

Secaucus



Newsletter

November 2025

Secaucus Monthly Newsletter

www.SecaucusNJ.gov



Fall in love with Secaucus, again!

This is the perfect season to enjoy beautiful fall colors in the center of Town, spookily fun Halloween events including a community Trick or Treat event at Schmidts Woods. Check out the Calendar on our website www.secaucusnj.gov.

Mayor’s Corner

November is a month of great importance to all of us. On the first Tuesday, we the people get to do something significant and let our voices be heard by voting. With a variety of ways to vote, it is easier and more convenient than ever before.

In our Town, you have the chance to cast your in-person vote during the early voting period from October 25th to November 2nd at the Recreation Center located at 1200 Koelle Boulevard. There is plenty of parking available and polling stations are open Monday -Saturday 10:00 AM-8:00 PM, and Sunday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM. No appointment is necessary, just walk in and cast your vote.

You can also choose to vote on Election Day at the designated polling station listed on your sample ballot. Election Day is Tuesday, November 4th and polling stations are open 6:00 AM – 8:00 PM.

If you choose to cast your vote by mail, please make sure you apply for a main-in ballot and return it in one of the following ways:

- Place it in the secure ballot drop box located at Town Hall before 8:00 PM on Tuesday, November 4th
- Deliver it in person to the Hudson County Board of Elections Office by 8:00 PM on Tuesday, November 4th
- Mail it, postmarked on or before 8:00 PM, Tuesday November 4th and should be received by the Hudson County Board of Elections on or before Monday, November 10th

In November, we also celebrate all our veterans. November 11, Veterans Day, is just around the corner so let’s take the opportunity to thank the veterans in our community for their service and sacrifice.



Secaucus Ice Rink Now Open

Join fellow skaters and enjoy the welcoming and affordable Secaucus Ice Rink located at 150 Plaza Center. It is now ready and available for open skating, as well as hockey practice and tournaments.

Public Skate Sessions:

- Wednesday: 1:00 – 2:30 PM
- Thursday: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 1:30 -3:30 PM; 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: 3:00 – 5:00 PM; 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Admission is \$3, Skate Rental is \$2.

Mayor Michael Gonnelli- mayor@secaucus.net - O: 201-330-2005		
Councilman William McKeever wmckeeper@secaucus.net C: 551-665-7650	Councilman Robert Costantino rcostantino@secaucus.net C: 201-401-9315	Councilman Mark Dehnert mdehnert@secaucus.net O: 201-330-2000
Councilman John Gerbasio gerbasio@secaucus.net C: 551-226-0955	Councilman James Clancy jclancy@secaucus.net C: 201-906-9657	Councilwoman Orietta Tringali otringali@secaucus.net O: 201-330-2000

LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER
SECAUCUS, NJ 07094



Secaucus Municipal Government Center
Paterson Plank Road
Secaucus, NJ 07094

Important Notice: Residential Parking Permits Required

Reminder: The Town of Secaucus has rolled out new residential parking permits that are required for vehicles parked in “Residential Parking” zones beyond posted time limits. All residents must get a new residential parking permit or renew the previously issued green parking sticker, which will expire on December 31, 2025. There is NO FEE to apply. New parking permit stickers will be mailed to residents when applications are processed. Please note that processing times will vary based on the volume of applications received.

To apply visit www.secaucusnj.gov/parking or scan QR code. You will need your driver’s license number, a picture of vehicle registration, and proof of address to complete the application. Enforcement of the new residential parking permits will begin on January 1, 2026.



New Community and Senior Center Opens



August 18, 2025, was a remarkable day for Secaucus. It marked the opening of one of the largest infrastructure additions in recent years; the Mayor Michael J. Gonnelli Community Center located at 101 Centre Avenue. U.S. Representative Nellie Pou, Hudson County Executive Craig Guy, County Commissioner Robert Baselice and more than 400 residents joined Mayor Gonnelli and Town Council members in the ribbon cutting and reception that evening. The mood was festive and cheerful as attendees exchanged words of appreciation for the modern, well-designed space. The fact that it was the same day as Mayor Michael Gonnelli’s birthday may, or may not, have been a coincidence! There was even an impromptu Happy Birthday song for the well-loved Mayor.

Thanking the Town Council, the residents and his family, Mayor Michael Gonnelli was visibly touched by the outpouring of love and “for the incredible honor.” He added that he was looking forward to all the gatherings and celebrations that will bring residents together at the Center. He also thanked former representative Bill Pascrell for his instrumental role in helping the Town secure a \$950,000 grant that offsets some costs of the project.

