

VILLAGE NEWS



The Next Steps in Transforming St. Paul's

by Carisa Giardino

The Village Board is continuing to develop the concept plan presented to the public last summer for creating a recreation, sports and community center at the former St. Paul's School, combined with anticipated upgrades to Cluett Hall and the Field House.



Architectural rendering courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle

Trustees hope to retain a construction manager within the next 30 days and held a special work session on January 22, 2019 to consider three candidates to help guide the Board through initial steps of assessing the building, developing a course of action and any approved construction plans and costs.

The construction manager and Sports Facilities Advisory, previously retained by the Village, will assist the Village with developing a final plan, cost estimates and forecasting for future operational expenses.

Concurrently, Sports Facilities Advisory will be meeting with various groups, including the Board of Commissioners of Cultural and Recreational Affairs, local sports and culture groups and seniors, and also undertaking market analysis, to assist the Board with determining the proposed programming facilities to be included in the final plans. SFA is planning to meet with these groups during the week of February 11, 2019.

In November, Carlos Cardoso, a Partner with Beyer Blinder and Belle Architects & Planners LLP, returned before Trustees with Michelle Dionisio, an associate with Thornton Tomasetti, to discuss next steps. "The current building as it stands needs an adaptive reuse in order to be viable," he said.

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BFJ Planning Reveals Results of Downtown Garden City Parking Study

by Carisa Giardino

The Board of Trustees asked BFJ Planning to provide a parking study for downtown Garden City and the New Hyde Park Road commercial area, particularly Parking Fields 7S and 7N. The results were presented to the Board at a public meeting. To date, Trustees have not taken action on any of the study's recommendations.

The downtown study area included 4,000 spaces in 10 municipal lots, as well as 300 time-limited spaces on surrounding streets. The New Hyde Park Road study area included 80 spaces in two municipal lots, 150 time-limited spaces on surrounding streets as well as occupancy counts at two private lots that offer a combined 110 spaces.

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Board Sets Seven-Year Chairperson Term Limit For Various Village Boards

by Carisa Giardino

The Board of Trustees adopted a Local Law in December setting a seven-year term limit for chairpersons of certain Village Boards.

During a work session in October 2018, Trustees determined that implementing term limits for the chairperson seat on the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Architectural Design Review Board was worthy of consideration. The Village Board directed Village Counsel to draft a Local Law limiting the term of office to seven consecutive years.



Currently, the Planning Commission is a mayoral appointment subject to Board of Trustees approval; the Zoning Board of Appeals is a Board of Trustees appointment; and the Architectural Design Review Board is also a mayoral appointment subject to Board of Trustees approval. The limitation would not prevent persons from continuing to serve on the various Boards; it merely requires changes in the chairperson.

Following a public hearing, Trustees voted unanimously to adopt the changes. “By custom I think there tends to be a certain longevity for the chairperson. This legislation is designed to encourage other people to step up to the plate and take a turn,” Village Counsel Peter Bee said.

Mayor Brian Daughney added, “It’s good to have rotation. We just want to have a good flow of the chairmanship and involvement.”

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The immediate next step is temporary protection, which entails enclosing the envelope to keep the elements out; interior abatement; windows and roof protection and a drone inspection to determine cost effective options. A team is currently assessing the building but will need the expertise of the construction manager to more fully assess the work required. This process is anticipated to take anywhere from three to four months of study.

At the January 17, 2019 Board meeting, Trustees unanimously adopted a resolution confirming that it would proceed with the analysis and development of the concept plans laid out during the summer of 2018. Pursuant to the resolution, the Board determined and addressed several issues, including:

- The Board shall continue to seek a viable use of the St. Paul’s buildings, and that “viable use” shall mean a use that will result in a building that generates some revenue to offset costs, has uses that are attractive to residents and includes preservation of significant portions of the exterior and interior for historical and architectural purposes;
- It is the opinion of the Board that there is no overwhelming public consensus of what to do with the Main Building, and very broadly speaking, absent demolition, there are three paths often expressed by members of the public, with overlap and alternatives offered by proponents of each path, within each path: (a) do nothing, which leaves the issue for the future; (b) undertake some financial burden (on an undetermined level) for a use as a recreation/ community based center that benefits a significant sector of the population in some manner; and (c) save the building with historical preservation as the priority, without regard to cost or potential uses;
- Use of the building as an educational facility, a library or as a new Village Hall is not in the Board’s view reasonable and has been considered numerous times by prior Boards of Trustees; and
- The public is to be advised that this Board acknowledges and wishes to make clear that the costs and expenses to preserve and rehabilitate the 120,000+ square foot Main Building into anything are substantial. These costs and expenses existed 25 years ago. These are facts true today and will be true tomorrow.

