

# VILLAGE NEWS



## Multi-Use Turf Field Makes Debut



As local sports teams christened the field, the Garden City Board of Trustees held a ribbon cutting ceremony in August on the newly renovated multi-sport turf field at Community Park, the latest example of the Department of Recreation and Parks' Strategic Plan in motion.

"I believe this multi-sport field is an incredible asset for the Village. We look forward to scheduling the field and maximizing its use for the benefit of all those participating in our great local sports programs," said Kevin Ocker, chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Cultural and Recreational Affairs. "We thank the Recreation Commission, all of our local sports organizations, the Board of Trustees and former Trustee Dick Silver for their collaboration and support for this project. All can be very proud of adding this premier field to our recreational facility inventory."

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## Board's Priorities List Focuses On Numerous Issues

The Board of Trustees, in a public work session, discussed a list of priorities intended to help Trustees and Village Staff set, maintain and keep priorities during the next year to 18 months. "The purpose of this list is to keep us and staff focused on certain matters and to commit to deadlines to get things accomplished," Mayor Brian Daughney said. "Generally, the list is comprised of items that are long term in nature, or involve a large sum of money, or may change the way a department operates, or part of the way a department operates."

Trustees discussed the list and the projects, and sought input from department heads, including Village Administrator Ralph Suozzi, as to the scope of the project and the timelines.

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# Garden City Named Clean Energy Community



The Village of Garden City has been designated a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), recognizing its leadership in reducing energy use, cutting costs and driving clean energy locally.

Garden City received the designation for completing actions identified by NYSERDA as part of the Clean Energy Communities initiative. The designation now enables the Village to apply for \$50,000 in grant monies to be used towards additional clean energy projects, with no local cost share. Garden City has completed the following high-impact clean energy actions:

**Benchmarking:** The Village adopted a policy that requires the annual reporting of energy used in government buildings. Buildings account for more than 60 percent of the energy used in New York State.

**LED Streetlights:** The Village converted 1,970 streetlights from conventional bulbs to LED fixtures and intends on using the grant money to fund the conversion of the remaining 590 fixtures.

**Unified Solar Permit:** Garden City implemented a unified solar permitting initiative, which streamlines the process for homeowners and business owners alike.

**Energy Code Enforcement Training:** The Village implemented an Energy Code Enforcement Training program for building inspectors. The training focuses on what code enforcement officials need to know about the Energy Code in the context of its practical application on active construction projects. There is significant opportunity for energy savings through improved Energy Code compliance.

"The Village's efforts to reduce energy use, promote green initiatives and drive clean energy locally not only benefits the environment as a whole but effectively reduces our operating costs," Mayor Brian Daughney said. "Our LED streetlight conversion project, for example, has an anticipated annual savings of nearly \$150,000."

According to Public Works Superintendent Joseph DiFrancisco, upcoming projects include improving the efficiency of the HVAC systems in Village Hall and the Library and (potentially) entering into an agreement with an energy efficiency consulting firm to evaluate and improve energy usage and undertake green initiatives Village-wide.

The \$16 million Clean Energy Communities initiative supports local government leaders to implement energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable development projects in their communities.

"The Village of Garden City's Clean Energy Community designation serves as a valuable model for local government leaders across the state who want to cut costs and reduce energy use in their communities," John B. Rhodes, president and CEO, NYSERDA, said. "Sustainable communities are a significant component of Governor Cuomo's nation-leading energy agenda and will help ensure a clean energy economy for all New Yorkers."

The Clean Energy Communities initiative on Long Island is offered in partnership with PSEG Long Island, whose support is funding the grant awards to eligible applicants. For more information on Clean Energy Communities, visit [www.nyserdera.ny.gov/cec](http://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/cec).

## Board Adopts Commercial District Zoning Changes



The Garden City Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a local law that removes certain commercial zoning restrictions within the Village’s T-Zone, which primarily includes Seventh Street and Franklin Avenue.

“We are making it less cumbersome for the lessee,” Mayor Brian Daughney said, further stating that, in his opinion, the prohibition against restaurants and food establishments in the Zone seemed outdated and an artificial creation that did not reflect reality.

“There are already sixteen establishments in the Zone that had been grandfathered or granted variances. Further, we have seven banks that already exist on the street. The way that we drafted the law, only one more could be added into the T-Zone area,” Mayor Daughney continued. “In an age when banks are closing branches, and not adding them, there is little risk in pushing out retail and existing restaurants.”

The changes were first suggested and requested by the Garden City Chamber of Commerce over two years ago. Dennis Donnelly, executive director of the Chamber, said, “The Chamber believes that impediments to locating a business in the Village are counterproductive to the economic vitality of the commercial sector. The elimination of restrictive covenants will only help spur further development of Garden City’s retail district.”

