

Woodfin Journal

Where Community Matters

From the Mayor

Since our last newsletter, several important changes have taken place in our town. The first was the hiring of a new Town Administrator, Eric Hardy. Eric comes to us from Buncombe County Government and brings a wealth of knowledge following an extensive career in local government, and is a tremendous asset to us. Read more from him in this newsletter.

The second change is the addition of Adrienne Isenhower who now heads up our Planning and Zoning department. She comes to us from Land of Sky Regional Council and is well experienced in planning and land use issues.

We have some new faces in our Police and Public Works departments, and we are grateful to these folks that they have chosen to serve the residents of Woodfin.

This year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will not be having our Annual Christmas Program for needy children. While this was a difficult decision on our part, we felt that there is still a big unknown regarding when the health risks might be lowered. We will, however, continue to refer need citizens to agencies offering assistance for food, clothing, and fuel oil.

Should any of you who have supported this program in the past wish to continue supporting this program, you can make a donation to the Woodfin Police Department and this money will be used to supply emergency assistance to those in need. Any funds not needed during the winter will be held in a special account and used throughout the year. All donations are tax deductible.

We continue to clean up areas where junk cars are reported to us, as well as having owners clean up their property, which has been neglected for some time. We continuously strive to have blighted areas cleaned up and made presentable.

In closing it is my wish that each of you have the best holiday season possible, or if I or any of our very dedicated staff can be of service to you in any way, please to not hesitate to call us.

Jerry Vethaun

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Town Hall Operations

- Open by appointment only
- All public meetings streamed live—see website for details
- Closed December 24-25
- Closed January 1
- Closed January 18



Woodfin Greenway & Blueway

Several recent developments with the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway project move us closer to realizing a revitalized riverfront in our own backyard.

Driving along Riverside Drive you may have noticed changes at the **Silverline Park** site, which is located at 1054 Riverside Drive or just north of Silverline Plastics. The first change that will catch your eye is a bright, new, shiny red roof sitting atop the existing building at Silverline Park. In the future, this building will house public restrooms as well as other commercial or non-profit uses. Stay tuned for developments.

You also cannot miss the emerging contours of the future Silverline Park near the riverbank. And, once completed on the northwest corner of the park, visitors will hear, “all aboard!” a Craggy Mountain Line streetcar to tour along the river and Beaverdam Creek toward Reynolds Mountain. This park is scheduled for completion before the end of 2021.

Using bond proceeds approved by Woodfin voters in 2016, the Town purchased a 4-acre tract of land under the Craggy Bridge in late July. This site marks the southern end of an expanded **Riverside Park**, where guests may wander through a woodland to picnic, improve their fitness, or watch paddlers navigating the French Broad River.

“We couldn't be more excited that the Woodfin Riverside Park project is moving towards completion.”

Brennan Splain, co-owner of French Broad Outfitters

WG&B Partner: Buncombe County

Buncombe County Recreation Services is working closely with other municipalities to develop a regional greenway system of open pathways to provide safe, equitable access to parks, schools, and communities.



Over 100 miles of greenway throughout the County are on the map, so to

speak. Many miles of greenway are in use, while other segment miles are currently in the design stage of development.

To learn more visit Buncombe County Recreation Services at www.buncombecounty.org

Some have called the **Whitewater Wave**, or Wave, the jewel in the crown of the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway. This manmade structure—built from natural materials—will sit in the riverbed adjacent to Riverside Park. The Wave is expected to draw locals and visitors from afar for recreational or instructional paddling, or for world-class competition. Park visitors may watch the activity from nearby overlooks or high above along the Craggy Bridge itself.

Riverside Park and the Whitewater Wave are currently in final design phase. The project plan calls for concurrent development of these park system elements and completion as soon as early 2023.

