



SALTAIRE NEWS

John A. Zaccaro Jr, Mayor

December, 2017

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

As the first snowfall has ushered in the start of winter, it is an appropriate time to update you on the status of our capital projects and the operation of the Village.

Building Renovations

As you know, FEMA has obligated \$2.6M to the Village for capital project improvements of our choosing. As background, these FEMA funds were originally obligated after Hurricane Irene for the restoration of Saltaire's oceanfront beaches. After the completion of the Army Corps beach project, FEMA allowed Saltaire and other coastal communities to reallocate those beach funds for other purposes. The Board last year targeted the funds to address older and deteriorating buildings, specifically 14 Bay Promenade and Village Hall. Over the last year and a half discussions have taken place regarding how best to optimize the programs currently housed in those two structures (the Village Offices, Village Court, Library, Post Office, a Meeting Space, Public Safety and Medical Offices). In addition, the Board has been wrestling with how to allocate and/or leverage the FEMA funds at those two locations to house all those programs, and/or to add a third location on the Market property to relieve some of the size and space pressure on those two existing locations.

It is apparent after many public meetings on the topic that there is no perfect solution, and that every option has its benefits and drawbacks. In order to obtain cost-certainty to make the most informed decision, at our November meeting the Board authorized Butler Engineering to commence the design process through to the development of construction documents sufficient for bidding purposes for the following buildings/locations with the following respective Scopes-of-Work:

103 Broadway Village Hall:	Renovation with Modified Alcove Expansion
14 Bay Promenade	New Building at approximately 1,500 Square Feet
Market Complex	New Library at approximately 1,400 Square Feet

We prioritized the bidding process for the Village Hall because its renovation is the most complicated and therefore has the widest range of cost projections. By bringing this project to bid first, and obtaining cost-certainty for that location, it will provide clarity regarding our options. The Board's preference is to house all the program requirements with the reconstruction of 14 Bay Promenade in conjunction with renovation of Village Hall; but if the actual costs come in higher than expected, we may be forced to reevaluate that approach. That would lead us to reduce the expansion of Village Hall, reduce the size of 14 Bay and add a new building to the Market complex. We will keep you apprised as we get closer to obtaining verified cost projections.

Lighthouse Promenade Reconstruction

With the completion of Bay Promenade this past summer, all of the walkways in the Village have been reconstructed since Sandy to the new flood-resistant elevated boardwalk design, except of course, Lighthouse Promenade. There are a number of logistical reasons why this main thoroughfare was chosen to be the last walk reconstructed, but we also wanted to take the time to have FEMA review our request to reconstruct Lighthouse Prom as a timber boardwalk like every other walkway in the Village. Although FEMA does not disagree that the pile-supported timber boardwalk is a better flood-mitigation design, they have not yet given a definitive answer as to whether it meets the complicated requirements for full funding above the cost to replace Lighthouse as a concrete walkway.

Therefore, pending that final decision, the Board has decided to bid the replacement of Lighthouse Prom as a concrete walkway in order to obtain the baseline cost that has been approved by FEMA for a replacement-in-kind walkway. We should have those costs via a bid process in the early months of 2018, by which time we should also have a definitive answer from FEMA whether they will fully fund a timber walkway. If they choose not to fully fund the timber walkway, then the Village has a choice to make. If a timber walkway proves to be more costly than a concrete walkway on Lighthouse, then the Village will have to pay the increased differential cost if we choose to go in that direction. If the cost differential for timber is less or the same, then the Board has already decided to proceed with timber. However, if the cost differential for timber is significant, then we will have to reengage the public to help us decide if the differential amount is an acceptable cost to bear to proceed with timber, or alternatively to proceed with the replacement of Lighthouse Promenade as a concrete walkway.

Either way, we plan to begin the reconstruction of Lighthouse Promenade in the autumn of 2018. This will be a logistically complicated project, and we will certainly keep you apprised how the work will impact the use of your home during the off-season. One aspect that will add to the logistical complexity is that the trunk-line water main that runs alongside the concrete walk will be replaced as part of this project. FEMA agrees that due to the proximity of the water main to the walkway that it will not survive the project, and they have agreed to add a new water main as a reimbursable component of the project.

Storm Protection

I think we can all agree that we are better protected on the oceanfront than we have been in years thanks to the Army Corps beach replenishment project of two off-seasons ago. Our diligence over the course of decades in maintaining and replenishing our beach enabled the Army Corps effort to get off the ground, and also provided the Alternate Project funding highlighted earlier. However, as we have seen in other areas of the country during this past hurricane season, we are always at the mercy of storms, and must remain diligent in staying engaged with the larger Fire Island to Montauk Point (FIMP) reformulation project so that maximum protection will be maintained into the future.

We must also remain very mindful of the Bayfront flooding problem that has become more prominent in recent years, and to that end we have submitted a project-request that is being considered under the FIMP plan to reconstruct the land formation spit (also known to older-Saltairians as Dogfish Island) on the northern end of Clam Pond Cove. We have submitted an engineering and environmental study which demonstrates that not only will this proposed project provide significant storm protection, but it will also provide measurable environmental benefits for habitat reformation for both fowl and fauna. Our application has gained support from important federal and local partners, but the review process for FIMP is complicated and lengthy, so we must remain persistent in making the point, and will likely ask your support at a strategic point in the process.

