

September 2026

Shepherdstown  
WEST VIRGINIA

# TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER

**Hello neighbors,**

Here we are in September – wrapping up an awesome summer season and heading into the busy and entertaining fall months.

This newsletter is jam-packed with updates on Town business and upcoming events, so please take a few moments to read and share!

I'd like to highlight a couple additional important items:

- Ernie “Ernest” Mose, one of our key and beloved Public Works crew, has retired from full-time work after serving our town for upwards of 18 years. Ernie was a valued and important member of our staff – and was always among the first staffers on the scene to address unexpected issues. The Town Council issued a proclamation of thanks to Ernie at the August meeting.
- The Town Council recently approved a special pedestrian safety initiative that will include increased traffic enforcement and pedestrian safety strategies focused specifically on downtown streets. The Town will post additional information on this topic soon.
- Our Town continues its due diligence regarding the future purchase of the Shepherdstown Elementary School. We plan to finalize the purchase later this fall. Until that time, the property continues to be owned by the Jefferson County School Board. The Board is responsible for upkeep and maintenance. We've been in communication with school staff about the need to ensure the school yard is appropriately maintained.

As always, my office hours are the fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm at Town Hall. Please stop by or reach me anytime at [jgatz@shepherdstown.gov](mailto:jgatz@shepherdstown.gov).

— James Gatz, Shepherdstown Mayor



## Help Build the Future of Shepherdstown!

Town Hall is always looking for volunteers to serve on committees and get involved.



The Town is currently seeking volunteers to serve on the [Shepherdstown Planning Commission](#).

The Planning Commission meets on the third Monday of each month at 6pm at Town Hall.

Residents interested in serving or learning more about the Commission can click the above link for more information, or contact us:

304-876-2312 |  
[clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us)



## **Town Council Activities:**

### **August 9, 2026 – Town Council Meeting Recap**

The Shepherdstown Town Council covered a range of community business during its August 9 meeting – from recognizing a longtime Town employee to approving community grants and several upcoming special events.

At the start of the meeting, the Council took time to recognize Ernest “Ernie” Mose, as he retired after 18 years with the Town Street Department, thanking him for nearly two decades of service to Shepherdstown.

### **Among other business, the Council:**

- Adopted an updated Town Planned Unit Development Ordinance and held the first reading of an ordinance that would adopt an updated version of the International Property Maintenance Code in compliance with State requirements.
- Approved special-event applications for the Constitution Day Parade on September 19, Town Run Rubber Duck Race on September 20, Appalachian Heritage Festival on September 25-26, and Shepherd University Homecoming Parade on October 17.
- Awarded two Community Grants: \$2,500 to Jamie Byron for a project to plant native and pollinator plants on Shepherd University property north of the German Street Wall, and \$1,000 to the Shepherdstown Chess Club in support of a tournament scheduled for January 2027.
- Heard an update from Experience Shepherdstown on plans for fall activities in town, including BooFest and Halloween events on October 31.
- Agreed to hold a Town Council planning session on Tuesday, September 15, from 6:30–8:30pm at Town Hall.
- Voted to appointment Edith Thompson to the Town Tree Commission.

The Council also reviewed regular reports from Town staff for July. The Police Department responded to 330 service calls in the month, including 21 assists for the Jefferson County Sheriff's office (the assists were located outside of the town).

The Public Works Department collected 48 tons of trash, 10 tons of glass, 12 tons of recycling, and 10 loads of yard waste in the month.

## – IN OTHER NEWS –



The Town, with the support of the Town Grants Committee and the State's Region 9 organization, submitted applications for grants to support the following projects in July:

- Support for engineering for sidewalks at the following locations (West Virginia Department of Transportation):
  - North side of German Street from Sage Place to near the Contemporary American Theater Festival building (formerly the Christ Church Building).
  - Portions of the North and South side of Washington Streets between King and Church Street.
- Support for engineering of a hiking trail on Town property between Mill Street and the Riverside Park near the former Tobacco Warehouse. (West Virginia Department of Transportation).
- Support for rail-related disaster response planning (Norfolk Southern Foundation)

