



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

**“Board Ed 101”.....1**

**Dollars & Sense.....4**

**Arbor Day 2009.....5**

**Plandome Heights  
Office Update.....5**

**Save the Date.....5**

**Upcoming Features....5**

**Scissors-Clip-(e)Mail..6**

## “Board Ed 101”: Architectural Review Board

Plandome Heights embodies “home rule” through its five Boards; each is unique in its purpose and acts independently:

- Board of Trustees
- Zoning and Appeals Board
- Architectural Review Board
- Planning Board
- Technology Advisory Board

In our continuing series “Board Ed 101”, the Fall Newsletter focuses on the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

The ARB was formed in 2000. Its mission is to maintain the architectural integrity of our Village and to prevent structures from being built that would change the character of our neighborhood -- ever mindful that good design is integral to maintaining the beauty of our village.

There are five members on the ARB, one alternate member and an independent consulting architect who meet, when necessary, on the second Tuesday of the month. All applications must first be approved by the Building Inspector, and, if necessary, approval from the Zoning Board must be granted prior to ARB review. The applicant is responsible for notifying all neighbors within 200 feet of the property in advance of the upcoming construction so that neighbors may have an opportunity to attend the ARB meeting and ask questions regarding the impact of the construction on their quality of life. The ARB is subject to Municipal Open Meetings Law; as

such, the meetings are open to the public and completely transparent.

After meeting with the ARB, the homeowner may be granted approval of his or her plans by a majority vote of the members of the ARB. Sometimes, changes may have to be made to the plans before final approval can be given, and a subsequent meeting may be necessary. If a minor change needs to be made, the Chair of the ARB may sign off on that change, without a meeting of the entire Board being necessary. The Building Inspector will not issue a permit unless an application has been approved by the ARB. Once a permit is issued, work is allowed ONLY M-F from 8am to 6pm, and on Saturdays from 9am to 5pm. Work is prohibited on Federal Holidays and Sundays.

Also, when a minor change is being made to your home, for example, replacing windows or doors with the same material as previously existed, adding a qualified fence, etc., approval may be granted by the ARB Chairman, without requiring a meeting of the full ARB.

When a resident initially meets with his or her architect, it is important that all parties understand that the creation of this Board was meant to maintain and enhance the physical appearance of our Village by adhering to the use of quality materials and design that are consistent with the traditional nature of the existing homes. The role of the ARB is to assist residents in meeting these

***“In most instances, people have been grateful to be able to work with the ARB, and its consulting architect, to help solve design challenges.”***

## **Architectural Review Board, con't**

standards and to work with them in providing to them the opportunity of updating their homes while adhering to quality architectural design. The ARB also has jurisdiction over certain landscaping work (section 4-6C), typically involving new construction where old shrubs are ripped out in the process. On large jobs it is not unusual for the ARB to ask for a landscaping design upon submission of the plans. The ARB tends to work collaboratively with the resident to help identify landscaping changes that may enhance the property's overall appearance. On the other hand, if a homeowner is enhancing a residence by adding to or replacing existing landscaping, a permit is not needed

For specific information when consulting with your architect, please refer to Chapter 4 of our village code located on VPH's website at [www.plandomeheights-ny.gov](http://www.plandomeheights-ny.gov). If in doubt about the interpretation of the code -- or if you just want to ensure you are on the right track before you begin the expense of a project -- we highly recommend a pro-active consultation with the Building Inspector.

Members hold five-year terms. Current membership, terms and biographies are highlighted below:

### ***Richard Hirt, Chairman, 2013***

Richard Hirt is a resident of Plandome Heights at 5 Winthrop Road since 1994. He has served on the Architectural Review Board as a member from 2005, becoming Chairman in 2007. Richard is an Account Executive for Infinity Global Packaging, a manufacturer producing packaging for many international fashion and accessory

retailers specializing in the luxury goods market.

### ***Thomas C. Ahn, Alternate, 2009***

Tom Ahn is a civil engineer with over 30 years of experience in facilities management and leadership of a large institutional/corporate organization. He is currently Vice President of the Real Estate Division for The Mount Sinai Hospital and The Mount Sinai School of Medicine. In this capacity, he is involved in all aspects of real estate management, including staff housing of over 2,000 apartments, off-campus satellite medical offices, design and construction, property management and acquisitions, leasing of commercial and retail facilities, and the operation of all Mount Sinai's real estate holdings. Tom has also been a key facilitator in the development of the American Cancer Society's Manhattan Hope Lodge, Charles B. Wang Chinatown Health Clinic Headquarters and development of the Museum of Chinese in America.

Tom holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Temple University and a Certificate in Health Care Design from New York University. Prior to joining Mount Sinai Mr. Ahn was Director of Facilities Projects at NBC Broadcasting Company in New York. He is on the Board of Directors of the American Cancer Society and the Museum of Chinese in America, and a member of the Real Estate Board of New York.