The unanimously adopted resolution, as well as other important information about St. Paul’s, are available to read on the Village’s website, www.gardencityny.net, under the “St. Paul’s” tab on the left side of the homepage.

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The study also revealed that it is generally difficult to find information on the Village's parking supply and time-limited regulations in one convenient place on the website; and perhaps, most interestingly, there will be an excess of approximately 700 spaces in the downtown even with full occupancies of all commercial spaces.

BFJ suggested several regulation changes, including limiting short-term parking regulations to two hours; extending regulations to 8:00 p.m. in Field 7S and along Seventh Street;

expanding pick-up and drop-off parking in Fields 7N and 7S and along Seventh Street; phasing in metered parking along Seventh Street and at time-limited spaces in Fields 7S, 7N and 7E; implementing resident and employee parking permits in Field 7N; and implementing metered parking along and adjacent to Franklin Avenue and in portions of Fields 5, 6, 6E, 9E, 9W and 10. BFJ also suggested enhancing parking enforcement methods with license plate readers and periodic parking occupancy counts. Looking to the future, BFJ also recommended maintaining the long-term possibility of a parking deck in Field 7S.



The Board has expressed interest in creating different parking zones within some of the fields. For example, Trustees had agreed that, pending receipt of the study by BFJ, in Parking Field 7N (and perhaps also in Parking Field 9E) separate zones should be created for residential parking since these lots have apartment buildings on their perimeter. The Board is also contemplating creating zones further away from the retail and restaurant portions of the parking fields and charging an annual fee similar to the fees charged for train station lots.

To date, Trustees have not taken any definitive action and have expressed doubts about metered parking. To read the draft study report, as well as view the November 1, 2018 presentation, visit www.gardencityny.net.

At its January 17, 2019 Board meeting, Trustees held a work session to consider possible changes to Parking Field 7N as a first step. The lot is bordered by Stewart Avenue and Seventh Street and is surrounded partially by apartment buildings and commercial stores. The Board is hoping to solve several conflicting issues. Some of the apartment buildings do not have their own parking lot and therefore depend on the Village-maintained lot.

In effect, Village taxpayers subsidize the use of the lot by apartment dwellers. Commuters on the railroad improperly use the lot and this impedes legitimate uses for apartments and commercial stores and puts a burden on the Village police force to monitor the lot when their time would be better utilized elsewhere. The Village believes it is necessary to have a good flow in and out of the lot to assist commercial stores with customers, and therefore shorter term parking is necessary; but apartment dwellers need longer term parking.

The Board hopes to have a more detailed plan for Field 7N ready in February for action. The current concept is to segregate several areas for residential use and shorter and longer terms. It is expected that apartment dwellers will be required to pay an annual fee to reserve spots in the lot. Any action will require changes to the Village's code and regulations.

Public Hearing Scheduled For February 13 Regarding Property Tax Levy

by Carisa Giardino

There will be a public hearing on Wednesday, February 13, 2019 to consider a proposed Local Law to authorize the Village to adopt a property tax levy in excess of the limit established in General Municipal Law to permit the Village to override the State-imposed property tax levy cap for the Fiscal Year commencing June 1, 2019.

Village Counsel Peter Bee emphasized that this proposed Local Law does not raise taxes nor does it direct the Board of Trustees to raise taxes. "It is merely a protective Local Law proposed to allow the Board to raise taxes above 2 percent if and only if the Board determines it is appropriate to do so when enacting the budget," he said.

The public hearing will take place in the Village Hall Board Room beginning at 8:00 p.m. Formal budget meetings to review the proposed 2019/20 Operating/Capital Budgets will be held in March.