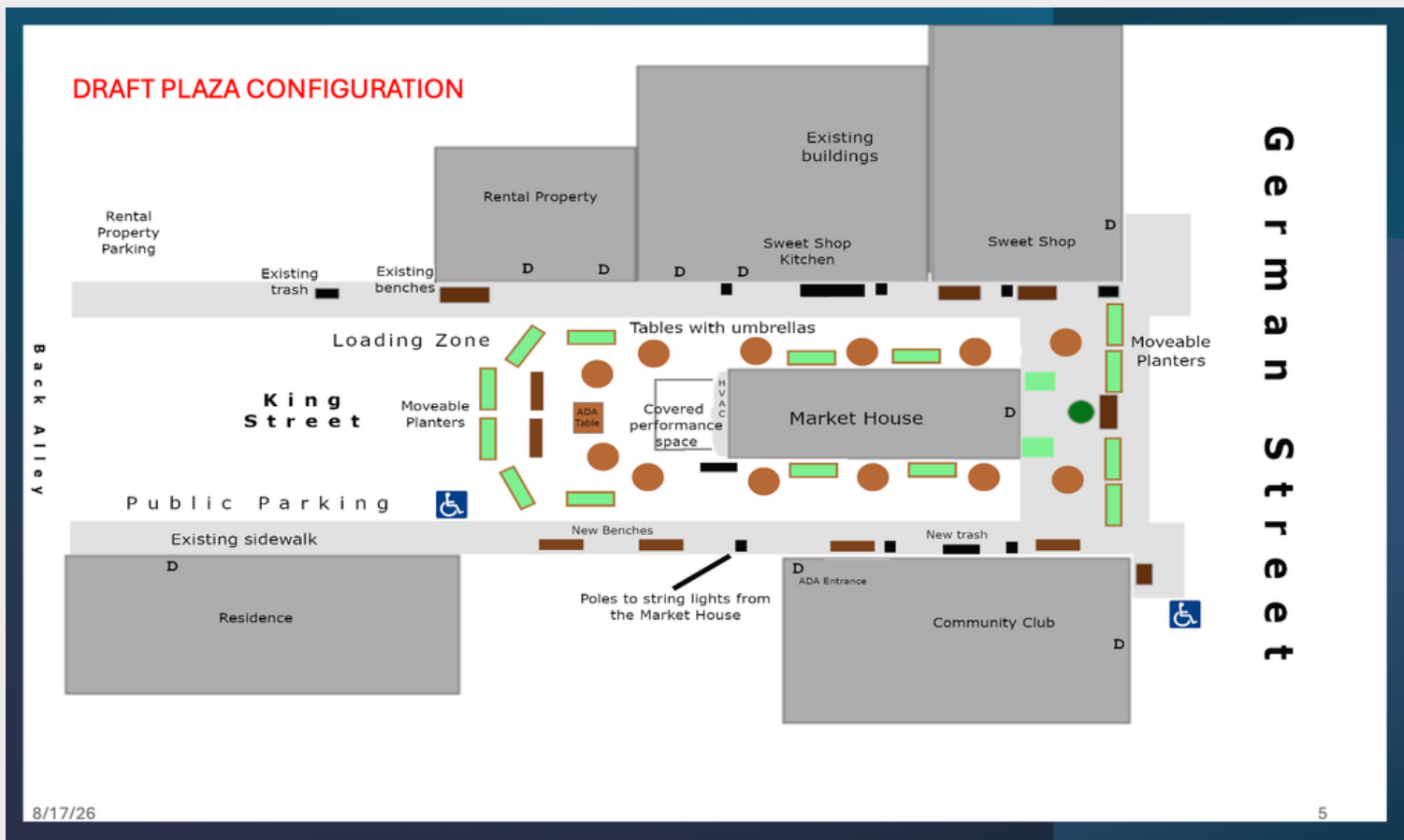
**NOTE:** The Town received word on September 1, 2026, that the Norfolk Southern Foundation will award it \$15,000 for the disaster response planning initiative.