Water Infrastructure

As a Board, we must continually look ahead and plan for the future protection and viability of the Village. As you probably know, the Village owns and operates our own water system, and we are proud of the quality of water we provide. We consistently exceed all required federal and state water standards, and our staff are very responsive whenever there is a problem. However, we must face the fact that much of our water system infrastructure is aging, and we must pro-actively plan for its replacement in order to maintain the high quality of this vital resource. We began that process in the last year by replacing over 2,300 linear feet of new, larger water main along Bay Prom and Broadway. Also, as mentioned earlier, the Lighthouse Promenade project will include replacement of another 3,300 linear feet of water main. This upcoming off-season we will add vital back-up generation to our Well #2 water field so we can provide service in a blackout situation, all funded through a grant under the Fire Island Reconstruction Zone program. These improvements have gone a long way to upgrade our water infrastructure, but we are planning more improvements with applications from other funding sources. We will keep you apprised as these initiatives progress.

Fire Department Operations

The entire community owes a debt of gratitude to the members of the Saltaire Volunteer Fire Company (SVFC) for all of their work over the past year. Their countless hours of training and preparation (when they could be spending time with their families) demonstrates their dedication to the community and the service they provide. That training enabled them to respond effectively to the Labor Day fire, and to the dozens of rescues calls in our community. We can take advantage of all that Saltaire has to offer because of the service provided by the members of the SVFC.

In an effort to continue to provide the SVFC with the tools to perform their duties effectively and safely, the Village and the SVFC have funded the purchase of a new Pumper and a new Ambulance. The funding for these items was achieved through the combination of bonds, grants, and your generous contributions. The new Pumper was just put into service replacing a unit that was over thirty years old. The new Ambulance has been ordered and will replace a unit that is over twenty years old. The new ambulance will be in service before the start of next season.

Financial State of the Village

Over the last few years we have completed a considerable number of infrastructure improvements within Saltaire, with several more underway as highlighted in this Newsletter. Thanks to the Board of Trustees and our administrative staff, the financial health of the Village remains strong and improving since Sandy. The Village office staff has guided the reconstruction of Saltaire through the maze of federal regulations required to remain eligible for reimbursement of our capital costs. The Board has managed the Village's financial assets to fund those projects in the short-term while maintaining a healthy level of liquid reserves. An important component of that asset-management was the sale of a vacant parcel on Pacific Walk. That asset-reallocation significantly increased the Village's liquidity, and helped us manage the short-term funding requirements as we bridge the time-gap between capital outlay and reimbursement. With our fund balance and with our fiscal management practices we have achieved an AAA bond rating, one of the few Villages in the New York State to carry such a rating.

Over the next several meetings the Board will be finalizing a fund balance policy, which will guide us on how, and at what level, we maintain our reserve balance both in the short and long term.

Other Project and Quality of Life Initiatives

- This off-season our Maintenance staff has continued the restoration of Brodtkin Park. All benches have been replaced, a new gazebo roof installed, decking replaced, and new guard rails installed. This upcoming spring, we will replant the Park with trees and foliage with plantings identified by the Environmental Committee. These plantings are sustainable and consistent with the indigenous environment, as well as consistent with the history of the Park as envisioned by the Brodtkin family when they conveyed this most-valuable gift to the Village.
- We have added a new style wagon rack on the dock near the ferry landing. This new rack has a design that we hope will make that area look neater while providing more room to access the ferry and the dock. Its low profile should enhance the view and aesthetics, while making it easier to handle and secure wagons. Give the new rack a try as you head out in the spring, and let us know what you think.
- We have extended the bike rack near the West Dock, and are looking at other rack expansion areas near and around the Store and Bayfront which we hope will alleviate short-term and overnight parking shortages.
- The Board has been considering the following policies and programs that will hopefully improve the quality of life for many residents:
 - New Courtesy Cart Procedures to expand uses while mitigating abuses
 - Expansion of the Public Beach Chair program, which was almost universally considered a success after its trial last year. We will be looking at location, storage, quantity and quality of chairs for the continuation of the program next summer.
 - The institution of a requirement to put a mail-box type flag on your garbage enclosure so that during the shoulder and off-seasons, the Maintenance staff knows when private garbage is ready for pick-up.

Next Meeting Reminder

These and other topics will be discussed at upcoming Board meetings. The remote attendance options through the internet has removed a major obstacle for many to attend during the off-season. Our next Board meeting will be held on January 23rd, and the specific agenda items, the meeting's physical location, and the remote connection instructions can be found at the following link to the Village website - <http://www.saltaire.org/agenda.pdf>. As always please do not hesitate to express any questions, comments or concerns to any of your Board members.

I want to wish all of you a happy and healthy Holiday season and New Year. I thank you for the privilege to serve as your Mayor. I, along with my fellow Board members, strive to improve the quality of life for current and future residents of Saltaire. And I want to thank you for your participation in making our community one that holds such an important place in all of our lives.

[Mayor John A. Zaccaro Jr.](#)

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In Case of Emergency While in Saltaire, Call 911
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