Tom, his wife May and their 17 year old daughter, Olivia have been residents of Plandome Heights since 1999, residing at 54 Bournedale Road North. Tom was a Village Trustee in 2004, ARB Member in 2002, ARB Chairman from 2003-2007 and currently serves the ARB as an Alternate Member.

**Mr. Craig Westergard**  
**([www.westergardarchitects.com](http://www.westergardarchitects.com))**  
**serves the Village of Plandome Heights Architectural Review Board as a consulting architect, has been a practicing architect for over 20 years, and also serves as Trustee for the historic Village of Roslyn.**

**Norman Dee, Member, 2011**

Norman Dee has lived in VPH at 103 Bay Driveway with his wife, Camille, and son, Vincent, for over 25 years. His son Vincent attended Manhasset schools and his wife Camille has been active in Community Fund, SCA, and Library Fund efforts. Norman is both a computer management consultant specializing in capacity & performance management and a professional flutist. He is currently working on projects for Reed Elsevier (Lexis Nexis), Xerox, and Pfizer. Norman is secretary of the Baha'is of North Hempstead and sits on the boards of the Hugo Kauder Society and Music For All Seasons Foundations.

Prior to becoming a member of the ARB in 2006, Norman served one year as a member of the VPH Planning Board.

**Maryann Grieco, Member, 2010**

Maryann Grieco, a resident of VPH since 1977, resides at 18 Shore Road with her husband, Don. They have two children, Danielle and Don, Jr., and three granddaughters, Delaney, Jacqueline, and Angelica. She taught in the NYC public schools for thirty-three years, retiring in 2004. Retirement affords her the opportunity to travel, and to pursue interests such as golf and tennis.

Maryann holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Marymount Manhattan College and a master's degree in gifted education from C. W. Post College. She has been a member of the Architectural Review Board since its formation in 2000. In that capacity, her goal is to ensure that the quality of life in our village is maintained and that the well being of our community is sustained. She is a former member of the Planning Board, a trustee since 2005, and currently serves as Deputy Mayor.

**Marlene Nowicki, Member, 2012**

Marlene Nowicki has been a VPH resident since 1973, residing at 74 Summit Drive. Marlene originally joined the ARB as an alternate member at its inception in 2000 and became a full member in 2004.

Now retired, Marlene and her husband were the owners of Pneumatic Tool Sales & Repair, which manufactured and repaired precision pneumatic machinery. Marlene received a bachelor's degree as an art history major from C.W. Post College. Her passionate love of art, architecture and our lovely Village was what attracted Marlene to serve on the ARB as a way to marry those interests. While "beauty is in the eye of the beholder, there must be rules of guidance which have proved beneficial to the community at large", Marlene noted. "In most instances, people have been grateful to be able to work with the ARB, and its consulting architect, to help solve design challenges."

**Martin Soja, Member, 2013**

Martin Soja, an engineer, is co-founder of First Sterling Financial, Inc. Mr. Soja has over 25 years of real estate experience. His primary responsibilities are strategic and corporate planning and oversight of operations. Prior to forming First Sterling, Mr. Soja was a Management Consultant with Price Waterhouse where he was responsible for developing accounting and management information systems for real estate companies and small business corporations. Previously, Mr. Soja served on the Board of Directors of the National Housing & Rehabilitation Association. Mr. Soja has resided at 62 The Waterway in VPH since 1979, and has been a member of the ARB since 2005. □

**INCORPORATED  
VILLAGE OF  
PLANDOME HEIGHTS**

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**Diana Merenda**  
Mayor

**Maryann Grieco**  
Deputy Mayor

**Lawrence Bourguet**  
Trustee

**Silva Ferman**  
Trustee

**Kenneth C. Riscica**  
Trustee

**Alvin Solomon**  
Trustee

**Norman Taylor**  
Trustee

**Valerie Onorato**  
Village Clerk / Treasurer

**Ann Demeri**  
Deputy Clerk  
Court Clerk

**Cye E. Ross**  
Village Justice

**Thomas M. Byrne**  
Village Building Inspector  
Stormwater Mgmt Officer

**Richard Hirt**  
Architectural Review  
Board, Chair

**Marion Endrizzi**  
Planning Board, Chair

**Don Parker**  
Technology Advisory  
Board, Chair

**Eugene O'Connor**  
Zoning and Appeals  
Board, Chair

## Dollars & Sense

At the September Board meeting, Trustee Ken Riscica gave an illuminating Financial Report for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2008, prefacing his remarks with the following historical highlights:

- a) over the past three years the deficits have consumed nearly \$212,000 of operating net cash (approximately \$66,000 in the year ended May 31, 2008), reducing our general fund balance to approximately \$198,000
- b) such deficits were driven by an approximate 62% increase in spending over that period, which
- c) resulted in a significant Village tax increase in percentage terms in 2007 over 2006.