### August 26 Special Town Council Meeting

The Town Council voted to increase the FY27 annual budget to accommodate several pressing needs, The Town Finance Director was directed to submit a budget amendment to cover the increases required for these needs:

- Additional hours for police traffic enforcement, and pedestrian safety "See Me" flags.
- Interior painting of Town Hall and new furniture for the Town Council meeting room.
- Historic Preservation Internship.
- Consultant services for identifying and applying for grant funds to support goals and tasks in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Consultant services related to planning regarding the purchase of the former Shepherdstown Elementary School property.
- Additionally – the Council discussed capital expenditures, including: cost of a new trash truck as well as traffic-enforcement equipment.



## Market House Plaza Pilot Begins September 7th, Labor Day

Shepherdstown's temporary Market House Plaza kicks off this month, Labor Day, September 7, giving the community eight weeks to experience the concept firsthand and help the Town understand how the space works.

Running through October 31, the pilot will test a flexible public gathering space comprising the roadways on both sides of the Market House and a small portion of space behind it—designed to improve pedestrian safety, support local businesses, and create a more inviting place to gather downtown. Plans include movable tables & chairs, lighted umbrellas, flower boxes, games, café lights, and a temporary performance area for occasional music, movies, and other activities.

Flexibility is central to the design. Nearly all furnishings can be moved, allowing the Town to adjust the plaza throughout the pilot to accommodate established community activities and access needs.

## Plaza Pilot cont ...

“This is exactly what a pilot project should be – an opportunity to try an idea, experience it firsthand, and learn from it,” Mayor Gatz said. “Nothing about this project predetermines what happens in the future.”



The Shepherdstown Farmers Market (SFM) will continue its regular Sunday operations, with the plaza reduced to the areas alongside the Market House and the space behind the building available for the Market as usual. Similar accommodations will be made for loading and unloading at the War Memorial Building during the Shepherdstown Community Club's annual book sale and for other downtown events.

“Giving the Market, our customers, and the community a chance to experience the temporary plaza space turns an abstract proposal into something tangible,” said Kate Savidan, SFM president. “People can see how they would use it, identify what works and what doesn’t, and raise concerns or suggest improvements based on real experience rather than assumptions.”

Experience Shepherdstown will help coordinate programming throughout the eight weeks, while the Town will gather public and business feedback and evaluate traffic, parking, deliveries, maintenance, and other impacts.

“I think this is an opportunity to reconnect with the historical roots of the Market House as a community anchor,” said resident Shannon Thomas. “I love the idea of having a welcoming, consistent, outdoor space for community events, spontaneous meetups, or just to enjoy local take-out, a board game, or a good book. I also hope it will help downtown businesses economically by keeping people downtown longer.

Patrick Green, Shepherdstown Community Club president, added, “I was happy to hear that the project was a test and not permanent. Having the opportunity to observe change in action reduces my concern over the outcome and gives me the chance to voice my concerns and agreements.”

The pilot is supported by a \$13,455 AARP Community Challenge Grant and is intended to do exactly that—test the concept before any longer-term decisions are considered. We look forward to bringing the pilot to downtown Shepherdstown and learning from the community's experience with the space throughout the fall!

For more information on the Plaza Pilot – [\*\*click HERE\*\*](#).

## Live Music to Kick Off Market House Plaza Pilot September 7th

Come out and celebrate the end of summer and help kick off the Town's Market House Plaza pilot with free live music from the Shenandoah Dukes on Labor Day evening, September 7, from 5-7pm.

Join us behind the Market House/Welcome Center (100 E. German St.) for a great evening of music and community as we get the new temporary gathering space underway. Both events above have been made possible by [Experience Shepherdstown](#).

**See You There!**



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## Volunteers Needed for Annual Legendary Book Sale (read more on next page)

— Before the book sale comes to town on September 18, the following days, times, and tasks need volunteer help!

**Thursday, September 10 | 10:00am-3:00pm** | Transport bookshelves from storage to the War Memorial Building.

**Saturday, September 12 | 10:00am-3:00pm** | Transport books from storage to the War Memorial Building.

**Tuesday, September 29 | 10:00am-3:00pm** | Transport books from the War Memorial Building back to storage.

**Wednesday, September 30 | 10:00am-3:00pm** | Transport bookshelves from War Memorial Building back to storage.

Remember, even one or two hours makes a big difference, and you're welcome to help on just one day or as many days as your schedule allows.

