

### Message from the Mayor

**Kenneth C. Riscica**  
 Mayor

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**Silva Ferman**  
**Gus Panopoulos**  
**Alvin Solomon**  
**Norman Taylor**  
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 Deputy Clerk, Building

**Maura McMullan**  
 Court Clerk

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 Emergency Mgmt.  
 Coordinator

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 Board, Chair

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

**James Madison**  
 Planning Board, Chair

**Trey Harragan**  
 Technology Advisory  
 Board, Chair

I am pleased to share with you news of events, activities, progress and plans in our Village.

Over these past months we: (a) serviced the Village through a harsh winter and clean-up (b) had an election and annual meeting, (c) adopted a Budget that permits you to participate in the “Tax Freeze” program, (d) advanced our capital plans including The Waterway/Neck, (e) worked on continuous improvement of trees, roads and signs and (f) extended our Village Hall lease.

In addition, this was a particularly robust period of engagement with residents on your concerns. Residents in the Bournedales have concerns over Building, Zoning and compliance with the new “Sky Exposure” law; residents on Beachway and Shore are concerned about unfinished building projects; residents on Summit/Grandview (and elsewhere) had concerns about hazardous trees; residents on Plandome Court have concerns about a blighted home; and two Village families

experienced the hardship of fire or flood. In each instance, we brought Village resources or action to bear on the issue. On building, we had 2 Public Hearings to air concerns & take action.

Village government exists to be “closest to the people” and in these engagements residents were provided with help, closure or progress.

The following pages present details of these items and other news in the Village. The Village is in great shape and moving in the right direction as capital needs ahead come into view.

It is a privilege to serve as your Mayor. If the Village can help you, please contact me at [Mayor@PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov](mailto:Mayor@PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov)

*Kenneth C. Riscica*

Mayor



### Residents Enjoy Property Tax Freeze Under our 2015-16 Budget

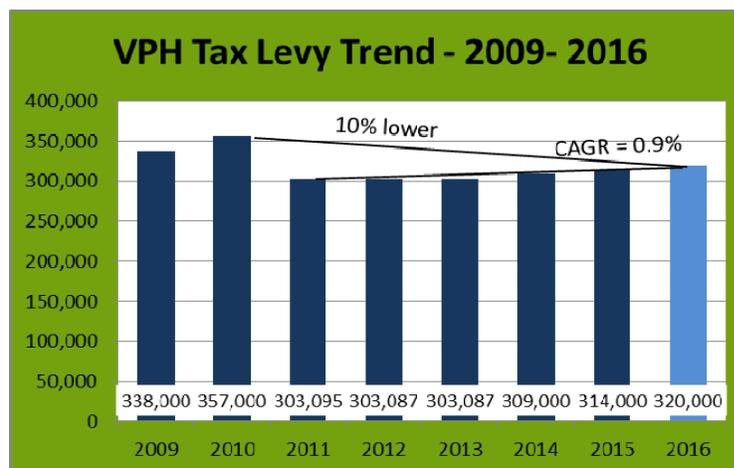
The Budget we adopted on April 6, 2015 will permit qualifying residents to participate in the NY State *Property Tax Freeze* program. Because we comply with the Tax Cap, the increase in our tax in 2015 -16 *will be refunded to qualifying residents* by NY State. That’s right, our total tax increase over five years is only 5.5% and NYS will rebate 1.9% of that back to you! The *Property Tax Freeze* is explained further on our home page at

[www.PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov](http://www.PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov).

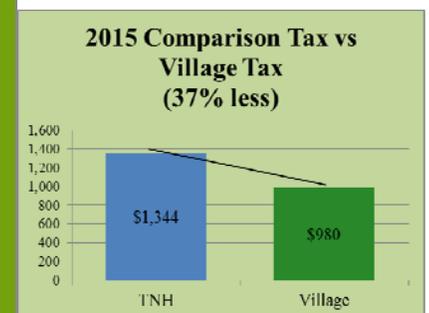
Our property taxes are:

- 10% lower than 6 years ago (below)
- 37% lower than tax outside the Village
- Only 0.9% CAGR\* (0.6% after rebate)

