

The State of the Village

From Mayor
Marshall Katz
and the Village
Board



The Village Board has been hard at work on behalf of our residents this past year. This newsletter focuses on our accomplishments in 2017 and our plans for 2018.

Fiscal Responsibility:

The Village Board works hard to keep costs down and to fund the operations of the Village as much as possible from sources that do not add to the property tax burden of our residents.

- With the help of Rockland County, the Village was able to get the Town of Ramapo to share income from the cell tower on the Mitch Miller property (on Lime Kiln Road).
- Orange and Rockland has been a good partner to the Village. They paid for conversion of all internal lighting in Village Hall to

energy saving LEDs and heavily subsidized the conversion of our Village Hall parking lot lights to LEDs. In addition, the process of converting around 2/3 of our street lights inventory to LEDs has begun at no cost to the Village. All these conversions will save the Village money on electricity going forward. For 2018 and on the Village will continue to work on converting the balance of our street lights.

- The Mayor took part in Rockland County's Shared Services Committee which is looking at ways to reduce costs through sharing

services among municipalities. The Committee expects to implement a plan in 2018.

- The Village passed a budget that did not exceed the State's tax cap and expects to do so again in 2018.
- We secured new snow plowing and landscaping contracts for the Village Hall property at a lower price than our previous contracts.
- The Village funded its 25% share of the East Willow Tree sidewalk project entirely from the Village's General Fund

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with no impact on resident taxes. The other 75% of the cost was funded by a Federal grant. Through conservative budgeting over many years we have been able to build up a General Fund surplus that can handle projects like this, and we will maintain this conservative budgeting for 2018.

- For the convenience of our residents we recently added American Express as a new payment option to our credit card system.

Codes and Law:

With input from our residents the Village Board regularly discusses whether changes are needed to the Village codes.

- The Village Board considered a new garbage and trash law requiring residents to remove their trash and recycling containers from the curb within a specified amount of time after pickup. Many residents commented via email and in person, representing both sides of the issue. In the end, the Village board



decided not to implement the new law.

- The Village Board had concerns about the effects on our residents of several new zoning laws proposed in New Hempstead. We engaged our attorney and Planning Consultant to review these laws, and then attended a New Hempstead Village Board to speak on the issues we raised.
- We updated our overnight parking law to correct some ambiguity in its wording that was pointed out to us by a Ramapo Police Officer.
- We passed a new law regulating commercial filming within the Village.
- We passed an update to our Wireless Telecommunications Law to better regulate cell nodes installed within the Village's rights-of-way.
- There are no ongoing lawsuits against the Village for 2017, though we have been put on notice that we may be sued for an injury to a child who broke an ankle falling from the playground equipment at Greg Sikorsky Park. The Village's insurance carrier is handling this issue.

Infrastructure:

With nearly 25 miles of roads, a Village park, culverts and other infrastructure under our

control, the Village has to expend funds each year to maintain this infrastructure.

- The East Willow Tree Road sidewalk project was just completed. The Village learned a lot from managing this project, and hopes to apply that experi-



ence to doing an even better job on future major infrastructure projects. Several punch list items will be taken care of this Spring.

- Joy, Tranquility, Carefree, Roven and part of Baker were repaved in 2017. The Village will conduct our annual road survey in the Spring to determine which roads will be repaved in 2018.
- A culvert on Van Winkle Road was repaired using grant money.
- The Village failed to obtain a grant for Willow Tree Road sidewalks, but met with the State to understand how we can score

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better on future grant applications. We heard from residents who want and do not want the Village to add sidewalks to Willow Tree Road. In 2018 we plan to conduct a pedestrian/cyclist study of Willow Tree to give the Board additional information to decide on whether to apply for a future grant for this sidewalk.

- Around \$5,000 worth of repairs were made to Greg Sikorsky Park.
- "Welcome to Wesley Hills" signs were erected at all major entrances to the Village.

Traffic and Enforcement:

For the most part, our Village roads are fairly quiet, though people should drive slower in our neighborhoods, and come to a full stop on Lime Kiln Road at the intersection of Wilder. There are external issues which can affect traffic in the Village in the future that the Village is being proactive in addressing.

- The Mayor advocated for New York State to take action to reduce the number of accidents at the Lime Kiln/Spook Rock/202 intersection. It took more than a year, but the State added a no-left-turn from 202. Ramapo Police have been ticketing violators. The Village will review the

results after a year and make further requests of the State on the issue if the changes have not reduced the number of accidents.

- The Mayor attended a traffic meeting held by the Interim Town Supervisor. He also met with incoming Supervisor, Michael Specht to talk about how Town policies affect traffic within the Village, and advised him to take note of how proposed developments on Patrick Farm (on 306) and Minisceongo Golf Club (on Pomona Road) will affect traffic on roads within the Village. For now, the Patrick Farm development has been sent back to the drawing board thanks the efforts of ROSA (Rockland Organized for Sustainability and a Safe Aquifer) which filed a lawsuit that led to a court ruling Minisceongo will be subject to a temporary moratorium that the Town of Ramapo is planning to put in place.
- The Mayor met several times over the course of the year with Ramapo Police



Chief Weidel to discuss traffic and other enforcement issues in the Village.

Miscellaneous:

- The Village has begun a project to replace our current, difficult to manage website, with something more modern and useful for our residents. Look for it sometime this Spring.
- In 2018 the Village will be independently testing all the cell nodes that were installed this past year in the Village, and will make the results available to our residents.
- We bid farewell to our former Mayor, Bob Frankl who passed away in 2017, and dedicated Village Hall in his name.
- The Mayor met with Fred Brinn, the incoming Town Highway Superintendent, to make sure he was aware of the Village's needs concerning plowing and road maintenance.
- The Village is working with the Town Parks Department and the State DEC on issues concerning the overpopulation of Canadian Geese, a NYS protected species.
- We said goodbye to our Code Enforcement Officer who retired and are looking to hire a replacement in 2018.



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*Sign up for the
Village Email List*

*Send a request to
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WWW.WESLEYHILLS.ORG



- At Village Hall we plan to repair a catch basin and collapsed pipe in our parking lot, and renovate the staff bathroom.

Thank you:

It's always dangerous to put together a list thanking people because someone will be inadvertently left out, but here is my best shot:

Thank you to our Village Staff for the work they do on behalf of our residents.

Thank you to our attorneys, experts, and consultants for supporting the needs of the Village.

Thank you to the residents who give of their time to serve on our Planning Board and Zoning

Board of Appeals, both for their time at meetings, and for obtaining and maintaining their State required certifications.

And finally, thank you to all of our residents for all their suggestions and comments throughout the year, and for making Wesley Hills a great place to live. We are here for you, and some of our best ideas come from the people who live here.

Please continue to reach out to us with your suggestions and comments.

Marshall Katz, Mayor

Ed McPherson, Deputy Mayor

Howard Richman, Trustee

Marion Ben-Jacob, Trustee

Ruth Ivey, Trustee

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