



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – February 28, 2018



BEDFORD 2020 CLIMATE ACTION SUMMIT

On Saturday February 3, 2018 Bedford 2020 held its Climate summit. The Town of Bedford has partnered and supported Bedford 2020's initiatives from the start. The Climate Action Summit addressed the urgent need for immediate, local and regional action to create and implement solutions to Climate Change. Bedford continues to be an environmental leader in the County and the State. Bedford continues to save money and reduce our carbon footprint from Community Choice Aggregation (Westchester Power), Energize, Solarize and our Green building code. Also thanks to B2020, single stream recycling has substantially increased recycling rates in Bedford, community composting has been established at the Town's recycling center on Railroad Avenue and on the horizon are other projects and programs. Take a look at www.bedford2020.org. The Town Board also has appointed a Leaf Blowers Task Force and Reusable Bag Initiative Task Force.

SEWER PROJECT MOVING AHEAD

As earlier reported, we held an informational session on January 25 at the Katonah Village Library (thanks to the Katonah Chamber of Commerce for hosting the session) to update the community on the status of the project. Our design engineers, Woodard & Curran, continue to be on schedule for completing the collection system design this summer. The Town Board is working with staff on the sewer law which sets out the rate structure for the sewer system, rules regarding connection to the system. As explained in the 2016 Map, Plan & Report, the sewer law also will require all Sewer District property owners with existing wastewater systems to connect to the Sewer System and "decommission" their existing wastewater treatment systems. There will be a further information session in coming weeks to discuss the sewer law.

MAKING IT EASIER FOR HORSE OWNERS

Kudos to Bedford Loves Horses, a community group of horse property owners and lovers, for working with the Town to help make Bedford more horse friendly. The group has been discussing concerns and issues for nearly two years and in January presented a petition (click [here](#)) asking the Town Board to consider relaxing provisions in the Zoning Code relating to

horse ownership. The Board referred the petition to the Planning Board for review and recommendations which was reported back to the Town Board (click [here](#)). The Town Board at our February 20 meeting scheduled a public hearing for March 6 on amendments to the Zoning Code, however, some revisions in the amendments are needed and also, by law, the Town Board needs to refer the amendments back to the Planning Board and also to Westchester County Planning Department (each for review and recommendation). Our plan is to take action as soon as we can. We thank Bedford Loves Horses for their advocacy and their patient work to help Bedford keep its long and proud heritage as a horse community. We are hopeful that the Board may be able to hold a public hearing and take action at our April 3 meeting by which time we will have all needed review completed.

WE HAVE ADDED PAGES TO OUR TOWN'S WEBSITE

Bedford Loves Horses

Click [here](#). It's filled with wonderful pictures. My thanks to the group who made this possible with special thanks to Nancy Nygreen who developed the template for the page.

Green Initiatives

Click [here](#). Initiatives and information related to leaf blowers and reusable bags are featured on the page

Parking in Bedford Village ~ Proposed Parking Lot

Click [here](#). For many years there has been discussion about expanding parking opportunities in the hamlet for businesses and for our residents and those who shop or do business in the Village. To fill the need, the Town Board is considering acquiring from Bedford Presbyterian Church vacant land off of Court Road to the East to develop municipal parking (a provision in the deed to the Church for part of the property stipulates that it must be free municipal parking).

The Town's Website in Spanish

Is now available in Spanish. We have added a plug-in allowing for the website's automatic translation to Spanish. Please note that this does not apply to linked PDF documents.

<http://www.bedfordny.gov/>

LEAF BLOWERS

The Leaf Blowers Task Force held a public forum on February 13. The Town is considering adopting regulations as we have heard from many in the community that the noise from leaf blowers is an ever growing nuisance and impairment of quality of life. Over 100 people were in attendance. We also have heard from Bedford 2020 and others of the significant pollution which gas powered leaf blowers emit, as well as significant health concerns and other environmental impacts. Landscapers, gardeners and property owners expressed strong concerns of adverse impacts on the ability to maintain properties at reasonable cost.

Neither the Task Force nor the Town Board has yet formulated a proposed local law, as we first want to hear from the community. The Task Force has been looking into the issue for several months reviewing local laws in other Westchester County municipalities and elsewhere.

Following a presentation by the Leaf Blowers Task Force, we heard the views of many in attendance both those favoring and those opposing regulation as well as those with questions.

We are asking the Leaf Blowers Task Force to develop a proposal for presentation to the community after which the Town Board will consider what next steps it may take. No action would be taken without a public hearing on a proposed local law. I am hopeful that we can find a reasonable, balanced proposal and take action before summer. For the meeting notes, click

[here](#)

THE REUSABLE BAG INITIATIVE - UPDATE

Bedford resident Filippine de Haan, who has been working for well over a year to promote reusable bags, chairs the Town's Reusable Bag Task Force which the Town Board appointed at

our February 6 meeting. The goal of the Task Force is to develop a local law on reusable bags/plastic bags, an initiative which began with our Conservation Board nearly three years ago.

