



What's Happening Rocky Hill & Cromwell?

Send us your community news!
E-mail editor@rarereminder.com or
call 860-563-9386 to submit news, photos,
announcements or any upcoming events.

State DOT To Receive Comments On Rt. 99 Sidewalk Improvements

By Randall Cox
Freelance Writer

ROCKY HILL - The state Department of Transportation is hosting an in-person public information session on June 24 at 5 p.m. at the Rocky Hill Senior Center, 55 Church St. Representatives of DOT will discuss the implementation of a new project that will take place along Route 99. Members of the public are invited to voice any comments or ask any questions regarding the new project.

The project has two prongs: first, removing so-called slip lanes and replacing them with safer dedicated turn lanes. Secondly, sidewalks will be added on both sides of Route 99 to connect gaps in the existing sidewalk network. The locus of the project spans from the I-91 northbound interchange to the I-91 southbound interchange and along Route 99 between those two points.

Slip lanes are usually single lanes that allow cars to make turns without stopping, or sometimes without slowing down by avoiding a dedicated turn lane, and thus easing potential congestion. The off-ramp at exit 24 is a prime example of a slip lane. Slip lanes prioritize car speed, often at the expense of pedestrian safety.

Slip lanes are dangerous for two reasons. First, cars can pass through them much faster than they would through dedicated turn lanes, leaving very little time to react to any crossing pedestrians. Secondly, slip lanes drastically increase the amount of space that a pedestrian needs to traverse in order to cross to the other side of the street. Slip lanes double or even triple the span of an intersection, usually creating pedestrian islands between the turn lane and the slip lane.

For these reasons slip lanes are being removed in numerous communities where pedestrian safety is a concern. In some towns, local campaigns by concerned residents have led to their removal.

And in others, like Rocky Hill, a state project is being implemented to remove them.

The other goal of this project is to close the gaps in the sidewalks, particularly under the I-91 overpass, where there is no sidewalk coverage on either side, and walking there is very dangerous. If you drive along Route 99, you have likely seen people walking or cycling under the bridge mere inches from passing automobiles. It seems strange that the sidewalk would simply vanish at the most dangerous point of a pedestrian's commute. A connected sidewalk would greatly improve walkability and pedestrian safety between Rocky Hill and Wethersfield.

Clearly the use of slip lanes, and the sidewalk gaps that have languished along Route 99 for years are an example of car convenience prioritized over pedestrian safety. DOT has recently begun implementing infrastructure that allows for both convenience and ease for motorists, and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The network of bike lanes that have exploded in Connecticut in recent years are one example. However, most of the bike lanes in the area are used recreationally, and not for daily commuting. The improvements described in this project would benefit commuters who are forced to assume an undue risk when walking in the Rocky Hill-Wethersfield town line area.

Residents who are unable to attend the June 24 meeting can email comments or questions to Melanie.Zimyeski@ct.gov or call (860) 594-2144 and reference State Project No. 0118-0191. The deadline for public comment is July 8. Construction is set to begin in the spring of 2027, based on the expected availability of funding. The estimated cost of the project is \$6 million. Eighty percent of the funding is federal and 20 percent from the state.

Town To Host "Make Music Day" With Sites All Around Community

By Margaret Radman
Freelance Writer

ROCKY HILL - The town is striking a new chord this summer as it hosts its first-ever Make Music Day on June 21—a free, town-wide event inviting musical performers of all abilities to pick up an instrument, grab a mic, or simply sing along with the rest of the world.

Set to run rain or shine from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., the all-day event invites spontaneous performances—whether it's someone playing a guitar on the sidewalk or in the park, a band playing under the pavilion, or a scheduled act at a local venue. Everyone is welcome to take part in this free, town-wide celebration.

The Make Music Day event - that is modeled after a tradition that has been popularized in larger cities like Miami, Nashville, and New Orleans - got its start in France, where the annual event - the Fete la Musique - has become a cultural marker. It is observed yearly at the commencement of summer on June 21 and recognized as a musical holiday.

Municipalities are "trying to bring it over into the states," explained Economic & Business Development Manager Alandra Maine who said she has been inspired in part by the sidewalk musicians who commonly perform on the streets in

New Orleans' French quarter.

Maine said she hopes to enrich the cultural presence in town and develop the musical festival theme further going forward, making it an annual event here in Rocky Hill like it is in some of the larger cities in the U.S.

So far, there are students slated to play at the Rocky Hill Community Center, and two performances are planned for the library. Likewise, Rocky Hill Arts Now, Inc. will be hosting a karaoke event at the 911 Memorial.

Impromptu sidewalk and park performances are welcome but for those seeking a particular venue, registration is suggested by scanning the QR code on the town website that will match performers with businesses who have opened their doors to performers.

Likewise, business owners who are open to having a venue at their establishment will be matched with performers by scanning the QR code that connects establishments with performers.

For registration, go to: <https://www.rockyhillct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2336/Make-Music-Day>

Creative District Plans Summer And Fall Events

By Joyce Boncal
Freelance Writer

CROMWELL - The Cromwell Creative District (CCD) was formed a couple of years ago as a 501(c)3 non-profit agency. Its purpose is to promote the arts, culture and economic development in the district. To that end it hopes to expose Cromwell's history, bolster current resources and promote growth through programs, tours and special events. The effort is backed by the town government along with community members and businesses.

The CCD district includes the area from the Connecticut riverfront to downtown Main Street. The district is managed by the Cromwell Cultural District Commission which includes members appointed to oversee and guide its activities.

If you see painted murals on sides of buildings, dugouts and even parking lots, most likely CCD had something to do with it. All part of their effort to advertise the creative artsy side of Cromwell. The dinosaur mural on Main Street is a "must see."