A costly litigation and essential repairs to storm drains were the primary contributors to the spending, deficits and subsequent tax increase.

The Village has acted in the current fiscal year to

- 1) reduce its planned expenditures for the current fiscal year by approximately \$52,000
- 2) hold taxes constant with no rate increase this year, and
- 3) budget for approximately \$20,000 of net higher other revenues and governmental aid.

We are pleased to report that the result is a "break-even" budget for the fiscal year 2008 – 2009. Early

indicators are that current year spending is in line or only slightly exceeding our budget.

Trustee Riscica explained further that process changes were desirable in our "financial reporting and control" function in order for the Village to have better "Actual to Budget" reporting on a monthly basis – a system not implemented in the past. This new reporting methodology will provide the Trustees with greater transparency in reporting, which, in turn, will most importantly lead to greater control of operations. The nature of this re-engineering is time consuming and detailed, but we believe it is very important for this and future administrations to contribute to fiduciary oversight. Therefore, Clerk-Treasurer Valerie Onorato is currently in the process of implementing these changes.

It is clear to the Board that, as we go forward, we need to pay close attention to spending and also to reviewing our sources of non-property tax revenues, which have been declining over time. With necessary capital projects for road and drain enhancements on the horizon, we need to improve planning in order to properly fund future expenditures.

The Board is grateful for the in-depth analysis generated by Trustee Riscica and is confident that his due diligence will help to keep the Village financials in good order.

Expect updates to the *Dollars & Sense* column in future Newsletters. □

**Got Scissors? Turn to Page Six**

**SAVE THE  
DATE:**

**JUNE 6, 2009  
SATURDAY  
7PM-  
MIDNIGHT**

**VPH 80<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
GALA**

**DINNER &  
DANCING**

**PORT  
WASHINGTON  
YACHT CLUB**

***Come and  
celebrate with  
neighbors and  
meet new  
friends at this  
very festive  
occasion!***

**Co-Chairs:**

***Anja D'Angelo***

***Marion Endrizzi***

***Maryann Grieco***

***Ruth Petras***

## **VPH Wins \$1000 to Celebrate Arbor Day 2009**

In response to Request for Grant proposal solicited by New York State, we are pleased to announce that VPH won \$1000 (the highest award) to celebrate Arbor Day on April 24, 2009. The event will be held at our own Plandome Heights Preserve, which we will have ready for the occasion.

Many residents are unaware that one of our Trustees, Norman Taylor, is an experienced forestry expert. Trustee Taylor and the Mayor are fashioning an agenda that we hope will be fun and educational for kids of all ages. Please stay tuned for more details but "save the date" for now. □

## **Plandome Heights Office Update**

Within a few weeks' time, we hope to be unpacked and boxes of files finally stored properly in new furniture and filing cabinets [all purchased through New York State GSA discount of 60.1% (not a typo!)]].

The October 6<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting includes a public hearing to discuss certain changes to the Village Code. Public hearings will be held off premises, as space at 37 Orchard may not be large enough. Starting November 3<sup>rd</sup>, however, our normal Board of Trustees monthly meetings, court proceedings, BZA,

ARB and Planning Board meetings will be conducted at the Village office at 37 Orchard Street.

Reminders for the change in venue will be sent to the Manhasset Press and posted on our website – as well as on the trusty telephone poles ☺

Thanks to the entire community for your patience during the construction period, and special thanks to the office personnel for working under challenging conditions. □

### **UPCOMING NEWSLETTER FEATURES**

- "Board Ed 101": focus on one VPH Board per newsletter
- "... As Lovely As A Tree ...": all about the VPH tree program
- What's New with Plandome Pond Park?
- VPH & Port Washington Office of Emergency Management
- "Adopt a Drain" Program – **YOU** can make a difference!

**REMINDER: No Contractor or Landscaping Jobs on Sundays or Federal Holidays**

### **Incorporated Village of Plandome Heights**

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Website: [www.plandomeheights-ny.gov](http://www.plandomeheights-ny.gov)

## Scissors – Clip – (e)Mail

This is our third Newsletter.

Now we'd like to hear from you.

Send us your suggestions for future articles.

Tell us whether you would like to be able to access the Newsletter online.

Do you require 'large type' for the Newsletter?

What's working? What's not?

We need to develop an email blast so we can alert you when necessary (eg, a magazine sales scam, or rabies vaccine pellets fall from the sky, or 40MPH winds are expected so put away your summer outdoor umbrellas) ... **HELP US COMMUNICATE BETTER!**

Snail mail: P.O. Box 1384, Manhasset

Email: [newsletter@plandomeheights-ny.gov](mailto:newsletter@plandomeheights-ny.gov)

**THANKS!** □

**Family Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address for Household Notices :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Idea / Concern / Comment:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Sign Us Up – My Family Wants to “ Adopt a Drain” to Protect Manhasset Bay:** \_\_\_\_\_