



State of the Municipality Address

By Mayor Michael F. Gabbianelli

Delivered before Township Council on January 3, 2009

Members of Council, Department Heads and fellow residents, today as I come to give you my State of Township address – I do so with the full understanding that we will face unique challenges in 2009.

I am proud to say however, that due to the hard work of many – Monroe is prepared to meet these challenges.

While the Federal, State and even many surrounding municipal governments will struggle – Monroe will continue to move forward.

That is because the State of our Municipality is still progressing and the future looks strong.

Last November, residents throughout New Jersey voted for change. In Monroe however, our residents gave a resounding vote of confidence to our Council members and re-elected them for another term.

That is because Monroe residents chose change several years ago, putting our Township on a new path and preparing us for the future.

Long behind us are the days when our Township was defined by political rivalries – Instead our great schools, great recreational facilities, the quality of township services and an improving quality of life have become Monroe's image.

Long behind us are the days when financial management was shortsighted. Instead, we have been far sighted and prudent, conscious and conservative, and dedicated to the belief that every dollar spent should be treated like it is our own.

Long behind us are the days when businesses felt unwelcomed by our municipality. Today new businesses line our roads, construction sites are now paving the way for new ones and we continue to fight the litigation that has prevented Wal-Mart from breaking ground.

I am proud to have worked with Frank, Walt, Marvin, Bill Julio, Bill Sebastian, Dan, and Ron.

I would like to give special thanks to Bill Julio who for the past four (4) years has demonstrated his strong commitment through hard work and long hours in serving this township. I am proud to have gained a personal friendship and wish him and his family well.

Today, I welcome Richard Delucia to our team. I am confident that you will bring the same dedication, determination and direction that your colleagues have demonstrated over the last several years. You have big shoes to fill and I am confident you will meet those challenges.

This Council has set a new standard for public service in Monroe. They are each problem solvers, critical thinkers, and resident advocates. They take pride in balancing our moral and financial obligations with their fiscally conservative views. They balance the need to plan for the future while still meeting the challenges of today.

Through their efforts, along with those of Department Heads, Township Employees and Volunteers, Board and Commission members and our professional staff, the word "Politics" in Monroe has been replaced with the word "Progress".

Progress that can be seen at the now completed Mary Mazza Duffy Park.

Progress that can be seen in inter-local agreements like the one this Township signed with the MUA to bring city water to the lake area.

Progress that can be seen on Marsha Avenue where our new State of the Art Library is under construction and is on target to open this year.

Progress that can be seen on Clayton Road where the Township purchased 34 acres of open space at the Genova property. This land will not only be used to further enhance our recreational facilities – it prevents the building of new homes here in Monroe.

Progress that is witnessed through our single stream recycling program – which has not only saved this Township \$250,000 in 2008, but has also, provided convenience to our residents.

In the coming year residents will see road improvements currently under review by the State for our redevelopment zones to support another shopping center on the Black Horse Pike.

Residents will see the remediation and the redevelopment of the landfill on Sicklerville Road.

More importantly, residents will see progress- not politics from this administration- this Council and this government.

In 2009, Monroe – like the rest of our country will face unprecedented economic problems.

We will face these problems like we face every other issue in this Town. "What is best for our residents - what is best for our Township".

We will continue to find unique cost saving measures like eliminating unnecessary phone lines, consolidating vendor activity to achieve optimum pricing and enter into shared service agreements where feasible.

Fortunately for Monroe in past years we have budgeted and planned with an eye towards the future and I am confident that as a team, we will strive even in these tough economic times.

Council, department heads, and township professionals, it is up to us to not lower the bar of progress because times are tough – we must raise it.

I will not tolerate anything less than 100% service and dedication to our residents and to this Community.

With that, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and let's get going there is work to be done.