

***VETERAN'S FIELD UPDATE By Mayor James F. Delaney***

A lot of things have happened over the last month since I have last written to you in the July edition. Thanks to the cooperation of our environmental engineers First Environment, our site engineers Neglia Engineering, our special legal counsel Tim Corrison of Connell Foley, and our Borough attorney Phil Boggia, the Borough was able to prepare a set of bid specifications seeking sealed bids from contractors for the removal of the contaminated fill at Veteran's Field. Sealed bids are scheduled to be opened on Thursday, August 28 and the Council has 60 days to make a determination to hire a qualified contractor or not. At the August 11 meeting, the Council introduced an amendment to the existing funding ordinance to provide an additional \$4 million to the ordinance to cover the anticipated clean-up work. While all of this was going on, the Mayor and Council also authorized our special legal counsel Tim Corrison to file a federal lawsuit against Waterside Construction and others for the removal and restoration of our field. We also continued to assist the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the United States Environmental Protection Agency with their respective investigations of this matter. The filing of the lawsuit and the involvement of the NJDEP and the USEPA have had a very positive impact on the negotiations Mr. Corrison has been conducting at mediation sessions with Waterside Construction. As a result, Mr. Corrison is continuing to work with Waterside Construction's attorneys in an attempt to reach a settlement with Waterside Construction which has admitted this disaster was caused by their poor work practices. Critically, if Waterside Construction is permitted to return to the project, its work will be subject to oversight by First Environment and it will have to be conducted pursuant to a plan approved by the USEPA. What this all means to you is that we are on track to have a contractor performing work on our field to restore Veteran's Field to what it once was, a spectacular open space and recreation area for our children and families to enjoy. I know many residents have spoken out against having Waterside Construction return to perform the work, and I agree. However, we are contractually obligated to attempt to resolve this matter and have Waterside Construction repair the damages at no cost to the Borough. Since this negotiation process has been very tedious and monotonous to say the least, we took the initiative to go to bid in the event we cannot reach a settlement.