

## Mayor's Column

April 18, 2016

This beautiful weather signals the start of virtually all of the Village infrastructure projects that have been in the conception/planning/bidding stage throughout the winter months.

With these improvements will come some traffic detours and temporary inconveniences. We ask for your patience as the end results will be so beneficial to the Village.

First out of the box is the reconstruction of the brick road surface on Park Avenue. The gas connections have been resolved, the bricks delivered to the site and the work will begin from top down, necessitating closure of the road segment. Lasting 100 plus years, this road has proven to be the most cost effective in the Village as it would have been paved ten plus times by now if original blacktop. It proves the old adage that sometimes the more expensive choice proves to be the bargain.

Sadly, the adage also proved true in the case of the Village front walk. Pavers instead of real bricks were laid only a few decades ago and their durability proved brief.

As a result, this coming Thursday we will have the pre-construction meeting to coordinate the new project using real brick and bluestone. In addition to more durable materials, the lighting will be improved and a Village seal will be inlaid as a lasting historical feature. All of the above was planned in concert with the ADA rules of height and incline.

On the day following the front walkway pre-construction meeting, the principals will meet to do the same for the long planned and awaited FEMA flood mitigation project. Set to begin on the Village Hall lawn and traverse Palumbo Place, the school will not be disrupted until post

commencement. As you can imagine, many entities have been involved including environmental agencies, our utilities and a traffic analysis as we map and coordinate the route of the mitigation conduits.

The Village storage area used to warehouse the road bricks will now take delivery of our new street light heads and poles. In just two weeks, work will begin in the east side business district to install forty new shorter poles and ten longer ones with energy saving LED heads. The older poles in various stages of disrepair will be salvaged for parts to repair those that remain so all lighting poles throughout the Village will be in pristine shape. The days of ugly black electrical tape holding lights together will be gone!

Street striping, with a concentration on the crosswalks in and near the business districts, will begin soon after the light pole installations. Some of the costs will be recouped from a payment received from Cablevision as compensation for their opening of some of our newly paved surfaces to enhance cable coverage. In an effort to increase visibility and with it, hopefully safety, more “brick” stamped crosswalks will be added in congested areas.

On a parallel track, some of our smaller projects have begun either with in house staff or contractors previously hired for defined tasks.

As example, our very versatile DPW staffers have installed a better slide at the Sagamore Play Park and removed and then replanted foliage that was either prickly to the touch or served to attract bees.

Our cleaning of the Village sewer infrastructure is in its final phase with twenty needed repairs pinpointed, the majority of which the direct result of the age of the pipes. We cast the cleaning net far and wide, and reached some pipes long overlooked. As evidence of this was that recovery of a spoon in the detritus clearly engraved “Gramatan Hotel”!

Thanks entirely to grant monies, you will see a new garbage/recycling truck on the road in the coming days. The grant award was a direct result of the demonstrative success of the percentage of recycling by our residents so the financial savings was the reward for your collective efforts.

The Scout Field renovation program is scheduled to be voted upon at the County level literally as I write with a very positive outcome expected. Following this vote, under the auspices of the Town and County, the Village and the School will be doing our parts to make the new field space a reality by spring 2017. I believe it will prove to be a safety valve for all sports.

Very in-house, Village Hall is involved in an energy audit in hopes of reaping some savings after a review of our internal systems.

Against the above back drop, the Village Board also met in many extra sessions to craft a budget for the fiscal year 2016-2017.

The end result is a modest tax increase of .78% or \$50 on a home with a value of \$2.5 million dollars. The above was accomplished without any diminution of services.

I will write at length next week about the nuts and bolts of the budget due to be filed with the State on May 1.