If you're able to lend a hand, **email [blhuillier@icloud.com](mailto:blhuillier@icloud.com)** with the day(s) and time(s) you're available.



**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**



# Legendary Book Sale Returns!

Each year, the Shepherdstown Community Club's Legendary Book Sale transforms the War Memorial Building (102 E. German St.) into a treasure trove for book lovers—and one of Shepherdstown's most anticipated annual traditions.

This year's sale opens to the public September 18 and runs through September 27, with two floors filled with thousands of books spanning just about every interest imaginable.

From history, science, and fiction to cookbooks, DIY guides, children's books, and plenty of unexpected finds, there's something for readers of all ages, genres, and curiosities.

Those hoping to get an early start can attend Dealers' Night on Thursday, September 17, from 6–8pm. Admission is \$30 and includes first access to the sale before it opens to the public.

Regular sale hours are 10am–6pm daily from September 18–27. The sale wraps up Sunday, September 28, from 10am–4pm., when shoppers can fill a basket with books for \$10.

Best of all, every book purchased helps support two important Shepherdstown landmarks. Proceeds from the annual sale benefit the maintenance and preservation of the War Memorial Building and Morgan's Grove Park.

Come browse the shelves, discover a few hidden gems, and support the Shepherdstown Community Club and the places it helps care for throughout our community.

**Happy Hunting!**

## Shaping Downtown: What's Needed – What's Next?

Experience Shepherdstown, in partnership with the Corporation of Shepherdstown, is moving forward with a retail market analysis of Shepherdstown's downtown business district and nearby commercial areas.

The study is taking a closer look at current business and real estate conditions, spending patterns, retail gaps, and other factors that can help the Town better understand what downtown needs to remain healthy and vibrant. The work supports the Town's 2025 Comprehensive Plan goal of promoting economic prosperity and cultural vibrancy.

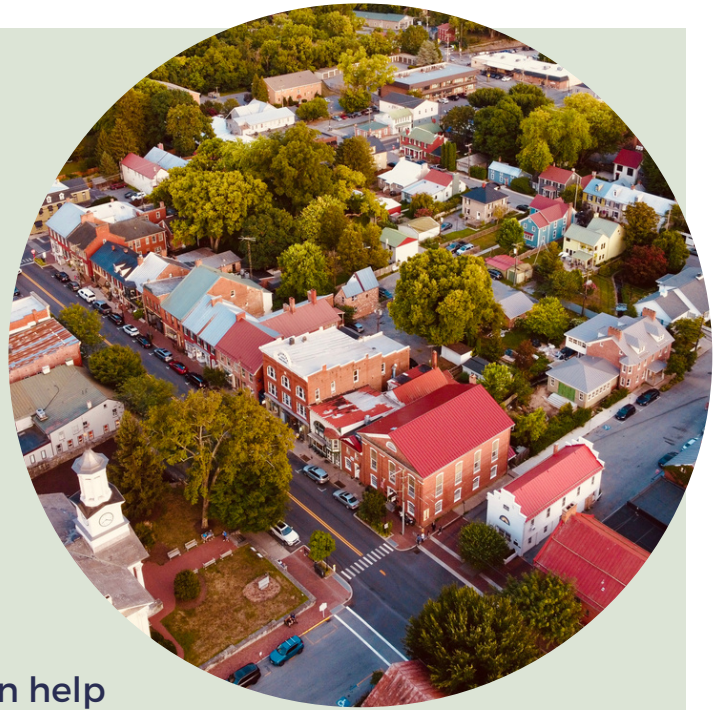
Mayor Gatz said the project reflects the Town's commitment to supporting its economy. "This work supports our Comprehensive Plan's goal of economic prosperity and cultural vibrancy. It's a small yet strategic project the Town is pleased to help fund, and I look forward to seeing and using the information and analyses."