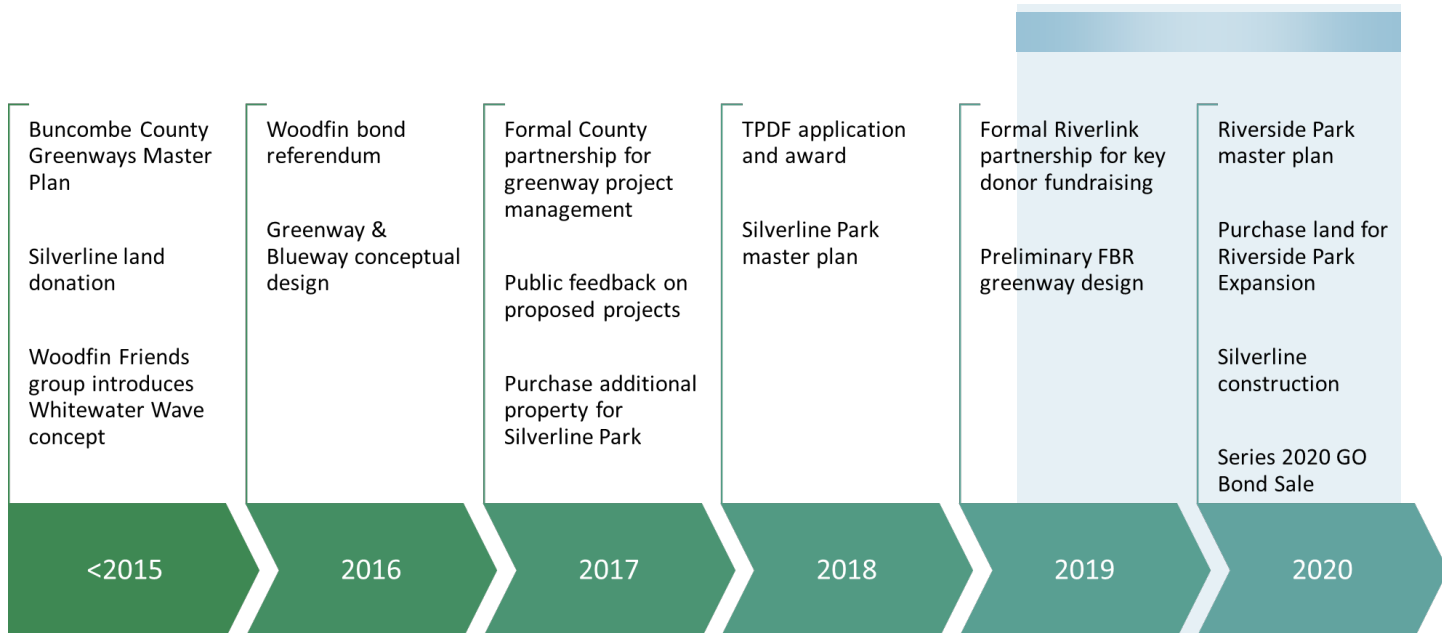
Connecting Silverline and Riverside Parks and the Wave is the **French Broad River Greenway**. Together with its companion **Beaverdam Creek Greenway**, the pathways will extend south to Broadway, parallel the river, and traverse northwest to the base of Reynolds Village at Weaverville Highway. These sections of greenway are part of Buncombe County's master plan network that will eventually offer a biking and walking corridor into Asheville and toward Marshall.

Buncombe County is the lead agency for design and construction of the greenways.

When considered together, this park system is called the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway. And at the end of the day, this ambitious project is more than a big playground; it also is an economic engine to spur investment. Equally important, the project aims to ensure environmental and wildlife habitat protections for future generations.

On the next page you will see several mile markers we have passed on our way to completion of this project.

To follow the action or get more information about WG&B, including master plans for Silverline and Riverside Parks and the Wave please visit Riverlink at riverlink.org/projects/Woodfin-greenway.



Woodfin Greenway & Blueway Milestones

Financing the WG&B Project

The Woodfin Greenway & Blueway is made possible through the generosity of many partners in our community. The current project budget is approximately \$18.8 million. To date nearly \$15 million has been committed to the project, leaving a remaining funding target of \$3.8 million. Town leaders are confident we can close this gap through a combination of public and private grants and community fundraising*.

Source	Greenways	Parks	Total Project
Woodfin GO Bond (Bondholder, First Horizon Bank)	\$428,939	\$4,081,061	\$4,500,000
Town of Woodfin	0	556,000	556,000
Federal Highway Administration (via NC Dept of Transportations)	6,064,000	0	6,064,000
BC Tourism Development Authority	860,000	1,390,000	2,250,000
Buncombe County	1,516,000	0	1,516,000
Friends of WG&B	0	30,000	30,000
Pigeon River Foundation	0	35,000	35,000
Cannon Foundation	0	25,000	25,000
Duke Energy	0	5,000	5,000
Total project sources to date	8,858,939	6,122,061	14,981,000
Remaining funding target	1,443,261	2,345,689	3,788,950

* Visit [Riverlink.org](https://riverlink.org) donate to WG&B

WB&G Partner: Riverlink

Riverlink promotes the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River and its watershed.

