



Message from the Mayor

Kenneth C. Riscica
Mayor

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September 1 - It is my pleasure to report news of events, activities, progress and plans in our Village.

We are on the move.

In June, I got news of more delays in our pending NY State road grant. Rather than delay

our project further, I have recommended that we **move ahead**, in stages, with nearly \$300,000 of capital projects over the next six-to-twelve months. My recommendation reflects: (1) the competitive climate that is much better this year as asphalt prices are down and contractors are more available, (2) our capital reserves are ahead of schedule due to our operating surplus' and (3) our expectation of further delay to the pending grant into early 2017.

If you recall, in 2015 we went to bid on road work but did not accept any bids due to "competitive conditions." Our August 2016 bids are much more competitive with seven bidders (compared to three last year) and pricing that is \$35,000 (20%) lower than 2015. So we plan to invest that \$35,000 savings into additional work in the Village. To facilitate that, our bid has an "accordion" feature that permits us to expand the work without the cost of additional bidding. Our plans include: (1) repaving Waterway/Neck and replacing broken sections of swales, (2) repaving

Cove Drive, (3) various concrete repairs on Summit, Grandview, Plandome Court and Beachway and (4) other needs including potentially paving Willow Court (see inside).

In other good news, we bid our snow removal contract in August, expanding the service period to 10 years to give us (and the bidder) desirable certainty. Cow Bay's bid is to hold last year's pricing for five more years before modest increases thereafter. This is a great outcome.

Success on the MLWD project over the summer included maximizing road restoration by encouraging MLWD to dig in areas where the road was already broken. Then we added nearly \$40,000 to the project for "Village sponsored" road repairs to needed areas. In total, \$125,000 was invested in improvement to those roads.

In finance, another strong fiscal year ended in surplus on May 31 and we filed our financial reports with NY State in July. The substantial surplus results from four factors: (1) building activity that is 100+% above the trend-line average, (2) savings from the mild winter, (3) settlement of a dispute and (4) unexpected FEMA payments from 2012. This is now seven years of surplus. The surplus is reserved to fund our ten-year Capital Plan. The following pages present details of these and other items.

It is a privilege to serve as your Mayor. You can reach me at Mayor@PlandomeHeights-NY.Gov

Kenneth C. Riscica, Mayor

Success on MLWD Summit/Grandview Water Main



Left: Mayor Kenneth C. Riscica with MLWD Superintendent Paul Schrader and the Water Main Project Team walking the jobsite on Summit Drive in April 2016.



Middle: Excavation on Summit Drive in May. **Right:** Road restoration on Grandview Circle in August



On the Move – Putting Our Capital Plan into Action

Near-Term Spend Up To \$300,000, Out of Our \$1.1 Million Plan, In Stages Over 6 – 12 Months

Overview - The near-term part of our 10-year, \$1.1 million Capital Plan includes work on Waterway, Neck and Cove.



Thanks to NY State Senator Jack Martins (see left), we have state grants *in hand* for Waterway/Neck for \$50,000 and *pending* for Cove (and other roads) for \$100,000. We have been holding off work for two reasons: (a) waiting for the Cove grant to finalize in 2016 and (b) “competitive conditions.”

Three things have changed in 2016: (a) competitive conditions have improved, (b) our capital reserves are now ahead of schedule due to operating surplus’ and (c) in

late June 2016, we learned that the Cove grant isn’t likely to receive approval until early 2017. So we decided to obtain competitive bids in August 2016 in order to take advantage of competitive conditions and move forward, albeit in stages.

Competitive conditions - To give you a sense of the changed “competitive conditions,” in July 2015 we received only three bids for our roadwork needs. In August 2016 we received seven bids. With asphalt prices down with the price of oil, our August 2016 bid is nearly 20% (\$35,000) less than the 2015 bid. Further, we did the bid with an “accordion” feature that lets us expand the work without a new bid. So we plan to spend that \$35,000 savings by doing additional work.

Scope of work – To give you a sense of the scope of work planned, it will consist of: (a) the repaving of Waterway and Neck as well as replacing approximately 1,100 feet (30 - 40%) of the broken swales on those roads and (b) the repaving of Cove. The expanded work includes replacement of broken curbs and flat concrete in sections of Summit, Grandview and Plandome Court and replacement of broken swales on Beachway. We are also looking into work on

Success on MLWD Summit/Grandview Water Main

Work began in May 2016 to replace the out-of-date 4” water mains on Summit Drive and Grandview Circle with new 6” & 8” water mains. The project involved digging under sidewalks, lawns and roads to lay the new pipes in a project that totaled approximately \$650,000 of investment by the MLWD. To engage residents, the process began with a meeting for affected residents with MLWD in February (right) so that the project could be vetted and concerns addressed. While residents were inconvenienced for about three months, many residents complemented the effort and some complaints were received, many of which were addressed.