An important part of that work is hearing directly from the community. Residents are encouraged to share their perspectives through an online survey, which will remain open until at least September 15. The input will help identify community needs and priorities and complement feedback being gathered from downtown businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders.

Take the survey [HERE](#).

The analysis is being conducted by Jon Stover & Associates, with findings and recommendations expected to be presented publicly to Town Council and the community in early 2027. The final report will help inform efforts to support existing businesses, identify opportunities for new local-serving businesses that fit Shepherdstown's character, and strengthen downtown for the years ahead.

The \$31,000 project is funded in part by the Town of Shepherdstown and in part by a \$15,000 grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, which supports education, arts, and economic and community development projects across West Virginia.



# COMMUNITY REMINDER

## A Friendly Property Maintenance Reminder

As summer winds down, the Town would like to remind residents and property owners about the importance of keeping properties maintained and vegetation under control.

Under Section 7-114 of the Town Ordinance, property owners and tenants may not allow grass or other vegetation commonly recognized as weeds to grow higher than one foot.

Regular property maintenance helps keep our neighborhoods and shared community looking their best.

We appreciate everyone's help in keeping Shepherdstown well cared for. Thank you!



## Scam Alert: Callers Impersonating Shepherdstown Police



The Shepherdstown Police Department is warning residents about scam calls from individuals falsely claiming to represent the department.

The Town has received recent reports of multiple incidents in which callers told residents they had an outstanding warrant for their arrest and then attempted to collect money.

Please do not provide payment or personal or financial information to anyone making this type of call. Hang up immediately.

If you receive a suspicious call from someone claiming to represent the Shepherdstown Police Department, please contact the County dispatch non-emergency number at 304-725-8484.

Please share this alert with family, friends, and neighbors who may also receive these calls.

**Thank you!**



## Constitution Day Parade Returns September 19

Shepherdstown will once again celebrate the principles at the heart of American democracy with the second-annual “We, the People” Constitution Day Parade on Saturday, September 19, from 10–11 a.m.

Building on the success of last year’s inaugural event, the parade will begin at Church and German streets and make its way through downtown before concluding at Town Hall on King Street. Along the way, community members will help carry the U.S. Constitution, bringing the document—and the ideas it represents—into the heart of Shepherdstown.

Immediately following the parade, the celebration will continue in front of Town Hall, where speakers will offer remarks commemorating Constitution Day and reflecting on the enduring importance of the document and the democratic principles it represents.

Residents, organizations, families, and visitors are encouraged to participate or simply come downtown and enjoy what organizers hope will be an even bigger community celebration in its second year.

# Upcoming Dates/Times for Town Council and Committee Meetings (Town Hall)

All meetings are typically convened in-person at Town Hall and broadcast via Zoom, with the exception of Age-Friendly Shepherdstown—which is held only via [\*\*Zoom here\*\*](#).

For all meetings, if a Zoom link is available for that meeting, it can be found [on this page](#) by clicking on the respective meeting and "2026"—and then the Video link within the "Resources" column that coincides with that date/time.

## Meetings:

- Town Council: Wednesday, September 9, 6:30pm.
- Tree Commission: Thursday, September 10, 6pm.
- Historic Landmarks Commission: Monday, September 14, 6pm.
- Town Council Planning Session: Tuesday, September 15, 6:30pm.
- Age-Friendly Shepherdstown: Wednesday, September 16, 1:30pm.
- Planning Commission: Monday, September 21, 6pm.
- Parks & Rec Committee: Tuesday, September 22, 6pm.
- Special Joint Workshop including the Town Council, Water Board, and Sanitary Sewer Board: Wednesday, September 23, 6:30pm.
- Public Works Committee: Monday, September 28, 6:30pm.



## Mayor's Office Hours:

Fourth Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm, Town Hall. The office hours will be cancelled in cases where the Town Council schedules a special meeting at that time.

Email [jgatz@shepherdstown.gov](mailto:jgatz@shepherdstown.gov) with any questions.

Municipal Court hours: Third Wednesday of every month starting at 5:30pm, Town Hall. [\*\*Click here\*\*](#) for more information.

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