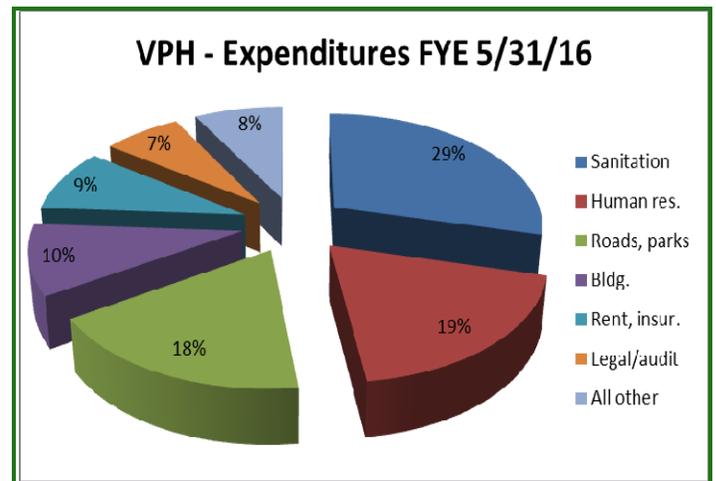
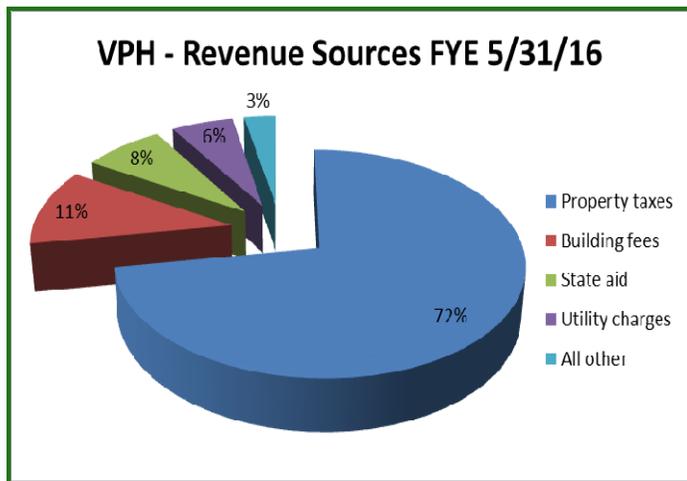
The details of our 2015–16 Budget are contained on our website at [www.PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov/Finance](http://www.PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov/Finance).



\* “CAGR” = Compound Annual Growth Rate (before tax rebate)



Our Budget reflects expenditures of \$442,525, an increase of 1.5%, and our tax levy is \$320,000, an increase of 1.9%. Our tax levy has been below our allowable tax cap each year of the cap. As a result, we have accumulated an unused Tax Cap that is available to us for unforeseen circumstances. The 2015 – 16 Budget is summarized below:



The table at right compares our budgeted expenses for 2015–16 vs. five years ago (2010–11). As you can see, our sanitation costs have gone up by about 12% over 5 years. They escalate by: (a) contract (fuel, salaries) and (b) disposal fees paid to the Town (which increase 2 – 4%/year). But *spending discipline* and *sensible changes in operations* have kept all other cost increases way down.

	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>5 Year Change</u>	<u>%</u>
Sanitation	128,000	114,835	13,165	11.5%
All other costs	292,800	292,472	328	0.1%
Budgeted costs	420,800	407,307	13,493	3.3%

The fact is we cut both taxes and spending in 2011 and then made changes to calibrate spending since then on many items.

We have a complete and transparent presentation of: (a) the Budget, (b) our Tax Cap and (c) how our tax levy compares to taxes you would pay outside the Village on our website at [www.PlاندomeHeights-NY.Gov/Finances](http://www.PlاندomeHeights-NY.Gov/Finances).

### Comings and Goings



**Thank you** Trustee Lawrence Bourguet      **Welcome** Trustee Gus Panopoulos

**Lawrence J. Bourguet** – Lawrence grew up in Manhasset and moved to Plاندome Heights in 1990. With his background in business and engineering, Lawrence Bourguet was appointed a Trustee of the Village in 2008 to replace a retiring Trustee. He has since been elected three times and served as Trustee for a

total of seven years. During his tenure, Trustee Bourguet has taken leadership over engineering and road projects (large and small), storm drains and has supported the development of our road survey, capital plan and financial and budget controls. His experience and service has benefited the Village greatly and his work on the capital plan and financial controls lives on. He is valued by all who work with him.