The Village involved itself in the project by working with the MLWD on the jobsite helping to direct MLWD to break our

Willow Court. The scope, staging of work and the contract award is expected to be decided at our September 12 Village meeting.

Capital resources and plan – To give you a sense of our capital resources, the chart at right shows that in 2016 we have \$261,000 “to go” to fulfill our ten-year, \$1.1 million capital plan. After the \$100,000 pending grant, as well as other resources expected, in 2017 we should have only \$121,000 “to go.” So if all continues to go well, we should fully fund our 10-year capital plan in 2017/18, three-to-four years early.



So we can summarize our \$1.1 million capital plan as follows:

- Work completed/spent (Bay, Bayview) \$ 265,000
- Scope of work to be done now (above) 300,000
- Assigned for future work 535,000¹
 - o Total capital plan \$ 1,100,000

¹ Includes \$261,000 of work not yet funded in 2016 as discussed above.

Conclusion - This is a lot of information; perhaps more than you need or want. But this is a major undertaking and we do this with full transparency so you can understand the effort.

concrete roads in areas that needed repair or replacement anyway. Then the Village added \$40,000 of its own capital funds for additional “Village sponsored” road repairs. In total, \$125,000 was spent on road repairs. We appreciate the cooperation from MLWD Superintendent Paul Schrader and the MLWD Commissioners including Plandome Heights native



Donald O’Brien, Mark Sauvigne and Brian Morris, and project engineer Bob Lucas (pictured with Mayor Riscica).

Fiscal Year Ends Strong; Best Practices Yield Best Results

In finance, we have adopted “Best Practices” for municipal governments including our budgeting, financial controls, ‘performance vs. budget,’ multi-year planning and ten-year Capital Plan. Results include: (1) the highest rating from NY State in their municipal “stress tests” for the latest year (2) systematically building our capital reserves to support our 10-year Capital Plan (3) seven years of operating surplus’ and (4) moderate, stable taxes that are lower than outside the Village.

On July 28, 2016 we reported our audited May 31, 2016 fiscal year-end financial statements to NY State. We reported a *surplus*, with our revenues nearly 16% higher than budget (due primarily to *non-recurring items*) and our costs 7% lower than budget (due primarily to *lower snow removal and road repair costs from a mild winter*).

More specifically, four factors drove the substantial surplus this year. For one, our *building fees* were 100+% over our trend-line average of about \$35 – 50,000 per year. But our building activity ‘crested the wave’ in 2015, came down 20% in 2016 and is expected to continue to come down. Second, the *mild winter* resulted in \$21,000 *lower snow removal and road repair* costs than budget. Thirdly, we settled a dispute matter that resulted in certain revenues to the Village and the reversal of certain costs. Lastly, we received nearly \$4,000 of *unexpected FEMA* cost recovery from 2012 Superstorm Sandy and nearly \$2,000 from NY State to help with the 2014 harsh winter. With these positive items in view, we took the opportunity to spend approximately \$5,000 on the completion of the Street Name Sign project and approximately \$4,000 to replace our five-year-old Village computers and to upgrade our ten-year-old Village phone system.

These factors, and others, result in an operating surplus of approximately \$99,000 for 2016. The surplus was set aside for our ten-year Capital Plan (see previous).

With such a large surplus in 2016, it is appropriate to ask about our operating plan and budgeting. When you take out (a) the “non-normal” building department activity, (b) the one-time

items and (c) the mild winter, you get to a “Core Budget” that is *sound and structurally balanced* for our normal activity.

<u>Year ended May 31, 2016:</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Better</u>	
<u>Income:</u>				
Real Property Taxes	320,000	320,000	-	
Building related fees	50,000	108,000	58,000	a
Other earnings	40,000	49,000	9,000	b
Grants and aid	34,000	36,000	2,000	c
Total Revenue	444,000	513,000	69,000	
<u>Expense:</u>				
General Gov. Support	191,000	168,000	23,000	b,d
Public Safety	40,000	48,000	(8,000)	a
Transportation	54,000	41,000	13,000	e
Parks	15,000	12,000	3,000	
Community Service	144,000	145,000	(1,000)	
Total Expense	444,000	414,000	30,000	
Surplus(Deficit)	-	99,000	99,000	
<u>Notes:</u>				
a. Related to building activity.				
b. Related to settlement of dispute.				
c. Includes unexpected FEMA & other grants.				
d. Various savings/efficiencies including unused contingency.				
e. Related to lower snow removal & road repair/mild winter				