Safeguarding Village's Water Supply: Emerging Contaminant Action Plan

by Carisa Giardino

In its continuing efforts to monitor and safeguard the Village water supply, the Board retained Langan Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc. to provide advice necessary for the preparation and execution of an Emerging Contaminant Action Plan for its water supply.

Emerging contaminants, particularly 1,4-Dioxane, are not unique to Garden City or almost any water supply across the country. The Water Department and Board of Trustees created the action plan to try to get ahead of any potential issues. It is important to note that the Village's water supply is tested daily to ensure all standards in regards to safety and quality are being met. The Village has spent millions of dollars over the years, and continues to spend and invest in infrastructure to ensure the safety of Village water.

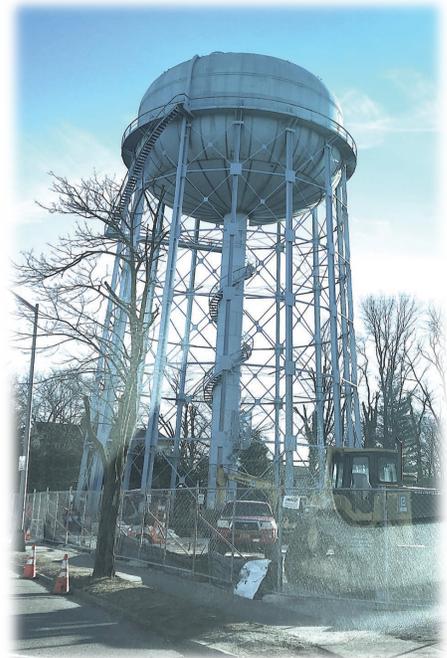
The Village receives expert guidance from nationally recognized environmental law firm, Sive, Paget & Riesel. David Yudelson of Sive, Paget & Riesel has worked with numerous municipalities, including Garden City, for years in solving water-related issues and was instrumental in the Village's successful suit that resulted in a \$10 million settlement against former companies that had contributed to polluting the local aquifer.

According to Public Works Superintendent Joseph DiFrancisco, there are no uniform federal, state or local standards for testing these emerging contaminants nor are there any approved treatment methods. New York State, for example, has not developed any minimal standards and is studying the issue. Village staff is consulting with H2M, the Village water consultants, and other water districts and recently had a meeting with the Western Nassau Water District, which has created a pilot program to treat some of these contaminants. "Their pilot plan shows some promising results," Mr. DiFrancisco said, "and we will of course pursue that further."

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1,4-Dioxane is a "likely human carcinogen" and has been found in groundwater at sites throughout the United States. It is a by-product present in many goods, including paint strippers, dyes, greases, antifreeze and aircraft de-icing fluids, and in some consumer products (deodorants, shampoos and cosmetics). 1,4-Dioxane is used as a purifying agent in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals and is a by-product in the manufacture of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic (Mohr 2001). Traces of 1,4-Dioxane may be present in some food supplements, food-containing residues from packaging adhesives or on food crops treated with pesticides that contain 1,4-Dioxane. As stated by the EPA, no federal Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for drinking water has been established. Residents can view recent EPA-published material on the topic by visiting:

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-03/documents/ffirro_factsheet_contaminant_14-dioxanejanuary2014_final.pdf

According to Langan, emerging contaminants, notably 1,4-Dioxane and perfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS), "have unique physical and chemical properties that make them, for the most part, more difficult to treat by the mainstay tried-and-true technologies." Board members are committed to developing an action plan to address legitimate concerns and will spend funds necessary that will successfully treat and remedy any issues.



Train Station Platform Work Improves Commuter Experience

by Carisa Giardino

Renovation work on the Stewart Manor train station platform has been substantially completed. Sidewalk repairs and/or replacement, along with a few other “punch list” items will wrap up shortly.

The project scope included full replacement of both station platforms, new platform shelters featuring artwork displays, new LED lights throughout the station and new signage and security cameras.

Wi-Fi accessibility and customer help points where assistance with medical or other emergency situations can be summoned by the push of a button are also featured.

