

# Norwalk political notes: A magnificent discovery, Washington Village, a bridge, a bike share, the arts, and SoNoCC

By Nancy Chapman 3 : 36 am EDT August 28 2018

Bureau of Vital Statistics. Valid Only in the Town where Issued.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT. Town of Norwalk Jan 5<sup>th</sup> 1885

## MARRIAGE LICENSE

*This Certifies that the within-named parties have declared their intention of marriage, and have complied with the provisions of the laws of the State of Connecticut relating to the Registration of Marriages.*

Attest: James A Brown Registrar.

Full Name of GROOM, Alfred G Fearing Age in Years, 41  
Place of Residence, Northampton Mass Occupation, Merchant  
Place of Birth, Wareham Mass \*Condition, 1<sup>st</sup> Marriage  
Color, White †Nationality of Parents, — Father, American Mother, American

Full Name of BRIDE, Adelle J Fuller Age in Years, 32  
Maiden Name, if Widow, \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Residence, Norwalk Ct  
Place of Birth, New Haven Ct \*Condition, 1<sup>st</sup> Marriage  
Color, White †Nationality of Parents, — Father, American Mother, American

I Heroby Certify that Mr. Alfred G. Fearing  
and Miss Adelle J. Fuller the above-named parties, were legally  
joined in Marriage by me at South Norwalk this 6<sup>th</sup> day of  
January 1885  
Attest: Homer H. Danning, Minister of Congl.

\*State whether first, second, third, etc., marriage; also whether widowed or divorced. †State whether Irish, American, English, German, etc.

"A grant from the Connecticut State Library Historic Documents Preservation Program will help to preserve death records and marriage licenses more than 150 years old," a press release from Norwalk Communications Manager Joshua Morgan said. (Contributed)

*Updated, 7:14 a.m.: Copy edits, new headline, and correction: the Arts Commission began under Moccia, the Bike/Walk task force began under Rilling.*

NORWALK, Conn. —Here’s a roundup of Norwalk news items/political notes

- Town Clerk’s office makes ‘magnificent discovery’
- Washington Village residents on the move
- Wilms: West Rocks Road is open
- Norwalk bike/share moving forward
- Two appointed to Arts Commission
- Council to consider SoNoCC purchase Tuesday

### **Norwalk to preserve historic documents via grant funding**

Records dating to 1863 will be preserved thanks to a \$9,500 grant from the Connecticut State Library Historic Documents Preservation Program, according to a press release from Norwalk Communications Manager Josh Morgan.

The death records and marriage licenses were previously stored in envelopes and boxes. “Without proper preservation, the documents run the risk of further deterioration or irreparable damage,” the release says.

“These documents had seemingly been forgotten and uncovering them was a magnificent discovery,” said Norwalk Town Clerk Rick McQuaid. “Each record has a story and connection to our city. I am thrilled these will not be lost to history.”

The release reads:

“The scope of work includes restoring and reinforcing any paper tears or



A report is in on this water found last month in a Washington Village basement. (Rick Reardon)

damage; binding the documents with archival grade polyester and adding the records to microfilm for public viewing.

“These documents provide a window into the past of our ancestors who were here long before us. These are historical records and need to be preserved for future generations,’ said Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling. ‘Thank you to the Connecticut State Library for providing funds for this truly unique and important project.’

“Now in its eighteenth year, the Historic Documents Preservation Program has awarded more than \$16 million in grants to municipalities supporting a wide range of projects. The records will be archived over the next six to eight months and will be available for the public to view in the Town Clerk’s office.”

### **Washington Village basement water results in**

Water found in a Washington Village basement last month had fecal coliform bacteria and a semi-volatile organic compound in higher quantities than the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protections Ground Water Protection Criteria allows, an environmental report said.

Republican State Representative candidate John Flynn said that Washington Village residents were “told to be out of their apartments” as a result, but Norwalk Housing Authority Executive Director Adam Bovilsky said the residents were asked to leave because demolition is expected in Phase II of the Washington Village reconstruction.

Regarding the basement water, Bovilsky in a Monday email wrote:

“My understanding of the ‘fecal matter’ is that there may have been some mouse/rat droppings in the water that was found in the basement. That water was tested and the results provided to the Norwalk Health Department and the State of Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (‘DEEP’). They instructed us to dispose of the water through the

sanitary sewer and it did not require a permit. We have a professional exterminator who upon reports of increased activity of mice/rats outside of the units, did an additional treatment.”

Norwalk Director of Health Deanne D’Amore confirmed Bovilsky’s statement regarding disposal of the water. “DEEP instructed us that the water could be pumped to the sanitary sewer, didn’t require any specific permitting from them, and would be considered simple building maintenance water. Additionally, the Norwalk Water Pollution Control Authority had no issues with the water being discharged into the sanitary sewer,” D’Amore wrote in an e-mail to NancyOnNorwalk.

The SVOC found was Bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, which the [National Center for Biotechnology Information states](#) is used as a plasticizer for many resins and elastomers. The water sampling was done by the firm Big East, which reported that “-.0025” was found and DEEP’s GWPC standard is .002. Fecal coliform was found at 63 parts per 100 milliliters.

The new development replacing Washington Village is dubbed Soundview Landing.

Seven Washington Village families “moved straight into Building A and another 33 families will move straight into 32 units in building B plus 2 additional families will move straight into Building B Low Income Housing Tax Credit units with a voucher,” Bovilsky wrote.