**Gus Panopoulos** is an attorney by background with an impressive resume in law. Now however Gus works as an entrepreneur, building restaurant businesses including the successful and historic, “Frankie and Johnnies Steakhouse” in NY and Westchester. Gus has a young family with children in Shelter Rock and therefore also represents an important demographic. Gus has attended Trustee meetings in 2015 and participated with the Trustees in the 2015 – 16 Budget.

### The Waterway/Neck - Road Grant Moving Forward....Albeit Slowly

We continue to coordinate with State Senator Jack Martins’ office and the various NY State Agencies involved in completing the approval process for \$50,000 in state funding that he has secured for this project. The project is, unfortunately, moving “*at the speed of government*.” The “good news” is that we are ready to go to bid and contract

once the grant is approved. Our project engineers have completed the design engineering and “bid package” and the Trustees have made the authorizations necessary to fund the project and to put it out to bid. We hope to do this project in 2015, but if we move without the grant, we lose it....so we wait.

## Continuous Improvement Program and a Focus on Our Trees

Our “continuous improvement” program has focused on three things: (1) clean up and repairs after our harsh winter, (2) “hardening” our decorative street name signs against vandalism and (3) our trees.

**Clean up and repair** – After the harsh winter, we focused on sweeping our streets of sand and salt, cleaning out our catch basins of leaves and debris to protect the bay, repairing dangerous potholes quickly and then repairing other potholes and cracks and broken storm drains over time.

**Decorative street name signs** – We have beautiful decorative street name signs but they have been vandalized often. Over two years we have developed a “hardened” design to resist vandalism. Now, all the signs on Plandome Road are hardened. This year we will move the project into the neighborhoods in a systematic fashion to install new reflective signs. The Town of N. Hempstead is our vendor for this.

**Our Trees** – This Fall we took a “Board level, fresh look” at our tree policies. Many of our neighboring villages have done so since Sandy. Trustee Taylor, a certified arborist by training, provides thought leadership to the Board on trees. In addition to Trustee Taylor’s insight, we examined tree policies of other villages on the Peninsula and we asked 5 arborists and

tree service firms for their recommendations and proposals. After discussion and deliberation, we made three decisions.

**First**, we concluded to relax the requirement for a full village tree survey each year so that this can be done on a multi-year schedule as recommended to us by the experts.

**Second**, we concluded to redeploy the savings from the tree survey to increase our tree maintenance activities and to “partner” with residents to address their responsibilities for trees on the right-of-way. In the process, we reaffirmed our relationship with the Village Arborist and established new relationships with two tree services, Harder and Santelli.

**Thirdly**, we clarified fines for unauthorized removal of a Village tree. Such fines had been rendered ineffective by inadvertent error. The correct fine is \$2,500.

As a result of these new policies, we:

- Trimmed and “lifted” our trees at Summit Drive
- Trimmed and “lifted” our trees at Shore Road
- Removed 6 Village trees deemed “hazardous” including partnering with residents for 3 of those trees.

As such, our budget for trees is being deployed in evaluating, maintaining and improving our trees.

## Springtime Shorts.....

### **New Light on the Flag Pole on Plandome**

**Road** – The flag pole on Plandome Road was dedicated on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Village in June 1969. But it was not lit until much later, people believe in the 1990’s. Until it was lit, it was raised and lowered daily. The 30+ year old light on the flag has worn out. In April 2015, we ran a power line to the pole and put a new energy saving, high intensity LED spotlight at base of the flag pole. Long may she wave.....



**164 Plandome Court** – This blighted property has finally completed a multi-year bankruptcy process. The property was sold to a North Shore developer in March 2015 and they are moving quickly for permits to demolish the building and move ahead with construction of a 5,000 square foot “conforming” home. It has been a long period of inconvenience for the residents of Plandome Court and that inconvenience will continue with construction disruptions. However, the end is in sight and a beautiful new residence will replace this eyesore and new neighbors will join our community. It’s about time!

**Holiday Decorations** – We are indebted to our Women’s Club for the beautiful decorations of our street name signs during the holidays. This is appreciated by all who pass by, thank you!