Work on the demolition of the old Senior Center building started in 2020 after the discovery of a leaking oil tank. It was determined that rectification of the issue would not have been cost effective and plans for a completely new building started to take shape at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The site was ready for construction after demolition and remediation of the property. On October 16, 2023, Representative Bill Pascrell, Hudson County officials, Mayor Gonnelli and Town Council members joined in for a groundbreaking ceremony and construction started shortly after.



The new two-floor community center is truly beautiful. The brightly lit first floor main hall with multiple bingo boards, television systems, and beverage machines is clean, modern and inviting. The state-of-the-art kitchen will support the Meals-on-Wheels and congregate meals programs. With a large walk-in refrigerator and freezer, top-notch ovens, stovetops, fixtures and plenty of open workspace, it’s the launch-pad of many meals that will bring our seniors together. The second floor is currently an open floor with several plans under consideration.

Please join us in experiencing the new Mayor Michael J. Gonnelli Community Center as the Town hosts senior and community events. We hope to see you there.

Unlock Solar Savings with Community Solar in Secaucus!

Great news for Secaucus residents! If you have ever wanted to enjoy the benefits of solar energy but thought it wasn’t an option – perhaps you rent, don’t have a suitable roof, or prefer no upfront costs – then Community Solar is for you!

Secaucus is at the forefront of New Jersey’s clean energy revolution. Thanks to a state-supported program by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), you can now subscribe to a share of a local solar farm, such as the ones located right here in our community. This clean energy flows directly into the PSE&G grid, and you receive the credits and the savings. Overall energy savings depend on your income level (the most significant savings are reserved for low-to-moderate income households).

What Makes Community Solar So Great?

- **Guaranteed Savings:** See a direct credit on your PSE&G bill, leading to guaranteed savings on your electricity costs.
- **No Installation Needed:** There’s no equipment to install on your property, and no maintenance for you to worry about.
- **No Changes to Your Utility:** Your electricity will still come from PSE&G, just as it always has.
- **Easy Access to Clean Energy:** Support local, renewable energy and contribute to a greener Secaucus without any hassle.

Ready to start saving and power your home with clean energy?

Learn more and sign up today by visiting the PSE&G Community Solar page at nj.pseg.com/communitysolar or by exploring options with providers like PowerMarket or Solar Landscape, who have projects serving Secaucus residents.

Deputy Police Chief Baccola Retires

On October 3, 2025, Deputy Chief Joseph Baccola marked his last day with the Secaucus Police Department with a clap-out held in the Town Hall courtyard. Police Chief Dennis Miller, staff and officers of the Police Department, joined Mayor Michael Gonnelli, Town Council members, family and friends as Dep. Chief Baccola radioed his last call.

Deputy Chief Joseph Baccola is a long-serving member of the Secaucus Police Department, whose career spanned more than two decades. He began his service with the department on March 12, 1999. Over the years, he served in both the Patrol Division and the Records Division and held several leadership roles. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2006, Lieutenant in 2013, Captain in 2015, and Deputy Chief in 2022. During his time with the department, he also added roles as a Field Training Officer and a D.A.R.E. Officer, working with young people in our community.

A graduate of Seton Hall University, Deputy Chief Baccola earned his Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice, laying the academic foundation for his career in law enforcement. Chief Miller also recognized his mother, Linda Baccola, for being a constant source of support throughout his career. Congratulations on your retirement, Deputy Chief.



Have you Noticed Raingardens in Our Town?

What is a rain garden you may ask. It is a shallow landscaped basin constructed in stormwater flow paths. Rainwater flows into the raingarden, reducing the amount of water runoff. The vegetation in the rain garden helps screen pollutants from leeching into the soil or contaminating streams and rivers. We have several right here in Secaucus! The two on Centre Avenue near Post Place were funded by a \$154,000 grant from the NJDEP’s Water Quality Restoration grant.

The Centre Avenue raingardens were constructed in partnership with a Stevens Institute of Technology team led by Dr. Dibyendu “Dibs” Sarkar and Dr. Hadeer Saleh, to retrofit the raingardens with Green Engineered Mulch (GEM), a filter media made from natural and recycled materials. Early monitoring shows the garden is already making a big difference: stormwater leaving the site is noticeably cleaner, with solids, nutrients, and metals all reduced, including nearly 50% fewer suspended solids, about 50% less phosphorus and ammonium, and up to 75% less lead.

This project shows how nature-based solutions can protect our waterways and create a greener, healthier community. So next time you see a rain garden, think about the positive ways it impacts our environment.