The lifted restrictions are intended to, among other things, streamline the process, enhance the pedestrian environment and achieve greater land-use efficiencies. The new code changes were not expanded to include general office uses beyond those that already exist in the code. The law permits banks and restaurants to replace empty storefronts as of right and eliminates Zoning Board of Appeals approval.

“This local law provides an opportunity for Garden City’s community to have businesses move in as they see the demand or need of residents. This gives the community the flexibility to adjust, attract people and to change as society and demand changes,” Trustee Robert Bolebruch said. “By lifting the zoning requirements you have in one area, you let business determine what is going to be there.”

To read the newly adopted local law in full, visit [www.gardencityny.net](http://www.gardencityny.net).

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The multi-purpose field is used for soccer, lacrosse and football. Sports groups using the new turf field for practices and games in the upcoming year include Garden City Centennial Soccer, GCAA Thunder Football, Garden City Rams Girls' Lacrosse and Garden City Youth Boys' Lacrosse.

Rick Harken, president of the Garden City Centennial Soccer Club, attended the ribbon ceremony. "We have over 220 home travel soccer games this fall so the additional field space is a welcomed enhancement to the other field locations in the Village. It will also allow our teams to schedule evening games and practices."



Harken added, "The turf itself is a technological advancement over previous versions and should reduce the number of turf-related injuries. The Village officials who conceived and executed the Department of Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan should be commended for their excellent foresight."

It is anticipated that anywhere between 12 and 20 games will be played during the weekends during the spring and fall seasons, with each group receiving dedicated practice time during the weeknights. The field is now fully lighted with permanent stadium lighting.

As part of Phase I of the Department of Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan, the Garden City Pool, Fields #3 and #4 and the multi-use turf field have all undergone major renovations. Fields #3 and #4, completed on time and under budget in the fall of 2016, was the first major project identified in year one of the Strategic Plan. Renovations included synthetic turf infields, new irrigation and new underground drainage systems. The fields were also outfitted with new safety fencing, backstops and dugouts.

The Pool, which just celebrated its 61st season, saw an uptick in family registrations, welcoming over 350 more individuals to the membership ranks. Facility improvements, which started about six years ago, continued this spring as Village maintenance staff converted the Game Room into an air-conditioned, indoor dining area. A new shaded area by the Adult Pool also debuted in June, as well as an accessible gate to the Adult Pool area for the mobility impaired. These upgrades followed a complete overhaul of the ladies and men's shower and restroom facilities last year. A brand new bathroom was also added near the Adult Pool, as well as a new First Aid Room and larger Family Bathroom to now include a baby changing table and shower area.

"Recent investments made over the last seven years to these recreational assets will benefit generations to come as they provide diverse athletic and leisure activities for all ages," Mr. Ocker said.

"We hope our residents will agree that these upgrades at Community Park really make the facility second to none," Mayor Daughney said. "The present Board members and our former Board member Richard Silver put in a lot of work to get these renovations done and to get in place a funding mechanism. We knew they were long overdue for renovation and we will continue our work."

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Mr. Suozzi and members of the Board noted that work on several items, such as the water tower's replacement, are well underway. Village Treasurer Irene Woo, and the Village's Superintendent of Buildings, Ausberto Huertas, Jr., advised the Board of the work that had been commenced by them, along with the efforts of Courtney Rosenblatt, Village Auditor, to identify potential accounting, tax and financial software and systems. Trustee Robert Bolebruch emphasized the need for these financial systems to interact with each other, particularly during budget season. "This integration will enable upper management to truly work together on any given project," he said.

Members of the Board stressed that the list is intended to be, and necessarily has to be, fluid. As time progresses and matters are investigated and addressed and information is learned, the scope of the matter may well change. The Mayor also noted "there may be legal issues, civil service or union contract issues, public safety issues," all of which can impact the timing of addressing and solving an issue on the list. "It is not an all-encompassing list, there are many other things we are working on, thinking about, that will continue to go on," Mayor Daughney said.

Numerous priorities are included on the list, including St. Paul's, integrating the Village's three major financial systems, hiring a Human Resources attorney, the Recreation and Parks Department's Strategic Plan. To read the list in full, visit the Alerts section of the Village's website, [www.gardencityny.net](http://www.gardencityny.net).

## **Cluett Hall Parking Enhancements Complete**

The work to create additional parking at Cluett Hall began in mid-August. This portion of the paving program consists of adding a total of 13 additional parking spaces to the complex, which includes the addition of two handicap spaces. These additional spaces are in two separate areas of the St. Paul's complex:

### **Cluett Hall**

- Four new spaces and two new handicap spaces were added in the area directly southwest of the entrance to Cluett Hall
- The sidewalk that runs along the western side of Cluett Hall and is used to gain access to the handicap ramp leading to the entrance was repaved
- Curb work and paving have been completed
- This additional parking required the removal of one tree.

