduled to take place between February 2022 and March 2022. Project completion is scheduled to occur in March 2022.

Project updates will be provided on the Town's Facebook page and website: [www.roundhillva.org](http://www.roundhillva.org).

#### SLEETER LAKE PARK UPDATES:

The new FY2022 budget, which the Town Council adopted on June 23, includes new boat storage fees of \$120 per year for enclosed storage and \$80 per year for open storage. New storage racks are scheduled to be installed by August 1.

The Town has also created a new fee to cover the cost of the County Sheriffs coming to the park to unlock the gate after closing time. This fee was created in response to a continuing challenge with visitors not leaving the park before the gate is locked for the evening.

Plans for a new kayak/canoe launch are currently going through the approval process with Loudoun County Building & Development.

Finally, the Town has also kicked off the construction of a new water line that will bring public water to the Utility Department Offices as well as to the site of a future restroom at Sleeter Lake Park.

#### Sleeter Lake Park Summer Gate Closing Hours:

- Through August 15: 8:30 p.m.
- Beginning August 16: 8:00 p.m.
- Beginning September 6: 7:30 p.m.

The gate opens daily at 7:00 a.m.

## ON THE AGENDA

Issues the Town Council and Planning Commission will address in the coming months include:

- Future well site acquisition
- Upgrades to Sleeter Lake Park
- Town Expansion
- Parking Study
- Zoning ordinance amendments for non-conforming commercial lots
- Renovation of Utility plant offices



#### ROUND HILL PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL UPDATE

The Town of Round Hill has completed several physical upgrades to the pedestrian tunnel that passes under Route 7 and connects the townhomes on Newberry Crossing to the Lake Point subdivision on the other side of the bypass. Upgrades have included steam washing and painting as well as updating security monitoring and signage along the tunnel.

Future goals include installing permanent lighting throughout the tunnel, improving security features, landscaping, and long-term maintenance plans.

The tunnel, which is planned to become part of the future Round Hill to Franklin Park Trail, has been greatly affected by vandalism including graffiti, trash, and property damage in the past. Throughout the revitalization process, the Town has been encouraging residents of this area and the community to report any acts of vandalism or suspicious behavior within the tunnel or surrounding neighborhoods to the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office 24-hour non-emergency line at 703-777-1021.

Town Staff and the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department have already increased monitoring in this area and continue to seek the help of the community to keep this tunnel safe and clean.

Any person who unlawfully destroys, defaces, damages, or removes without the intent to steal any (Town) property, real or personal, shall be guilty of (i) a Class 1 misdemeanor if the value of or damage to the property, memorial, or monument is less than \$1,000 or (ii) a Class 6 felony if the value of or damage to the property, memorial, or monument is \$1,000 or more.

## Upcoming Events

#### ► Town Council Meeting July 21/Aug. 18

7:30 p.m., Round Hill Town Office and Zoom

#### ► Planning Commission Aug. 3/Sept. 7

7:00 p.m., Round Hill Town Office and Zoom

#### ► Town Council Work Session Aug. 4/Sept. 1

7:30 p.m., Round Hill Town Office and Zoom

(Note: The Town Council and Planning Commission will return to in-person meetings beginning in July 2021. Members of the public can still participate remotely; the Zoom link and phone number will be provided on the agenda for each meeting, [www.roundhillva.org/minutes-and-agendas](http://www.roundhillva.org/minutes-and-agendas).)

