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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 13, 2013

A Message From Mayor Tom Kelaher **One Year Wrap-Up After Superstorm Sandy**

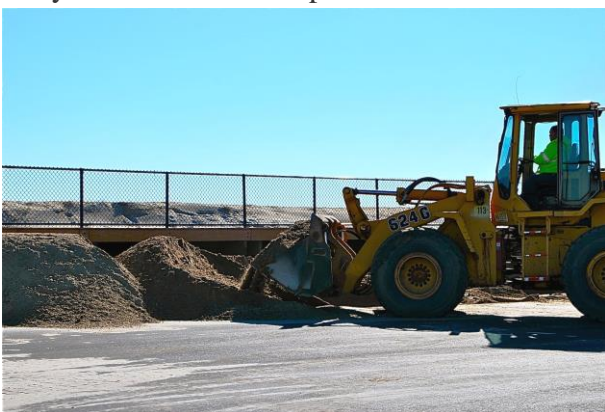
TOMS RIVER TOWNSHIP- Hello, this is a message from Toms River Township Mayor Thomas F. Kelaher addressing all residents and second homeowners of Toms River.

As we pass the one year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, it's hard to believe that an entire year has gone by. It has certainly been an extremely busy year for homeowners and the official family of Toms River Township. I would like to share with you a few of the things we have accomplished since the storm and what you can expect in the coming months.

While the barrier island took the brunt of the storm, there were also many homes on the mainland that sustained damaged, as well. In all, there were over 10,000 homes destroyed or damaged by water. A majority of homes have already been restored, and you can see that a large number of homes have been completely demolished, paving the way for new homes in town.

Dunes and Beach Replenishment

There's no question that storm protection remains our #1 priority. Toms River has been shoring up the oceanfront with 20-foot high sand dunes. These temporary dunes held up very well during recent nor'easters. The Army Corps of Engineers is scheduled to begin their major project this summer and build out 150 feet of dunes from the edge of the boardwalk, and then another 100 feet of beach that will be extended into the ocean. They will continue to replenish the beaches every four or five years, for the next 50 years.



The Toms River Public Works Department has been placing sand under the boardwalk and building up our dunes.

To get the Federally-funded Army Corps of Engineers dune and beach replenishment project underway, it is likely that we may have to invoke eminent domain on the few holdouts who have refused to sign an easement, granting permission to allow us to access private beach property.

Toms River Beaches

In 2014, the entire portion of our public beaches in Ortley Beach will be open. We think businesses will flourish and we encourage residents to rebuild. We do not expect the Army Corps work to close much of our beach at any given time, since they will be working in sections. Their work should not unduly impede on our summer beach season.

Assistance and Grant Programs

We will continue to notify residents about any grant opportunities or non-profit agencies willing to help you restore your home. That information can be found on our website at **www.TomsRiverTownship.com** and click on “Assistance Programs.”

Tips for hiring a home elevation contractor

Please do your research when hiring contractors. There are some tips on our website that will help you ask the right the questions. Above all, don’t pay someone up front, and don’t pay in cash to get a “better deal.”

PPDR Programs

Phase I of our Private Property Debris Removal Program, or PPDR, went very well. Numerous residents had their debris picked up curbside and there were 141 homeowners who voluntarily had their home demolished, at no cost to them. The Township will be reimbursed by FEMA for these costs.

We are now in “Phase 2” of the PPDR program. Our goal is to identify properties that are uninhabitable and keep the lines of communication open between our staff and the property owner. Since many homes appear to be abandoned, we want to know if you plan to fix up your home.

In order to restore our community as expeditiously as possible and to ensure that the proper health, safety and quality of life standards are met, the Township is taking several measures. Our Code Enforcement Officers will determine if violations exist, and a letter will be sent to the property owners advising them of the corrective action that will be necessary in order to be in compliance with the Township property maintenance code. The Township completely understands that not all personal situations are the same and we are committed to working with property owners to work toward acceptable solutions. **It is vitally important for property owners to respond to us if they receive a letter from the Township Code Enforcement Officer, as soon as possible.** Failure to respond will leave the Township little choice in enforcement. Contact our Code Enforcement Office at 732-341-1000 ext. 8440.

Orange Unsafe Structure Notice

If utilities are not available at a given location, a notice will be posted advising property owners that they cannot occupy the structure until utilities are available. This does not stop a property owner from working on the structure. However, under the state-mandated Code, a property is not fit for occupancy if electricity, gas service, water and sewer service are unavailable.

We are looking at unsafe storm-damaged homes, unoccupied homes with storm-related debris in the yard, and

homes that are structurally unsound or pose a health hazard. It has been over a year and there is a presumption that homeowners have done nothing or may not be in a position to do anything.

I'd like to share some statistics with you from the past year. These are our Superstorm Sandy figures.

By the numbers:

Homes damaged by Sandy

2,000 homes in Ortley
4,500 homes in the Northern Beaches area
4,000 homes on the mainland
=10,500 homes damaged by Sandy

Amount of lost tax ratables

20% or \$2.25 Billion from our tax base

Businesses re-opened on the barrier island:

78 businesses re-opened and only 19 vacant

Homes in our voluntary PPDR program

141 voluntary demolitions

Amount of debris picked up

Over 300,000 tons of debris and 2,500 tons of concrete

Money received from FEMA

Toms River has spent over \$20 million and we have received \$4.079 million in reimbursement from FEMA, so far

Permits issued-

- 1,015 demolition permits
- 492 completely demolished, so far
- 167 permits to elevate
- 223 to be raised in 4 years
- 317 new homes
- The Township has received 1,829 zoning permits post-Sandy. The two years before Sandy hit, the Township averaged 1,130 zoning permits annually.



The new “look” of Ortley Beach, as people begin to raise their homes.

New “involuntary program” for PPDR/Orange notices

- Potential demolition for Phase II PPDR: 123
- Approx 600 uninhabitable

Status of dunes/easement/eminant domain-

Total easements needed---40....26 provided....14 holdouts remaining

Township property repaired

- Our dunes have been re-constructed to the pre-Sandy level/volume, which is 3 times the FEMA minimum
- The boardwalk has been reconstructed 2 feet higher than the new FEMA Base Flood Elevation.
- The cost of the boardwalk was \$953,760
- One lifeguard house is 90% complete and the other is in the design phase
- The Third Avenue parking lot has been repaired and paved

We have accomplished a lot in the past year, but we still have some work ahead of us. I'd like to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to all of the members of our governing body who have been invaluable partners throughout this recovery period. It goes without saying that none of these efforts could have been accomplished without the support of everyone on our staff, regardless of their position or department. Everyone rose to the occasion and dedicated their efforts to do everything within their power to get Toms River back to order. The effort will not be over for at least another year or two. We will continue to do what's necessary to help our residents.