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“Board Ed” 101: Zoning and Appeals

As with any an incorporated village in New York, Plandome Heights embodies “home rule” as the single most important aspect of local government. Practically speaking, home rule means that resident taxpayers are empowered to elect their neighbors to manage their village on a day-to-day basis. The electorate votes only for Mayor and Trustees. Members of all other Boards are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Board of Trustees, unless there is a vacancy which may be filled by the Mayor directly.

Five Boards serve VPH; each is unique in its purpose and acts independently:

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

We promised that in each seasonal newsletter we would highlight one of the Boards that serve the Village of Plandome Heights. The Summer Newsletter focuses on the Zoning and Appeals Board and its mission to protect and preserve the character and integrity of our neighborhood.

The Zoning and Appeals Board is typically engaged after the VPH Building Inspector disapproves a particular plan or structure related to a residence and/or the resident requests a variance from the VPH code (available on the website at: www.plandomeheights-ny.gov).

As the Zoning and Appeals Board is a

quasi-judicial body, the petition process is rigorous and exacting. Village Counsel and a court reporter are present at hearings, and parties are sworn in prior to giving testimony. Applicants are reminded that the Zoning and Appeals Board *interprets* but does not enact code -- that is the purview of the Board of Trustees in its capacity to represent the electorate.

The Zoning and Appeals Board meets on an as-needed basis. Each case must be properly and publicly noticed, and Counsel's input and reflections are actively sought. Feedback from surrounding neighbors is always considered. Each Board member is asked to vote and give her or his opinion. Very often the Board collaborates with applicants to help achieve their desired objective within constraints of the VPH code.

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

Eugene J. O'Connor, Chairman, 2013
 Gene is a partner in Pt. Washington-based maritime law firm Chalos, O'Connor & Duffy, and has 30+ years of maritime and environmental law experience. A graduate of the College of the Holy Cross and Fordham University School of Law, his practice is focused on litigation of ship casualties, cargo defense and arbitration of charter party disputes. He is a member of The Maritime Law Association of the United States, American Bar Association, and the Connecticut Maritime Association.

“We attempt to balance the desires of applicants for an exception to our Code with the need of the Village to preserve its beautiful character. Nearly all of the time, a sense of collegiality predominates the meeting.”

Zoning and Appeals Board Membership, con’t

Gene and his wife, Jackie, have three children, and one grandchild. Gene has been a lifetime Manhasset resident, moved to Plandome Heights in 1983, and resides at 34 The Waterway. He was appointed to the Zoning and Appeals Board in 1985 and has been chairman since 1990.

Joanne Anderson, Member, 2012

Joanne has been a Plandome Heights resident for about 30 years, serving on the Zoning and Appeals Board for the last six. Joanne attended Cornell University, College of Arts and Sciences, and Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia, where she met her husband, Clay. After practicing law for several years, Joanne retired to raise her family, sons Alex (11) and Athan (10), and daughter Samantha (7). The Andersons reside at 85 Shore Road. Joanne began working in the family real estate development and management business in 2004.

Joanne is president (2008-10) of the Plandome Heights Women’s Club and has served on the club’s Village Beautification Committee, responsible for decorating signs and signposts during holidays and planting flowers in green areas (quite a challenge as none are irrigated).

Paul P. Baard, PhD, Member, 2010

Paul is a professor of communication and management at Fordham University’s Graduate School of Business and holds a doctorate in psychology. He consults with organizations, is a noted corporate keynote speaker, co-authored a book on leadership, contributed to *Harvard Business Review*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and appeared on CNN among other media outlets.

Paul served in senior line management in the TV division of

A.C. Nielsen Company. An appointee of two New York governors to the City University of New York’s Board of Trustees (now Emeritus), Paul has lived with his wife, Veronica (a consultant and former managing director in charge of human resources at a leading investment banking firm), at 81 Bournedale South for 22 years. Their daughter, Samantha, served on Manhasset’s Board of Education, as its first Student Representative and is a Research Fellow studying at George Mason University.