New light poles were also installed, along with new stairs and concrete work and new speaker systems to improve station announcements and customer communications.

“The finished product should better serve the residents who rely on this station every day,” Public Works Superintendent Joseph DiFrancisco said.

The Long Island Rail Road kicked off the four-phase project in January 2017. All renovations are being done because of the influx of passengers expected when work begins at New Hyde Park Road as part of the nine-mile MTA/LIRR third track expansion project.

The Village paved the station parking lot in 2018, the cost of which was reimbursed by the MTA.



NYU Winthrop Ambulance Service Commenced Week of January 7



by Carisa Giardino

Ambulance service for Village residents through NYU Winthrop commenced January 7, 2019 in the Village, responding to 45 service calls in the first week alone. The two-year agreement provides service 24 hours a day/seven days a week with at least two new ambulances fitted with brand new equipment, each of which has one EMT and one paramedic aboard. Under the agreement, NYU Winthrop charges the resident's private insurance carrier, and does not charge residents for any shortfall.

Ambulances are stationed at the St. Paul's campus and crews are using a meeting room in Cluett Hall to serve as their Headquarters. Electrical outlets were added to the room, as were key fobs to make the room accessible 24 hours a day. Dedicated parking spaces were also created. Village Police have radio connectivity with the ambulances and the Village is upgrading its VHF radio systems to accommodate the new T1 communication lines into the Police Department's radio system, which improves connectivity between Headquarters and each new ambulance. Further, two microphones/speakers are being installed for efficient dispatching between Police Headquarters and each ambulance. Residents requiring service can call 911 or the Police Department.

The former agreement the Village had with Nassau County provided one ambulance, stationed at the Garden City Water Works building, and required a Village police officer to leave the scene and travel with the ambulance to the hospital. The Village lost the services of that officer for an extended period of time. From an operational perspective this loss of a patrol officer was no longer economical and lessened police coverage on Village streets. The switch to a private service provider was one of the items on the Board's priority list adopted in 2017. During deliberations, there were public presentations from several providers, including Northwell Health and NYU Winthrop.

Mayor Brian Daughney publicly thanked Trustee Mark Hyer and members of the Fire Department for their many hours of research and discussions with various parties and potential providers. Trustee Hyer thanked Police Commissioner Kenneth Jackson and Inspector Michael Doyle for their assistance as well.

Water Tower Demolition Scheduled To Begin in Early February

by Carisa Giardino

The Village has begun prep work for the water tower replacement project off of Old Country Road. The Water Department is performing system tests that could affect the entire Village. While this is being done, residents may experience temporary disturbances in their water service, similar to when hydrant flushing occurs in the spring. Unfortunately, this work cannot be conducted overnight.

Due to this, residents may experience temporary fluctuations in water pressure and/or temporary water discoloration during the course of the day. However, the water is safe to use. The Village anticipates these inconveniences to only last one to two days. In addition, residents might also notice fire hydrants open and flowing. This is part of the work being done and has no effect on fire protection in the Village. Contact the Garden City Water Department at 465-4020 with questions.

Demolition of the actual tower is slated to begin in early February, after the Village finishes replacing valves and completing other related work to allow for the Village to rely on West Hempstead's water system and provide access to the site. The new tower has been designed to allow for the placement of cell and related equipment, which can generate revenue for the Village and also be used to improve emergency services communications. The new tower is expected to be completed by late fall of 2019.

Trustees Considering Expanding Its Public Outreach, New Smartphone App

by Carisa Giardino

At its January 17, 2019 meeting, the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to add the *Garden City Life* to its approved official papers for Village notices. In New York, local governments must have at least one official news outlet for official notices that require publication. The Village continues to seek ways to improve the manner in which it communicates with residents.

Among other potential improvements, the Village is considering implementing an app that would push notifications about Village matters to residents who sign up. Meanwhile, the Village website, www.gardencityny.net, provides a lot of relevant and important information, including the water tower replacement project, St. Paul's, National Grid and PSEG projects, the LIRR third track project, zoning change review projects and much more.