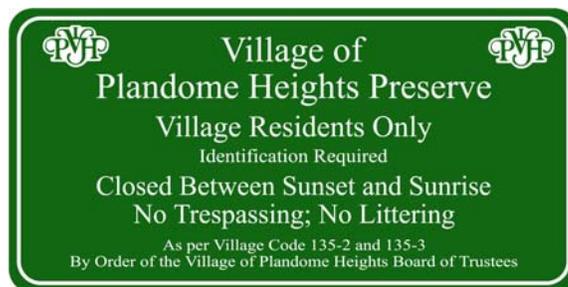
To summarize our finances:

- Our taxes are 9% lower than 2010,
- Our taxes are 36% lower than outside the Village,
- Our *surplus’ build our reserve funds* to support our ten-year Capital Plan,
- We comply with the NY Tax Freeze again in 2016 so you are “rebate eligible”

Over 30 people volunteer to serve our Village, and this, as well as other efforts and factors, helps generate these results. A complete and transparent presentation of our financial results and our Budget is on our “Finance” page at www.plandomeheights-ny.gov/finance with 15 pages of detail.

New Village Law Reserves Village Preserve for Village Residents

Residents near the Village Preserve at Bayview Circle have pointed out that people from outside the Village are regularly visiting the Preserve including late in the evening. Some are teens, some are fisherman following tides and fish. All of it creates a security concern for residents. So working with our NCPD POP team, we passed a new law to restrict use of our Village Preserve to “Village residents and their accompanying guests” and to restrict usage “after sunset and before sunrise.” The sign at right was installed at the Preserve in August 2016.



Snow, Sanitation and Lease Relationships Under Review; Over 40% of Spending

As mentioned in the April 2016 “State of the Village” message, contracted services represent approximately \$180,000 or about 43% of our expenditures and about 55% of our tax levy. This includes our contracts for (a) sanitation, (b) snow removal and (c) our Village Hall lease. During and after the recession of 2008, we secured each of these contractual

relationships with long-term contracts (5 – 7 years). Now, each is coming up for review in coming months.

In August, we went to competitive bid for snow removal. We decided to seek certainty and ask for a bid for a 10-year period. The winning bid will freeze our normal snow removal costs at 2015-16 levels for the next five years and then include

modest increases every two years for the remaining five years. This is an outstanding outcome from our provider, Cow Bay.

In the Fall we plan to bid the *sanitation* contract and then, by the Spring we need to address the *Village Hall lease*. One

issue we have in Village Hall is space; the expanded activity of the past three years, particularly in building, is straining our existing storage and facilities.

We will report more as news develops.

Fall Shorts

“Galleries de Plandome Heights” –

Our “Galleries” are open with a few street name signs available for garage or dormitory “art” including Beachway, Chester, Bournedale South, Shore, Tideway, Willow and Winthrope.

Please call Clerk Arlene Drucker.

Right: “Art” from “Galleries de VPH”



phone, cell phone, work phone, email and/or text. And you can add family members to the system.

Fall Leaves – We do NOT offer curbside pickup of leaves so please do not rake leaves to the curb. If you need disposal of leaves, you must bag them for Dejana.

Please Curb Your Dog – We are receiving complaints about the failure of pet owners to pick up their dog waste. Please follow the law and pick up and dispose of your dog waste.

\$250 Tag Sale Signs Available – When residents tape “tag sale” signs to our white decorative street name signs, the glue from the tape leaves a residue that becomes an unsightly black streak. The fine is \$250 fine per offense. Please, don’t do this.

Sign up for North Shore Alerts – Our emergency notification system is www.NorthShoreAlert.org. We use it for emergency notifications such as power outage status and street closings (see Capital Plan above). The system is “user driven” so you decide if you want notification on your home

Clerk’s Corner

As a reminder, we pay for side yard pick-up so it is not necessary to put your trash at the curb.

This is a good time of year to “lift” your tree limbs by trimming them away from signs and sidewalks.

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.

Please curb and clean up after your dog.

Trustee Solomon reminds you to sign up for Village notifications at www.NorthShoreAlert.org.



**Incorporated Village of
PLANDOME HEIGHTS**

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www.plandomeheights-ny.gov

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NEWSLETTER – FALL 2016

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Sign up for **Village Emergency Notifications** at www.northshorealert.org