Harmony Suites Makes Donation

Harmony Suites, owned by lifelong Secaucus resident Alex Patel, generously donated \$5,000 to support the Secaucus Cheerleading Team in their journey to the prestigious Champion Cheer Competition in Las Vegas earlier this year. This exclusive event invited only 40 teams nationwide, making it a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the young athletes.

“These cheerleaders have shown incredible dedication and hard work to earn their place in this highly competitive and prestigious event,” said Patel. “As proud members of the Secaucus community, Harmony Suites and I are honored to support them in achieving their dreams.”



In Loving Memory of Chipper

Stephanie and Robert Finelli lost Chipper, a lovable Golden Retriever therapy dog, “with a heart as big as his smile,” the family reported. Many of you may have seen Chipper around Town, at Mill Creek Point Park, at our schools and hospitals. “For 12 beautiful years Chipper was more than our dog, he was a ray of sunshine and love to all who knew him. He will be greatly missed and will never be forgotten,” said Robert. Prior to Chipper, the Finelli family had Fairway, another therapy dog from the same family line as Chipper.



State-of-the-art, Inclusive Park Ready for You!

Have you visited Ivanoski Park lately? Check it out and you will be in for a sweet surprise at the newest, fully reconstructed, inclusive park that is sure to make children of all ages happy. With this addition, the Town boasts 3 all-inclusive municipal parks—the other two being Clarendon School and Schmidts Woods (to be completed in 2026).



The 10,000+ square foot park in the middle of the block on Charles Street has been completely gutted and rebuilt with soft rubberized safety surface, picnic tables, a 25-foot diameter gazebo, all-inclusive playground equipment for children of varying ages, two swing sets, bike racks, benches, etc. The park was funded by a Green Acres grant from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection in the amount of \$750,000.00 as well as a grant from the Hudson County Open Space Trust Fund in the amount of \$500,000. The park is now complete and is open to the public.



Secaucus Student Wins Fire Safety Poster Contest



The NJ Division of Fire Safety’s newsletter Fire Focus announced winners of the NJ Fire Safety Poster Contest, and we have a winner from Secaucus! Please join us in congratulating Alicia Li from Clarendon Elementary School. Her artwork will be featured in the 2026 New Jersey Fire Safety calendar.

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, students from around New Jersey created original artwork to promote fire safety messages in their schools.

New Tree Conservation Ordinance to Protect and Enhance Urban Canopy

As required by the State of New Jersey, the Town of Secaucus has officially updated its tree conservation ordinance to better protect and replenish the local tree canopy and manage stormwater runoff. This adoption aligns our local policies with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)’s requirement that ensures the protection of these invaluable natural resources for future generations.

Key provisions of the updated ordinance include:

- **Permit Requirement:** A Tree Removal Permit is required before removing any tree with a trunk diameter of three (3) inches or greater, measured at breast height. This applies to all standing trees, whether alive or dead, located anywhere on your property.
- **Application Process & Fees:** To apply, property owners, business owners, and/or contractors must complete an application, tag trees for removal, and include a sketch showing the location of the tree(s) to be removed and replaced. The Administrator of Tree Conservation will schedule an inspection within twenty (20) days. For properties not zoned as residential that do not involve a site plan or subdivision, a \$50 application fee is required at the time of application.
- **Tree Replacement:** For healthy trees that are removed, a replacement tree may be required. If a property owner cannot accommodate the required replacement trees on their lot, they must pay a \$400 per tree fee, to the Secaucus Tree Fund. Replacement trees must be chosen from the Town-approved list of species.
- **Exemptions:** Dead, damaged, diseased, hazardous, or invasive trees are exempt from fees and replacement requirements. However, a Tree Removal Permit is still required.

This ordinance applies equally to homeowners, contractors, and large landholders to ensure consistent protection of the Town’s collective tree canopy.

Please email shadetree@secaucus.net, or call 201-330-2000 and ask for the Administrator of Tree Conservation, or Environmental Department or Construction Department with questions about this new requirement or for assistance with the application.

For more information, you may also scan the QR code.



Street Dedication Ceremony to Honor Ex-Captain William “Bo” Koenemund

On Saturday, September 6, 2025, the Washington Hook and Ladder Company hosted a Street Dedication Ceremony in honor of ex-Fire Captain William “Bo” Koenemund, who proudly served the Secaucus Fire Department for more than 39 years. Mayor Michael Gonnelli honored Bo’s memory and thanked him and his family for being an integral part of the firefighting community. Ex-chiefs George Heflich and Raymond Ciecuch, took attendees down the memory lane, sharing snippets of their time together with Bo. On behalf of Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council, Councilmember James Clancy presented a Proclamation honoring William. Later, a street sign with his name was unveiled on the corner of County Avenue and Lincoln Avenue.