Riverlink accomplishes its mission by providing permanent public access to the river through conservation and recreation easements, reclaiming contaminated lands for public use and enjoyment, empowering over 1,000 volunteers each year, and annually educating over 3,000 students, as well as the public-at-large, about the importance of the French Broad River watershed.



Riverlink provides structured fundraising for the WG&B, as well as delivering communications to stakeholders of the project.

NC Department of Transportation Roads

Streets maintained by NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) include:

Baird Cove Ln	Massey Rd
Baird Cove Rd	New Hope Rd
Brookdale Rd	Old Burnsville Hill Rd
Cov'd Bridges Way	Old Home Rd
Dryman Valley	Old Leicester Hwy
Elk Mountain Rd	Old Marshall Hwy
Elkwood Ave	Olivette Rd
Farm Rd	Owenby Rd
Flynn Branch Rd	Powers Rd
Gorman Bridge Rd	Riverside Dr
Gosnell Rd	Victory Ln
Hollifield Rd	Weaverville Hwy
Ingle Rd	Wolf Cry Cir
Lower Barton Rd	Woodfin Ave

Inquiries or requests for improvements for these streets should be directed to the Asheville office of the NCDOT Highway Division 13 Engineer 828-250-3000.

Get involved by serving on an appointed board

In early 2021 we invite you to find details concerning available openings for either of our appointed boards and committees at woodfin-nc.gov.

- PLANNING & ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
- PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

When will I see improvements to my street?

Miles and miles of streets crisscross our town. Responsibility for nearly 40 miles of these roads falls to the Town of Woodfin for repairs, traffic control, and snow removal. However, did you know that NCDOT has primary responsibility for certain major thoroughfares running

through Woodfin? See sidebar for more about NCDOT street maintenance.

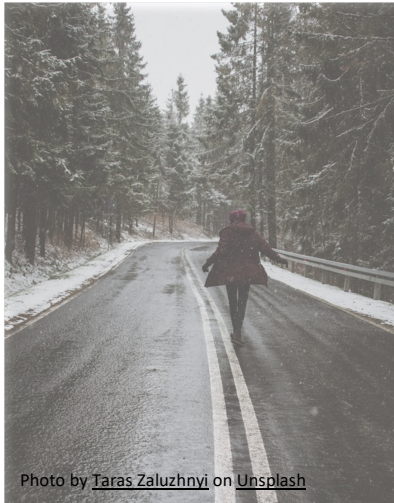


Photo by [Taras Zaluzhnyi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Repairs

In order to establish an equitable and manageable plan for street improvements, JM Teague Engineering and Planning has conducted a paving condition assessment. This evaluation serves as a roadmap for our town to prioritize and guide investments over the next 3-5 years. Residents are encouraged to stay tuned for more discussion on this matter during the budget planning season that begins in January.

Traffic Control

You might ask how is traffic "controlled". The answer is that it depends. Signage, pavement markings and installations (speed bumps), and signal devices are all used to inform, guide and control traffic. Pedestrians, motor vehicle drivers and bicyclists all rely on these control measures. Currently the town invests mainly in signage—street name, speed limit, and stop/yield signs—and pavement markings. While the town's leaders focus first on street improvements, future decisions may address needs for additional pavement installations and signal devices.

Snow Removal

When threats of snow and ice are part of the weather forecast, many of us rush to the grocery store for milk and bread, while others check fuel supplies or working condition of generators. Fortunately for us, Public Works staff prepare trucks with plows and salt spreaders as they gear up to clear streets. Rest assured. They are working ceaselessly to reach your street and clear your path.

Winter Trash & Recycling Collection Schedules

If your pickups are scheduled:

December 21, 22, or 23

Thursday, December 24

Friday, December 25

December 28, 29, 30, or 31

Friday, January 1

Your pickup will be:

No change

Tuesday, December 22

Wednesday, December 23

No change

Thursday, December 31

Remembering Jason Young

On March, 10, we lost a leader and friend whose loss is felt every day. The late town administrator, Jason Young, left behind him “a wonderful family, and they will long be remembered in our thoughts and prayers.” noted Mayor Jerry VeHaun.