The rest will have to move into other apartments through the use of vouchers, he wrote:

“We are just weeks away from closing on Phase II of the project. Phase II includes the planned demolition of 6 buildings in Washington Village. Phase III will result in the demolition of the remaining buildings. Rather than have some of our tenants living next to a demolition site, we decided to just move everyone out now. It will take time for folks to accept their vouchers and

lease up in the private market and we are expecting that this process could take another 3-5 months until everyone is out. This move has been planned for years as part of our redevelopment project. As part of this process, all of our Washington Village tenants received a notice telling them it was time to start moving out and once again reminding them that they will receive financial assistance and case manager assistance from specialists who will help them find a place and organize their move.”

## **Washington Village Water Report 18-0823**

### **West Rocks Road bridge open**

The newly reconstructed West Rocks Road Bridge over the Merritt Parkway (Route 15) was opened at 6 p.m. Monday, according to State Rep. Fred Wilms (R-142).

Norwalk Police also say the bridge is open.

Detours will continue sporadically at night for the next two weeks, with traffic limited to alternating lanes during non-peak hours, Wilms wrote in an email blast.

“DOT Project No. 0102-0356 was awarded to New England Road, Incorporated at a cost of \$4,117,827.00 on December 29, 2017 and is scheduled to be completed by May 13, 2019. The project is being administered by the Office of Construction in District 3, New Haven,” Wilms relayed.

The existing bridge superstructure was demolished and replaced.

“Remaining bridge work includes: Installation of ornamental railing, installation of the permanent chain link fence, application of membrane, placement of asphalt pavement,” according to Wilms’s e-mail.

### **Bike Share approved**

A bike share agreement was preliminarily approved at the Aug. 14 Council meeting, where Rilling was authorized to sign a contract with P3 Global Management for the service, at no cost to the city.

The Council packet doesn't elaborate; the only information provided is a letter from Assistant Corporation Counsel Diane Beltz-Jacobson to Department of Public Works Director Bruce Chimento stating that the Council approves salient terms.

Bike/Walk Commission Chairwoman Nancy Rosett told Council members that the goal is to provide a "first mile" for commuters who are seeking a way to get to their train or bus without using a car.

It's "somewhat like Citibike but a bit smaller" and will also boost tourism, she said, adding that renting in Norwalk will be more attractive if apartment dwellers have an option for bike riding that doesn't require keeping a bike in their apartments, she said.

There will be 200 bikes at 20 stations, "docked," so bicycles won't be littering the city, she said.

## **Two appointed to Arts Commission**

Marc Alan, an unaffiliated voter, and Sharon Baanante, a Democrat, were unanimously approved for appointment to the Arts Commission by the Common Council.

Alan is the director of marketing for Factory Underground, a music industry business located at 16 Isaac St. Baanante is the founder of the Love ALL Project, a non-partisan volunteer organization whose mission is to "stop the cycle of hate by fostering understanding and relationships between different cultures through community collaborations," according to her resume.

Alan is the moving force behind the Wall Street area's First Friday effort and Baanante is a graduate of Norwalk Public Schools, with two children in NPS,

Norwalk Arts Commission Chairwoman Susan Wallerstein told the Council.

The Arts Commission has existed for just over a year as an official City Commission, she said, adding, “Not only are we alive and well, we are thriving.”

Sometimes you don’t know what will happen with the specific language in a new ordinance, but “two thumbs up” for requiring Council representation, she said, lauding the participation of Council member Chris Yerinides (D-District A) and Republican representative Emerson Straniti (appointed by Minority Leader Doug Hempstead) as “terrific additions” who have brought diversity to the Commission in that they are both musicians, and both young and male.

Rilling took the opportunity to laud the Council for creating both the Arts Commission and the Bike/Walk Commission.

The former began as an advisory group under then-Mayor Richard Moccia, and the latter began as a task force under Rilling.

“I think this Council can be very, very proud of the fact that we took two Committees that serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and made them a standing Commission, because the arts in Norwalk are so very, very important. We want to keep the arts alive, we want people to appreciate it, we want our young people to be exposed to the arts because it allows them to grow and develop to their fullest potential,” Rilling said.

Of the Bike/Walk Commission, he said, “We know that people are starting to try to find other means of getting around their community. We are trying to develop our urban core and by having safe streets that people can feel comfortable walking on, that people can feel comfortable riding their bikes whether it be to go down to the train station, or even have their young children ride their bikes in the City of Norwalk.”

## **South Norwalk Community Center purchase headed for vote**

The agenda for Tuesday's Council meeting states that the proposal to buy one-half of 98 South Main St. from the South Norwalk Community Center is up for a vote, with an executive session possible. The City already owns half of the building.

This item was tabled on July 10 after the Board of Estimate and Taxation did not move it forward, seeking answers to questions.

The building at 98 South Main, long a hub for social services to the South Norwalk community, was built with \$1 million of grants obtained by the city between 1981 and 1987. Ownership of the property was transferred to NEON and SoNoCC in August 1987, with each organization owning half of the building.

The City has proposed buying SoNoCC's half of 98 South Main for \$300,000 and spending an additional \$200,000 on building repairs. The purchase and repairs would be funded from the \$3.5 million paid by GGP to the City this year in exchange for permission to eliminate a hotel from plans for The SoNo Collection. SoNoCC would have a 700-square foot office in the building.

The proposed purchase stems from NEON's bankruptcy, which was settled more than a year ago, with the City gaining ownership of NEON's half of the building.

The proposed deal includes a new organizational structure for the South Norwalk Community Center, with the appointment of a new 11-member Board.

Rilling on Aug. 14 announced that Esther Murillo had been selected to represent the Council on the SoNoCC Board.