Paul summarizes his 10+ years of service on the Zoning and Appeals Board as very satisfying, despite the tensions inevitable when parties conflict. “We attempt to balance the desires of applicants for an exception to our Code with the need of the Village to preserve its beautiful character. Nearly all of the time, a sense of collegiality predominates the meeting.”

Keith Geismar, Member, 2011

Keith has been a Plandome Heights resident since 1999, and has served on the Zoning and Appeals Board since 2004. He and his wife Ruth have three children: Jack, Ryan and David, making their home at 115 Shore Road. Jack and Ryan attend the Shelter Rock elementary school and David attends the Community Synagogue in Sands Point. Keith has worked in the financial services community for twenty years and is currently a Managing Principal at Jack Ryan Group, LLC a financial services consultancy.

Lucille J. VanBaaren, Member, 2009

Lucille has been involved in product safety and regulatory compliance for over 30 years, and is currently Executive Director, Global Regulatory Affairs for the Estee

**INCORPORATED
VILLAGE OF
PLANDOME HEIGHTS**

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Maryann Grieco
Deputy Mayor

Lawrence Bourguet
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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

Lauder Companies. She is responsible for worldwide regulatory compliance and is chair of both the international and the environment air quality committees of the cosmetic trade association, the Personal Care Products Council.

Lucille also had significant regulatory tenures at Calvin Klein Cosmetics and Avon Products, and at Lever Brothers' Department of Toxicology as a research toxicologist responsible for their product safety programs.

Lucille received her undergraduate degree from Hood College, Frederick, Maryland and an MS in

Green Procurement

Nassau County Legislator Judi Bosworth was a guest speaker at the Board of Trustees June meeting to talk about her 'Green Procurement' bill.

"I'm proud to be a sponsor of the legislation establishing a Green Procurement Policy for Nassau County", said Legislator Judy Bosworth. "I truly believe that the local government has a responsibility to do all it can to protect and preserve our environment. I hope that in implementing a green procurement policy Nassau County

Plandome Heights Preserve

We are very pleased to report that VPH water-front park property at the convergence of Bayview Circle, Shore Road and Bay Driveway has been recently cleared of unwanted vegetation and is now accessible to residents. Through the initiative of Don Parker, resident and Technology Committee Chair, professionals were competitively contracted to thoughtfully clear a series of paths leading to a single point of access to Manhasset Bay. After phase one in

Pharmacology/Toxicology from the School of Pharmacy, St. John's University, New York.

Lucille has been a Manhasset resident for 31 years, 11 years in VPH, and was appointed to the Zoning and Appeals Board in 2008. Both her children attended / attend Manhasset public schools. Johanna graduated from MHS in 1987 and George Washington University and now lives with her husband (who also grew up in Manhasset) and their 2 children in West Hempstead. Her younger daughter, Julie, is currently a junior in MHS Class of 2009. □

can set an example for other municipalities and our residents by showing them ways in which we all can replace our current supplies with environmentally friendly materials."

VPH will be studying ways in which we can adapt this policy in our own Village. Volunteers interested in working on this project should email mayor@plandomeheights-ny.gov.

*(Complete text of the legislation is available at:
www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/documents/2008_LL03.pdf.)* □

the Spring, and at no charge to the Village, they left piles of wood chips that volunteers have been spreading along these paths to retard the re-growth of vegetation that would otherwise make the paths unusable.

Though still a "work in progress", Village residents should visit and take pride in their own "Plandome Heights Preserve ". Volunteers meet weekly on Saturday mornings from about 9am to 11am. □

**SAVE THE
DATE:**

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

**VPH 80TH
ANNIVERSARY
GALA**

**DINNER &
DANCING**

**PORT
WASHINGTON
YACHT CLUB**

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

Talking Trash, Safely

It is so important to prepare trash properly to ensure everyone's safety. DeJana does a good job and has a lot to cover to meet scheduling demands. As a result, their men work quickly, often without concern for themselves. They have the right to assume that they will not be

harmed. For example, broken glass and medicinal hypodermic needles must be properly packaged and clearly marked "CAUTION".