**Plandome Pond Park** – The Town has a \$300,000 project to address the stagnant water and build-up of algae and sediment at Plandome Pond Park. Councilwoman Dina DeGiorgio advises that the “sediment sampling” program was completed in the Fall of 2014 and advises the next steps include design documents and review by the DEC. The project is scheduled for completion in approximately November 2015 after approvals are received, contracts awarded and the work performed. We will continue to report progress.

**Shore Road** – Our Village Planning Board has “concurrent jurisdiction” over the subdivision of a 5+ acre, waterfront property in Plandome to build four single family homes. The project has been moving through the approval process in Plandome since January 2013; affected residents have had several opportunities to comment at Public Hearings and our Village Engineer was actively involved in reviewing the project. Since the project has received approval from Plandome Village as a “conforming” project with no variances requested, our Planning Board approved the plan on October 8, 2015. Demolition /site work has commenced.

**Summit Drive and Grandview Circle** – MLWD has a planned capital project to replace the 2” water mains on Summit Drive and Grandview Circle with 4” water mains. We are told that the project, originally included in their 2014 Capital Projects Plan, has been deferred to 2015 and *possibly 2016* depending on the progress on the Munsey Park tower.

**Contracts extended** – In March 2015, our Trustees approved the permitted three year extension of our lease on Village Hall through July 2018. In September 2014, the Trustees approved the permitted two year extension of our sanitation contract with DeJana until May 2017. Extension pricing is consistent with our tax cap planning. Long-term contracts support our “planning beyond one year” program to avoid surprises.

**Snow Removal** - Residents can report snow removal issues in

real time to the Village at [Info@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov](mailto:Info@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov). We communicate regularly with Cow Bay (who uses GPS guided service) before, during & after a storm. So we will investigate and respond to service issues promptly. See however, below.

Each year a few residents raise concerns about plow residue in their driveway. This is natural and cannot be avoided. Cow Bay works for the safety of all residents and they will not, therefore, respond to such individual resident concerns.

## **Focus on the Future – Capital Needs Coming into View**

The Village Engineer did a road survey in 2011 to give us insight into the need for repair and replacement. From that, we fashioned a ten year capital plan, in 5 year increments, estimated to total over \$1 million of work. The first five years of the Plan call for approximately \$350,000 including \$100,000 for the pending Waterway/Neck project.

The second 5 years of the plan, now only 2 years away, call for an estimated \$650,000 of work. Our “planning beyond one year” initiative has us plotting the resources we will need to do that work as it comes into view. While Village administrations exist for only two years at a time, as stewards of the public, we need to plan for the long term future, and we are.

## **Clerk’s Corner**

We remind residents that overnight parking on Village streets is prohibited. Contact us if you need to park overnight.

Village code restricts contractor work to 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. No work is permitted on Sundays or Federal holidays.

The Clerk maintains a “non-solicitation” list for residents who don’t wish to be bothered by lawful soliciting in the Village.

Is your emergency contact information up to date? Log on to [www.NorthShoreAlert.org](http://www.NorthShoreAlert.org) to update your contact information and personal preferences.

Spring is a good time to evaluate the need to trim the trees on your property including Village (“tagged”) trees. “Thinning” and “lifting” the trees improves health and growth and promotes safety. Village contractors may be willing to give you a free consultation – please call Village Hall to find out.

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**Incorporated Village of Plandome Heights**  
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**Manhasset, NY 11030**  
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[www.plandomeheights-ny.gov](http://www.plandomeheights-ny.gov)

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## **NEWSLETTER –SPRING 2015**

### **Village Contacts**

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<b>Clerk-Treasurer</b> , Arlene Drucker	<a href="mailto:Clerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov">Clerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov</a>
<b>Deputy Clerk, Building</b> , Elizabeth Vera	<a href="mailto:DeputyClerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov">DeputyClerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov</a>
<b>Court Clerk</b> , Maura McMullan	<a href="mailto:CourtClerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov">CourtClerk@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov</a>
<b>Building Inspector</b> , Edward Butt, AIA	<a href="mailto:BuildingInspector@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov">BuildingInspector@PlandomeHeights-ny.gov</a>

Sign up for **Village Emergency Notifications** at [www.northshorealert.org](http://www.northshorealert.org)