

# Hillsborough Township

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## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Business Community and Township Building Department Collaborate *Business Roundtable Hosted by HBA***

Nearly 30 local business owners braved the snow last Wednesday morning to attend the Business Summit Roundtable Discussion with the Building Department, hosted by the Township's Business Association, led by Business Advocate David Kois.

Township Administrator Anthony Ferrera opened the event, welcoming business owners and providing the agenda and format for the roundtable. "Balancing the needs of the Business Community while working within the confines of the regulations led to this collaborative event," stated Administrator Ferrera.

Construction Official John Fiedler offered opening remarks and overview of the Building Department, explaining in further detail the process. He introduced the panel of participants on the panel; Ed Allatt Fire Subcode Official, Pete Palmieri Electrical Subcode Official and Frank Lukacs Plumbing Subcode Official, highlighting their areas of discipline, professional background and length of employment with the Township. Fiedler further reiterated that the Building Department offers a service for business owners and residents alike, but they are regulated by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. They operate their department in a professional and businesslike manner.

Communication vs. Confusion was an exercise that Building Subcode Official Rich Perlman walked attendees through. During the exercise the emphasis was on how clear communication is necessary to convey the correct message and to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

One of the goals of the Building Department for 2018 is to streamline the process and to better educate the applicants on how to submit a complete application so that there is less time spent on errors and completing missing information. Additionally, as part of that process there will be a

new application checklist for commercial projects is forthcoming. This checklist will also aid in the streamlining of processes by adding an online system.

Committeeman Greg Burchette, Liaison to the Economic and Business Development Commission reiterated that the staff is here to assist the business community.

Questions were submitted online in advance and attendees were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions during the roundtable portion of the event. Some of the comments offered included:

Greg Porraro of Porraro Homes said, "I use Hillsborough as the barometer as they are one of the best Building Departments in the State."

Andy Andeski, of Total Energy Services said, "this event provided a healthy and greater appreciation of the scope of work and willingness of the Building Department to communicate."

"Great forum, happy to know that the Building Department understands that time is money," said Fred Mosesman of CJ Management, LLC, when speaking of obtaining permits to open.

Commercial Property Owner, Robert Berlant, who conducts business in many towns across the state added, "I've never participated in anything like this before; it was an informative session."

John Mannino of Cerminara Architect, "this makes sense for the Town to reach out to the business community to find out how to improve, being involved for many years people change and the process has come along way, there are different people to work with."

Ken Hesthag, a member of the Economic and Business Development Commission shared, "three years ago the Commission put out a survey to the business community and at the end of last year we did the same, we have seen improved feedback on the Building Department over the past three years."

"We are looking forward to the progress for the upcoming year," concluded Hesthag.

**Looking ahead....next steps...**

***Upon the conclusion of the session, volunteers were sought for a subcommittee that will meet in the next 30 days and going forward quarterly to continue ongoing dialogue.***

**About the Hillsborough Building Department:**

The Hillsborough Building Department's mission is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the public, through proper administration of the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code, conducted in a courteous and professional manner.

**About the Hillsborough Business Association:**

Interested Hillsborough Businesses are invited to join the Hillsborough Business Association for free and enjoy the following benefits:

- Ribbon Cuttings - Celebrate your opening with Township Officials and have your business featured in the Township e-News, an electronic newsletter sent to over 5,000 potential customers.
- HBA e-News - Access to electronic newsletter with news, events and resources designed to be helpful to your business.
- HBA Business Finder Directory - List your business on [www.hillsboroughbusiness.org](http://www.hillsboroughbusiness.org), a searchable public directory available to Hillsborough residents and visitors.
- HBA Networking Events & HBA Member Events (Fees may apply) - Events are scheduled throughout the year to provide networking and business development opportunities.

To join the HBA or for more information, visit [www.hillsboroughbusiness.org](http://www.hillsboroughbusiness.org) or email the Hillsborough Township Business Advocate, David Kois at 908-369-3533 [dkois@hillsborough-nj.org](mailto:dkois@hillsborough-nj.org) or call at 908-369-3533.

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