July 30 will be the Summerfest Festival at Pierson Park, West Street from 1 to 7 p.m. There will be 70 vendors, four live bands, food trucks, and

activities for the children. The rain date is Aug. 6.

Sept. 6 will be the Second Annual Town Wide Tag Sale, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The town does the advertising, you get the profits. There will be a tag sale trail map with your items listed. Yard signs and numbers will be provided. Your registration will help fund community events. The tag sale will be held rain or shine. You can register by picking up a paper from the Town Library or Town Hall or on the CCD Website: cromwellcreative-district.org

Take time during the Summer or Fall to take the audio tour of historic Main Street. The tour highlights 16 stops along Main Street featuring historic homes and landmarks and history of individuals who contributed to Cromwell's history. Access the tour at: <https://www.youraudiotour.com/tours/cromwell-creative-district-historic-house-tour/>

You can also take the tour from the comfort of your home.

The Cromwell Creative District committee is looking for volunteers to be on the committee as well as help with events. Contact them through cromwellcreativedistrict.org.

Pick-Your-Own Berries At Community Farm

Liam McLoughlin, Staff Writer

ROCKY HILL — There's no better way to kick off summer than with a pile of bright, red strawberries in your hands.

If you agree, you're in luck because Fair Weather Growers, a local farm with over 400 acres of land, has opened a "Pick-Your-Own strawberry venue" at the Rocky Hill Community Farm.

"We have partnered with the town to grow these juicy, fresh berries, and now it's time to share the harvest with all of you," they said. It's first official day was June 6, and is expected to close later this month.

On their website, the farm also offered some tips to picking the best berries. Visitors should only pick "berries that are bright red, plump, and fully ripe," being sure to avoid any with green or white areas.

Mayor Lisa Marotta announced the opening on last week.

"We are thrilled to announce the official opening of a first-of-its-kind, pick-your-own strawberry venue at the Rocky Hill Community farm, a unique agritourism initiative designed to celebrate and preserve local agriculture, while offering families and visitors an opportunity to engage directly with farming."

Marotta also thanked the Collins family, owners of Fair Weather Growers, for their help and support with the project.

"Thank you to 4th generation farmer, Billy Collins and the entire Collins family," she said. "We are confident that this initiative will be a resounding success and attract visitors from near and far."

Billy Collins is a fourth generation farmer, having taken over the farm from his late parents, Chris and Mary Collins. The family has been farming in the region for more than 100 years, transitioning "away from animals and into vegetables through the last 60 acres," according to their website.

Today, Collins and his team grow over 200 varieties of vegetables, herbs, and annual fruits, as well as flowers and vegetable plants as part of their farm market.

Their strawberries cost \$4.50 per pound, and pre-picked cartons of fresh-picked strawberries are available for those unable to pick themselves. The public can visit the Rocky Hill Community Farm from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day to pick strawberries, weather permitting.



REMINDER FROM THE CROMWELL TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE JUNE IS DOG LICENSING MONTH!

Every dog, except dogs under a kennel license as provided in C.G.S. §22-342, must be licensed when it becomes six months old, and then annually in June. A valid rabies certificate must be presented if it is not up to date in the system. Dog licenses are \$8 for neutered or spayed, \$19 for non-altered dogs. All dog licenses after the month of June will be charged a \$1 late fee per month. Dog licenses are issued by the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 41 West Street, Cromwell, or through the mail by providing a copy of the valid rabies certificate, a check payable to Cromwell Town Clerk, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Thank you,
JoAnn Doyle, CCTC, CCMO
Cromwell Town Clerk

FROM THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE DON'T FORGET JUNE IS DOG LICENSING MONTH!

Every dog, except dogs kept under a kennel license as provided in C.G.S. §22-342, must be licensed when it becomes six months old, and then annually in June. A valid rabies certificate must be presented if it is not up to date in the system. Dog licenses are \$8 for neutered, \$19 for non-neutered dogs. All dogs licensed after the month of June will be assessed late fees of \$1 per month. Dog licenses are issued by the Town Clerk's Office, and may be obtained in person during office hours, at 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill; through the mail by providing a valid rabies certificate, a check for the appropriate fee payable to Rocky Hill Town Clerk, and self-addressed, stamped envelope; or these items may be deposited in the secure drop box marked Town Clerk located on the building to the left of the main entrance to Town Hall. Renewals may be done online at www.rockyhillct.gov at the Town Clerk's page.

DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR 10th ANNUAL ROCKY HILL TOP DOG CONTEST!!!

All dogs who are licensed during the month of June are eligible to be entered into the random drawing for a chance to win the #1 TAG and their picture permanently placed on the Top Dog wall of fame at the Town Hall! Visit the website above or call (860) 258-2705 for more information, including office hours.

Juneteenth Concert

Global Recording Artist, Nedelka Prescod and her Band in Concert! It is taking place on Wednesday, June 18, at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary at Rocky Hill Congregational Church, 805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067. Bring a friend to this concert spanning genres from gospel to jazz to songs of liberation. You will not want to miss the opportunity to be moved by Nedelka's powerful gift of music!

Group Collecting Used Wheelchairs

Wheels for the World will pick up for free used manual wheelchairs (in any condition), wheelchair parts, walkers, metal crutches, and canes. No motorized wheelchairs.

We can make a referral for any equipment that Wheels for the World can't accept.

Call Marshall at (203) 747-0543 or Ken (860) 754-7602 to arrange for collection. Wheels for the World is a charity of, Joni & Friends, their website: <https://joniandfriends.org/wheels-for-the-world/>.