His mark on this community is a legacy that will outlive us all. Commissioner Don Hensley said, “Jason did more to shape Woodfin, past, present and future than any one person has ever done.” Indeed, his storytelling of Woodfin’s past speaks to our humble roots as a tight-knit blue collar community. He oversaw a period of dynamic growth as the town saw the development of Reynolds Village and areas west of the French Broad River. “I am especially grateful to him for all the hard work he did in making the Roy Pope Park possible,” says Commissioner Jackie Bryson. His vision and passion for the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway will benefit generations to come.

Although he was not born here, he was a man who cared deeply for Woodfin. Vice-mayor Debbie Giezentanner says that Jason “was wickedly smart, articulate, political, insightful and was competitive and loyal in everything Woodfin.” Commissioner Don Honeycutt echoes this sentiment, stating, “Jason was always looking out for the town. He put in a extra time and energy, making sure things got done.”

Town employees remember his friendship, his care, his humor. Those who worked alongside him for many years recall him during his best—and lowest—of times as an advocate and fervent supporter. He never waived from his commitment to his work family.

“Jason led the Town through a lot of progress and always did his best to see that all sides of any issue were heard.” Mayor Jerry VeHaun

Town Administrator Notes

As 2020 draws to a close it is an appropriate time to look back at the year now coming to a close, while also eyeing a new year ahead of us.

Looking back, many of us know that the first year of this decade has been one like we have never seen before nor one we hope to repeat. In our personal and professional lives we have reflexively adapted to the pandemic, to social unrest, to political tumult. My hope is that we emerge more resilient, more resolved to make a mark on our community—whether locally or far-reaching.

Town operations look different today than in the past, though not as different as one might expect. Staff still maintain parks grounds, patrol neighborhoods, collect trash, plan future land uses. The interaction with residents and business people in the community, however, has not been so simple. Our staff, Commissioners, and appointed officials conduct business virtually but often at the expense of inclusivity. Law enforcement officers—often seen only as blue uniforms—face complex challenges.

What lies ahead for 2021? A new town website will be launched during the first quarter of the year, promising more timely, meaningful engagement. Audio/visual equipment at town hall is also seeing an upgrade for increased access and reliability during public meetings.

Budget planning for the fiscal year beginning July 1st ramps up in January. Some of the focus questions for next year’s budget are:

- ⇒ Street improvements—what is the right level of investment?
- ⇒ Staffing—are we appropriately staffed across operations?
- ⇒ Storm drainage—how do we protect property and preserve waterways?
- ⇒ Facilities and equipment—are we adequately provisioned to perform?

Big questions. Workshops on these budget topics and others begin in January, and I hope that you will stay informed to help inform those decisions.



Phone contact list

911	Emergency
Town Services	
828-253-4887	Town Hall
828-253-4889	Woodfin Police
828-645-7063	Woodfin Public Works
828-252-2532	Curbside Management (recycling)
Other Services for Woodfin Residents	
828-255-7561	Woodfin Vol Fire Dept
828-253-5551	Woodfin Water District
828-658-9300	Woodfin ABC Store
828-255-0061	Metropolitan Sewerage District
828-232-4287	Woodfin Elementary School

Woodfin's Golden 50th

Woodfin approaches its 50th birthday in 2021. That's right. Woodfin was incorporated as a town in 1971 through a charter approved by the NC General Assembly. As a community Woodfin has been a part of the Buncombe landscape long before its actual incorporation. In earlier times, Woodfin was largely a blue collar working town with several major mills operating along the river. One of those factories was textile manufacturer, Martel Mills. Martel Mills deeded and built dozens of houses for its employees in what is now Martel Village. Similar mill housing was developed by others southward toward Asheville and workers were transported in a loop from Asheville up Merrimon Avenue, along Beaverdam Creek, and then southerly on the tracks next to Riverside Drive. This history is preserved and celebrated by the Craggy Mountain Line railroad, which offers a beautiful streetcar ride along Beaverdam Creek and along the French Broad River for those looking to retrace the steps of those who came before us.



TOWN OF WOODFIN

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