Please be mindful and take care, so that others won't be hurt. □

Open Meetings Law Training

Your Boards will undergo training in the Open Meetings Law during the upcoming months. The training will be given under the auspices of VPH Counsel, Ackerman Levine LLP, and is strongly recommended by the New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials (NYCOM). The Board of Trustees will itself be the first to undergo the training. It will take place during the first hour of the upcoming August Board of Trustees meeting. Regular monthly Board business will

commence immediately thereafter. This is not a closed session; all are welcome.

Holding public office is a sacred trust and one that VPH takes seriously. We already espouse a Code of Ethics and are studying possible improvements in policies and procedures.

More to come in future newsletter editions. □

Summer's Here: Ticks, Mosquitoes, Hurricanes

Ticks: Due to the recent increase in the rabbit population, the possibility of Lyme disease has risen drastically. There has been one confirmed case of Lyme disease confirmed in the Village. All residents are advised to apply tick repellents on their pets and keep an eye on any bites on their children or family members that resemble a "bull's-eye" target. If this mark is found, consult your doctor or pediatrician immediately.

Mosquitoes: Nassau County Dept of Public Works treated Plandome Pond Park's pond, sump and neighboring storm drains with Vectobac®, an effective biological pesticide that combats eruptions of West Nile Virus. These locations

showed considerable mosquito activity caused by recent weather conditions of heavy rains and temperatures in excess of 90 degrees.

Hurricanes: Within this mailing is the annual letter from VPH Emergency Management Coordinator, Dave Paterson. Dave reminds us that when there is an emergency, it's too late to plan – so please take a moment to get organized now.

VPH thanks State Farm Insurance for the enclosed brochure on hurricane / emergency-preparedness. It is filled with helpful hints. □

News & Updates

Office Move: The new owner of 37-39 Orchard Street has nearly completed the renovations of the 'VPH side" of the building. Both parties expect the three-year lease to be signed as this newsletter goes to press. Our landlord, Lois Silva of Silva Real Estate, will be relocating us from our current temporary location at no additional charge to the Village. The VPH is grateful for this consideration, and is also thankful to the 'real estate consortia' of residents who helped with the lease negotiations.

Our Clerk / Treasurer, Valerie Onorato, and Deputy Clerk, Ann Demeri, have done a great job keeping the wheels turning during these months, under difficult physical conditions. We thank them even as we appreciate your patience and cooperation during this period.

The move back to 37 Orchard will occur mid August, and will probably entail one day "emergency only" VPH business, without electricity, just as when we moved into temporary space.

Internship: St. John's University has awarded VPH another intern who started with us July 21st. Dana Davila is a Criminal Justice major at SJU and accepted an internship working with newly appointed Court Clerk, Ann Demeri. The SJU internship is uncompensated and merits 3 course credits upon successful completion.

Verizon/FiOS Agreement: VPH has a franchise agreement with Verizon. Residents may now subscribe to Verizon/FiOS service. For more information about FiOS TV, visit the website at www.verizon.com/fiostv. For tech support, billing or order inquiries, you may call 888-553-1555.

Right of Way Cleaned Up : The Right of Way on The Beachway has been cleaned up after the emergence of significant overgrowth.

Huge tree stumps remain so be careful if you use it, be mindful of the tide -- and please be courteous and respectful of the surrounding neighbors. A Village sign will soon be posted. □

UPCOMING NEWSLETTER FEATURES

- "Board Ed" 101: focus on one VPH Board per newsletter
- "... As Lovely As A Tree ...": all about the VPH tree program
- Meeting Location Changes – Office Move Progress
- What's New with Plandome Pond Park?
- Taking Trash

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

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