### **Rockaway Avenue Entrance**

- 17 parking spaces were added on the south side of the entrance road coming off of Rockaway Avenue
- The new spaces are head-in parking spaces, which has enabled the Village to increase the amount of spaces by 70 percent
- Curb work and paving have been completed

"We have added 13 additional parking spaces to the St. Paul's complex, improved accessibility to Cluett Hall and enhanced the ease and convenience of parking along the Rockaway Avenue entrance," Superintendent of Public Works Joseph DiFrancisco said.

# Ceremony Marks 42<sup>nd</sup> Rainbow Division's Centennial

A beautiful ceremony marked the 100th anniversary of the 42nd Infantry Division's establishment and deployment from Camp Mills, located in the southeast area of Garden City during World War One.

Hundreds gathered at the newly restored Rainbow Division Memorial Monument on St. James Street South August 12, 2017 to commemorate the occasion. A cake cutting ceremony immediately followed at the Senior Center on Golf Club Lane.

Sprung Monuments of Babylon power washed and chemically cleaned the memorial and the concrete benches surrounding it. Members of the Rainbow Division Veterans Foundation, many of which attended the ceremony, presented a check to Mayor Brian Daughney to cover 50 percent of the restoration costs.

"Restoration of the Rainbow Division Memorial for its Centennial celebration is a respectful tribute to the history of Camp Mills, the Rainbow Division formation and to all of the men and women in our military families who have and continue to preserve our nation's path of freedom," Village Administrator Ralph Suozzi said.



## Garden City Police Lieutenant, Sergeant Take Their Oaths

It was Police Commissioner Kenneth Jackson's privilege and honor to introduce Lieutenant Steven Braun and Sergeant Kevin Reilly to the Board of Trustees in July, speaking highly of their accolades while serving the Village for a combined 43 years.

Deputy Mayor Theresa Trouvé administered their oaths of office during a brief ceremony at Village Hall.

Lt. Braun is a 26-year veteran of the Garden City Police Department. During those years, he was assigned to the Bureau of Special Operations as a Detective in 1997 and promoted to Sergeant in 2008.

Throughout his career, Lt. Braun has been the recipient of many departmental awards, as well as the Congressional Certificate of Merit, the Nassau County Municipal Chief's Distinguished Service Award and the Town of Hempstead Police Service Award.

He resides in Suffolk County with his wife, Theresa. He has three children, Max, Bella and Lucas.

"Lieutenant Braun has proven himself to be an exceptional officer and has established himself as both an effective investigator and leader," Commissioner Jackson said. "We have no doubt he will do well in this new role."

During Sgt. Reilly's nearly 18-year career with the Garden City Police Department, he too has received numerous awards and citations, including the American Legion Law & Order Award and the Nassau County Municipal Police Chief's Association Distinguished Service Award.



He has spent nearly 24 years with the New York Army National Guard. He retired as a Major in November 2006. He spent six months deployed to Ground Zero, one-and-a-half years active duty deployment in 2004 and 2005 and was activated out of retirement in 2008 for two years of active duty deployment to Maiwand, Afghanistan.

He was Commander of the PMT Mongoose, a 12-man team that advised, trained and mentored the Afghan Police and District Leadership. While deployed he was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart as well as other awards.

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He and his wife, Erin, who is retired from the New York City Police Department, have been married for 25 years. They have a son, Brett, a Petty Officer, First Class, in the United States Navy, Active Duty, attending SUNY Maritime for Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering in his senior year. They also have a daughter, Bridget, a junior at SUNY Albany studying Digital Forensics.

“Sergeant Reilly is of outstanding character and integrity and has distinguished himself through his hard work and devotion to public service. He will be an excellent role model for the officers he will be supervising,” Commissioner Jackson said.



## **Stewart Field Cleanup Work Will Help Enhance Parking Needs**

As part of the Department of Recreation and Parks’ long-term capital plan and its normal operations, the Village is considering changes to Stewart Field. Last year the fenced-in baseball field was renovated and sprinkler systems were added to much of the entire field, including the area that has been traditionally used by Thunder football. The grass areas have improved because of the irrigation.

“The parking lot at Stewart Field is too small to handle parking needs and although the Stewart School parking lots are available we are considering changes to the field space,” Mayor Brian Daughney said.

Recreation and Parks crews continue clearing away brush and vegetation that has accumulated over the years, especially at the north end of the field. To enhance parking needs, the Village may be able to add spaces at the north end of the field on the newly cleared space, as well as use what was formerly the Long Island Motor Parkway, with access through Russell Road. The Department of Public Works has also requested copies of any legal easements with PSEG-LI (there is a large transmission tower on the property with overhead lines) and Village Counsel is contacting Nassau County to discuss acquisition of or easements over county-owned land adjacent to Stewart Field to the north.

“We may move or remove fencing or make an access gateway at that end of the field,” Mayor Daughney said.