

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Colts Neck Township Announces Formal Plans to Construct New Municipal Building

COLTS NECK, N.J., Jan. 29th – The Colts Neck Township Committee announced its formal plans to construct a new municipal building that will house the township's police department, a large public meeting room for multiple purposes and various administrative departments. Plans for the new building were discussed at a public meeting this evening at town hall.

"We are pleased and proud to share our formal plans about this exciting project with all Colts Neck residents," said Mayor Frank Rizzuto. "After five years of evaluation and planning, the time has come to replace our aging, sub-standard police/municipal court building, parts of which date back to the early 1960s, with a new building that will serve the needs of Colts Neck residents, both now and in the future."

Design flaws, along with persistent water infiltration, have contributed to structural issues and other problems in the existing police/municipal court building, according to Colts Neck Township Administrator Kathleen Capristo. Given its age and the limitations of its original structural design, the building remains consistently out of compliance with codes and standards established by the State of New Jersey. As problems surfaced in this building, the township implemented short-term remediation measures. For example, steel cable reinforcements were installed above the courtroom to stabilize the roofing structure. Additionally, as a result of persistent flooding that deemed the basement of the police station as unusable, an external trailer had to be installed to support police operations.

"Short-term fixes are not long-term solutions," Mayor Rizzuto said. "The time has come to address this building decisively."

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The new municipal building will be two floors with 16,000 square feet. It will be constructed on the site of the current police/municipal court building at the Colts Neck Municipal Complex at 124 Cedar Drive. Once complete, the Colts Neck Police Department will occupy most of the first floor of the new building. The second floor will feature a large public meeting room that will host various township committee and commission meetings, other public meetings and the municipal court when in session. Township finance and administrative offices will be housed on the second floor, too.

The township has retained Eli Goldstein, AIA, of The Goldstein Partnership, based in Maplewood, N.J., as the architect for the project. The Goldstein Partnership has worked on many similar municipal undertakings, including the Atlantic Highlands Municipal Building (completed 2012); Keansburg Police Headquarters (completed 2018); and the Oceanport Municipal Complex (under construction with estimated completion in 2020), among many others.

The township intends to solicit bids for construction in May of this year, via a competitive bidding process and hopes to award a contract by the end of August. Provided there are no delays, demolition of the existing police/municipal building will occur in September. Construction is expected to begin in October with a target for completion of the project around January 2022.

The new municipal building is projected to cost approximately \$12.5 million, inclusive of necessary and required site work, furnishing, equipment and fixtures. The overall cost projection will be finalized during the bidding process. Based on current financial conditions (i.e., township debt schedule, interest rates, duration of bonds, etc.), and utilizing the \$800,000 average assessed value of a home in Colts Neck, the project's tax impact for a resident living in such an average assessed home is expected to be between \$40 to \$89 annually (or between \$3.34 and \$7.42 per month). If an assessed home value is lower, the tax impact will be lower. If an assessed home value is higher, the tax impact will be higher.

"Today, Colts Neck has the fifth lowest municipal tax rate, out of 53 municipalities, in Monmouth County," Mayor Rizzuto said. "As elected officials, and as fellow taxpayers and residents of Colts Neck, one of our most important obligations is managing and investing taxpayer dollars wisely. We take this responsibility very seriously, especially as we undertake this important project on behalf of the township. And yet, we have a responsibility to make capital improvements, like this new building, which are absolutely essential for effective and efficient township operations."

To ensure no disruption in services during the construction period, the Colts Neck Police Department will operate from the Colts Neck First Aid Squad building, located within the municipal complex, and the Colts Neck Municipal Court will operate out of the Freehold Borough Municipal Court, located at 38 Jackson Street in Freehold, NJ. Final contingency plans will be posted on the Colts Neck Township website once they are finalized.

The Colts Neck Municipal Complex, located at 124 Cedar Drive, includes four municipal buildings: Colts Neck Town Hall, which currently houses the township finance and administrative offices, planning and zoning, the building department, code enforcement and health department; the Colts Neck Municipal Court/Police Building, located just west of town hall, which will be replaced; the Colts Neck Library, located within the municipal complex, on Winthrop Drive; and the Colts Neck First Aid Squad, also located within the municipal complex, at the nearby 1 Heritage Lane. As noted earlier, the new municipal building will be constructed where the current police/municipal court building is located. All other buildings will remain as part of the Colts Neck Municipal Complex.

For more information about Colts Neck, please visit the township's website at www.coltsneck.org.

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