**Annual Village Update Letter**

The Village Board provides this update letter to residents on the many ongoing projects as well some of the issues and challenges facing the Village. Much of the work we do goes unreported by our local press, so we employ our website, Facebook, Village Sign and this letter to keep residents informed.

If you have questions or concerns after reading the update, please feel free to reach out to us or attend a Village Board meeting on the second Monday of each month. Minutes for board meetings are also available on the village website: [www.villageof](http://www.villageof)coxsackie.com. Coxsackie is on the verge of completing some important projects and long sought after downtown re-development is beginning. This is an exciting time for our Village.

**Sewer Plant Upgrade** – We are about 50% complete on the $17 million dollar sewer plant and sewer system upgrade. The plant capacity will be increased by several hundred thousand gallons by the larger piping that was placed on South River and Reed Streets last summer and fall. A new headworks building and holding tanks are being constructed at the plant on South River Street. The plant should be operational by the end of 2020.

Why are we doing this? The original sewer plant was constructed in the 1960’s and had several upgrades over the decades, with the last one occurring in the 1980’s. This upgrade should suffice for the next 30-40 years and will accomplish two very important goals. **First,** we will get the moratorium lifted on new sewer hook-ups, removing an impediment for future growth. **Secondly,** all sewer overflow pipes will be removed, and we will no longer have any overflows of raw/untreated sewage into our Hudson River or creek. Few communities along the Hudson can make this claim.

It is important to note that we received a $2.5 million grant for the project and that the NYS Department of Corrections which uses about 60% of the sewer capacity will contribute a large amount to the debt incurred, reducing the cost to our users.

**Sewer Collection System** – In conjunction with the plant upgrade, a new pressure sewer line was placed along Mansion St. over the summer and the pump stations on Mansion St. (by Bethany Village) and Riverside Avenue are being renovated and updated.

**Water Tank** – One of our decade’s long weaknesses to our water system is the lack of storage capacity. We presently only can store about 450,000 gallons of water, which is very, very small for a water system of our size. When a water break occurs, it can deplete the present storage capacity very quickly threatening to run our water system dry and diminish our firefighting capability.

Last year we received a $3 million grant towards placing a 2-million-gallon water tank to give us enough storage capacity. This project is progressing, and we hope for construction to start this summer.

**Radio Read Water Meters**: We have installed 1,158 radio read meters and have only 109 more to go. Radio read meters allow for more accurate readings, eliminate the need for cards and have streamlined the billing and collecting of water/sewer charges.

**Flach / Downtown Revitalization Project** – Local developer Aaron Flach has purchased the old “Opera Building/Dolan Block”, old Patrick Henry’s Tavern and the old Wire and Foundry buildings. He has received $2 million in grants from the state to develop an event venue and a 40-room hotel initially. The remaining properties are to be developed later. Patrick Henry’s will return as a tavern and restaurant and the “Old Opera Building/Dolan Block” will have storefronts restored on the first floor and condos and apartments on the floors above.

We are fortunate to have Aaron take on these ambitious projects and improve a very dilapidated historic area of our waterfront. Aaron is a proven re-developer and it bodes well that he chooses to develop in the Village. We wish him the best.

**Sidewalks** – This summer the first sidewalk project will bridge the gap near the Sunoco station. Once done we will have sidewalks on both sides of Mansion Street. The next focus will be a section of sidewalk on Bailey Street from Peppertree Apartments to Mansion St., to assist the residents there and make it safer for the Little League Field as well. We will also be doing some spot replacements of some much-deteriorated sections throughout the Village.

**Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan Committee** – LWRP for short. Last year the Village received a $100,000 matching grant to go through this year long process of developing this plan. 9 people were appointed to a committee by the Village Board last fall and Elan Planning, a trusted and experienced municipal planning company from Saratoga was hired.

Why is this important and what will it do? Grant money is available for development of the waterfront and also the corridor (Mansion St.) from Rt. 9W through the Village. To qualify, you must develop a vision, ideas to help see that vision realized and plans for implementation, to name a few steps. Hence, the LWRP was formed in order finalize a plan and develop ideas to be able to apply for substantial grants for projects.

**New County Jail** –There have been many questions regarding construction of the new county jail on Rt. 9W. Yes, the Village is supplying water and sewer service to the new jail. No, the Village has not paid for the new water and sewer lines along Kings Rd. to serve it. That cost has been borne 100% by the county. The new jail will pay rates that state prisons do.

**McQuade Park Playground** – Last May we dedicated a new playground at McQuade Park, which has proven to be very popular. This playground, in total, cost $225,000, but was built all with budgeted funds and no tax impact. We retained many dedication features of the old playground that was built in 1998. Our plan is to continue to add features and structures and expand the playground in the future.

**New Firetruck** – Last summer we replaced the Village Firetruck at the DM Hamilton Firehouse ahead of schedule. The existing truck had become unreliable and we simply could not risk its continued use. The cost was $500,000 and will have a lifespan of 20 years or more.

**Financial** – The financial condition of the Village is very good. We have continued to receive a favorable review from the NYS Comptroller’s office. Our tax increases have remained under the 2% tax cap and several years have been well below 1%. We cannot predict the future cost of retirement, health insurance etc., but we will continue to keep costs under control and seek savings wherever we can.

**Solar Project** – Our Stacy Rd. solar project, after clearing many obstacles, is finally nearing completion. The Village is negotiating a final agreement with the developer to determine the yearly savings that the Village will receive. The land the project is on will remain in the ownership of the IDA and will pay taxes and the construction. The project cost to the Village: $0, just a lot of time and work.

**Riverside Park** – Many plans have been developed over the last several years for improvements to the park. The restoration of 14 South River St., a historic building originally built as the George H. Scott Firehouse, continues as we apply for grants and accumulate funds. Our plan will be to develop this as a welcome/historical center celebrating the history of the Village and downtown. The building will be available for meetings and events and an initial design plan includes bathrooms. Other ideas include a new picnic pavilion, new walkways and expansion of the docks. Our planning has put us at the forefront of substantial funding should it become available if the Environmental Bond Act passes this fall.

**Farmers’ Market** – In a few months the highly successful Farmers’ market will return for its 9th year. Each year the market has increased the number of vendors, added restaurants/food trucks providing food each week along with music and other entertainment. Each week is sponsored by a local business and has a theme and various groups and organizations represented. Eileen Goble is the new Market Manager. Volunteer help is needed this summer, please contact her through the Clerk at Village Hall if you are interested in being a vendor or volunteering to help. Look for information on our website and Facebook page.

**2020 Owls** – Forty-one hand decorated works of art by both local and distance artist will be on display throughout the Village from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Information is available at the Village Hall or visit "hootoftheowl.com." and mark your calendars for the 2020 Gala and auction, scheduled for Sat. Oct 3rd. Over $40k has been raised to support various local charities. Consider picking up a brochure and voting on your favorite; then bidding on an Owl or joining our Committee

**Mansion St. Cemetery** - Restoration work continues at the Village Cemetery on Mansion St. and we hope you have seen the improvements.  Markers are being cleaned and restored if needed, plotting of graves will provide location of graves, benches have been donated for the walkway, a new flagpole and historical markers have been placed.  The next major project involves restoration of the iron fence that fronts the cemetery.  This comes at a great expense so consider a donation or joining the Restoration Committee. Info is available at the Village Hall and you can check out several of our famous graves located in the heart of the Village.

Village of Coxsackie,

Mayor & Board of Trustees