Proposed Village Code Change To Address Road Excavations

by Carisa Giardino

The Village Board of Trustees has instructed Village Counsel to draft a Local Law to attempt to limit the ability of anyone, including utilities such as PSEG and National Grid, to dig up recently paved roads that have been paved by the Village. The law would require the repaving of the entire road, curb to curb, not just the portions dug up.

Trustees are seeking to amend the existing code, which already requires a 150 percent deposit to cover the cost of a person restoring a street damaged by a street opening. "The amendment prohibits, short of an emergency, permits being issued for street openings for streets that were repaved in the last three years or newly paved in the last five years," Village Counsel Peter Bee said.

This Local Law is based off a law recently passed by the Town of North Hempstead, according to Department of Public Works Superintendent Joseph DiFrancisco. A public hearing on the matter will be held Wednesday, February 13, beginning at 8:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.



On motion of Trustee Minuto the following resolution was offered:

RESOLUTION NO. 17-2019

RESOLVED, this Board is cognizant that, through numerous Boards and Commissions, made up of numerous Trustees, residents and taxpayers, the Village has struggled for over 25 years to reach a consensus on what to do with the St. Paul's School buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Village's efforts to secure such a consensus have included, during the past 25 years, numerous meetings, polls and surveys to try to solve the "St. Paul's" issue; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of this Board that there is virtually no solution that has not already been talked about or considered or that would provide a unanimously accepted solution; and

WHEREAS, this Board nevertheless continues to seek a viable use of the former St. Paul's School; and

WHEREAS, in the interests of accuracy and transparency, this Board wishes the public to be aware of its goals and steps taken towards those goals;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that this Board shall continue to seek a viable use of the St. Paul's buildings, and that "viable use" shall mean a use that will result in a building that generates some revenue to offset costs, has uses that are attractive to residents, and includes preservation of significant portions of the exterior and interior for historical and architectural purposes; and

IT IS FURTHER AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that this Board believes it to be in the public interest that certain facts, together with this Board's views about the St. Paul's Main Building, Cluett Hall and Fieldhouse, be more widely circulated to the public as follows:

1. That though some may disagree, it is the opinion of this Board that there is no overwhelming public consensus of what to do with the building.

2. Very broadly speaking, absent demolition, there are three paths often expressed by members of the public, with overlap and alternatives offered by proponents of each path, within each path: (a) to do nothing, which leaves the issue for the future; (b) to undertake some financial burden (on an undefined level) for a use as a recreation/community based center that benefits a significant sector of our population in some manner, and (c) save the building with historical preservation as the priority, without regard to cost or potential uses.

3. That use of the building as an educational facility, a library or as a new Village Hall is not (in our view) reasonable and has been considered numerous times by prior Boards of Trustees, and this view is based upon several factors; First, it is against state law to utilize education system money for historical preservation purposes; Second, moving Village Hall and/or the Library would not result in uses which generate revenue; Third, the proceeds of sale of those two parcels of land where they currently reside would not come anywhere near paying for the costs of rehabilitating St. Paul's; and Fourth, any potential sale of the current premises of the Library and Village Hall would also result in arguments over what to allow as acceptable uses where the Library and Village Hall now sit.

4. There are no pools of grant money or historical funds that could come anywhere near paying the costs of what is required to restore the building. For those limited grants that are available, they generally require historical accuracy in rehabilitation - driving up costs, or they require that the buildings be open to the public at large and access and use cannot be limited to just residents of Garden City when state or federal grant money is deployed.

IT IS FURTHER UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the public be advised that the concept that we are currently analyzing is not a "sports arena." It is a plan, still only in concept, to create a community center which does include sports uses but will also include vast improvements to Cluett Hall for performance/dance/music space and preserving or creating other spaces in the Main Building to benefit as many interests as we can justify or make reasonable sense in terms of a viable building; and

IT IS FURTHER UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the public be advised that this Board acknowledges and wishes to make clear to the public that the costs and expenses to preserve and rehabilitate the 120,000+ square foot Main Building into anything are substantial, that these costs and expenses existed 25 years ago, it is true today and these facts will be true tomorrow. Nevertheless, this Board will continue to pursue its inquiries and ideas to achieve the goal of a viable use as defined above.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

AYES: 8
NOES: 0

The resolution was declared adopted.