William “Bo” Koenemund held several roles during his career at the Washington Hook and Ladder Company including firefighter, department secretary, lieutenant and captain. He died in the line of duty on September 2, 1982, after responding to a massive arson fire that engulfed more than 40 acres of the Passaic factory district. After several hours of firefighting, Bo reported being very tired and collapsed. Doctors determined he had suffered a fatal heart attack.

Bo was known for his leadership and constant presence at the firehouse. Since he worked at PSE&G, just across the street from the firehouse, he spent countless hours at the station, which many considered his second home. He even cooked at company events and helped strengthen the bonds in the department. Even in his sixties, he was described by fellow firefighters as “strong as a bull” and fearlessly and consistently responding to fire events. He was never motivated by compensation—volunteer firefighting offered none in those days—but by an unwavering dedication to duty and community.

The Koenemund family has been deeply rooted in the Secaucus Fire Department for generations, with over 225 combined years of service to the community. At one time, seven members of the family served together at Washington Hook & Ladder. Bo’s dedication continued a tradition begun by his uncle, who served 47 years, alongside his father and cousins. In the last four years of his life, Bo had the privilege of serving alongside his son, William E. Koenemund, at Washington Hook & Ladder. His grand-daughter Julia now continues the tradition of firefighting—a fitting tribute and honor to William “Bo” Koenemund.



Important Information on Illegal Residential Units

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of illegal residential units in Secaucus. Inspections have revealed modifications to existing homes without proper approvals, additions in basements, and sectioning of homes for the purpose of increasing the number of units beyond zoning approval. Illegal residential units significantly impact quality of life in our neighborhoods, lead to shortage of parking, overburdened utilities, additional children in the school system, and a serious strain on safety and emergency services. The Town Administration, and several municipal departments, including Construction, Zoning and Fire Safety, are working continuously to increase awareness of the issue and would like to share important information to consider while making modifications to your home or renting a property in Secaucus.

For Homeowners:

- If your home is a legal single, two+ family home, it cannot be modified to allow for greater use, without approval of the Zoning Board and permits from Construction Department.
- Prior to construction work or modifications to your home, please contact the Construction Department to check the legal number of units and determine the permits you need for the proposed work.
- If a home has been modified to add more bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, or other rooms, without permits and prior zoning approval, you will be subject to fines, summons, possible municipal court appearance and be required to remove all unapproved work. An Order to Vacate may also be issued on the structure.
- To avoid potential issues, please rent property only as permitted.
- Basement apartments may be illegal, so we advise renters to verify with Construction/ Zoning office to avoid possible hassles.
- Short-term rentals, defined as rentals under 30 days, are strictly prohibited.

If apartments are rented illegally, the landlord is responsible for the tenant’s moving expenses and other potential damages.

If you feel a property has been illegally modified to increase the number of units, or is being rented for short term use, please do not hesitate to contact the Construction Office at 201-330-2027 or you can fill out a complaint form available on our website. Complaints can be anonymous. For details, you may also read the related ordinance—Chapter 154 Unlawful Residential Units—on our Town’s website: secaucusnj.gov.

Recycling Cart Tagging Has Begun!

Secaucus residents, get ready for a cleaner, greener community! We’ve started tagging recycling carts to help everyone recycle correctly. Our goal is to ensure only the right materials make it into your bins, which helps our environment, increases our recycling grant amount, and keeps our recycling program efficient.

Know Your “Nos” for Recycling!

To avoid your cart being tagged and missed for collection, please remember these key items that do NOT belong in your recycling cart:

- **No Plastic Film, Bags, or Wrap:** This includes plastic shopping bags, dry cleaning bags, and plastic film.
- **No Tanglers, Cords, Hoses, Chains, or Electronics:** These items can jam the recycling machinery.
- **No To-go Containers:** Black plastic containers, Plastic utensils, Cardboard food containers, waxed paper cups
- **No Food or Liquid:** Please empty all containers before recycling.
- **No Clothing or Linens**
- **No Bagged Recyclables:** Please keep all recyclables loose in your cart.

If your cart is tagged, it means we found a few items that do not belong. Please correct these issues, and we will collect your recycling on the next scheduled pickup.

For a full recycling guide, please visit green.secaucusnj.gov.