By way of background, the Town Board, as well as governing bodies of a number of Westchester municipalities adopted a resolution endorsing County Legislator Catherine Parker's proposal for a County wide ban on single-use plastic bags (patterned after Rye City's law). While Westchester County may be considering a County law, it may be some time before action is taken and many of us at the local level now feel we should consider taking local action rather than wait further.

There are many approaches to discouraging the enormous waste of single use plastic bags and paper bags and encouraging the use of reusable bags. There isn't necessarily a magic bullet model law. There are common elements among the laws, such as a fee being charged to the shopper who arrives at the checkout counter with no bag. The Town of Bedford has not developed any legislative proposal and is in the information gathering stage.

Like many other mayors and supervisors, I've reached out to the retail community including our three grocery stores in Bedford, Key Foods, DeCicco's and Shop Rite. From meetings with representatives of the grocery stores and food industry, among the options we are considering is a fee approach as has been in Long Beach, Suffolk County and New York City. The law does not impose a ban, but rather requires a minimum fee for each plastic, paper or reusable bag provided at the point of sale where a shopper arrives with no bag.

I hosted a meeting on February 26 here in Bedford at which representatives of 15 of the 41 Westchester County municipalities participated to discuss the options and the possibility of some uniformity among local laws that may be adopted. All agree that changing consumer behavior is the cornerstone of any successful effort to reduce the waste of either single use plastic bags or of paper bags. All but one municipality in attendance plan to move ahead with adoption of a local law.

We are scheduling further meetings with retailers and will also have a meeting with the general public as we move forward.

THE FILMING COMMITTEE – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FILMING LAW

The Town Board met with the Filming Committee (work session) to discuss proposed an amendment to the Filming Law to make Bedford more "film industry friendly", while ensuring that adverse impacts (noise, traffic, light) are minimized. It was noted that Bedford's distance from New York City is an impediment to greater film industry activity. A follow-up work session has been scheduled for 7:15 PM on March 6 at which time we may also schedule a public hearing on the amendments.

HORSE PROPERTIES

Following nearly two years of discussions with horse property owners and others supporting the horse community, the Town Board had referred to the Planning Board their petition requesting revisions in the Zoning Code to allow for a half bath in barns and stables, the purpose of which is to enable property owners to engage daytime grooms. The Planning Board recommended a revision to allow half baths in accessory structures, while expressly prohibiting sleeping facilities and kitchens. It also required that the owner apply for a Special Use Permit. The Town Board agreed with the Planning Board recommendations, except for the requirement of the Special Use Permit. We will keep the community posted as to developments and the timetable for it.

"THINK DIFFERENTLY"

The Town Board unanimously passed a resolution adopting "Think Differently" an initiative to assist individuals with special needs and their families. Click [here](#) for the resolution.

TOWN COMPTROLLER REPORT

Town Comptroller Abraham Zambrano reported to the Town Board on February 15, 2018 as follows:

I'm pleased to report to the Town Board that on January 2, 2018, the financial modules of the MUNIS software were activated; included in the "live" environment are the purchasing, accounts payables and financials modules. Due to the intricacy of the Town's collective bargaining agreements with the various unions, the conversion process had to be extended. However, we are anticipating "going live" with the payroll system in April. As we begin to collect data in the new system, more information will be available later this year.

Based on pre-audit financial data, we are pleased to inform the Town Board that the Town's two major funds, General and Highway, will end the year being able to add to their respective reserves. At the time of this report, the General Fund will be adding in excess of \$300,000 to Fund Balance, while the Highway Fund will add just over \$150,000 to its Fund Balance. The increase in reserves are attributed to the diligent efforts of the department heads to do more with less, a relatively mild 2017 winter and non-tax revenues that exceeded the budget amounts. Once the annual audit is completed, the financial reports will be delivered to the Town Board by the auditors later in the spring.

As for January 2018, the building department collected \$21,030 in fees, while the Justice Court recorded \$58,272 in fines. Parking revenues for the month of January totaled \$31,501, which includes \$25,824 collected from daily commuters that use Lot 3 on Woods Bridge Road.

The February 2018 financial report will include projection schedules typically provided to the Board.

TRAFFIC CALMING - CHERRY STREET

There was further discussion of the January 24 Report of John Canning of Kimley Horn, Town's traffic consultant, regarding possible further traffic calming measures for Cherry Street. The Board asked staff to review the request of some in the community for speed tables or cushions on trial basis and will take up the matter again either at the March 6 or March 20 meeting. Click [here](#) for the reports.

CELL TOWERS AND CELL FACILITIES

The Planning Board further considered the application of Verizon for a cell tower on Hickory Lane in Bedford Village. Under the Federal Communications Law, the Planning Board has 150 days within which to make a determination regarding the application. The Planning Board had provided the applicant a possible alternative location which would be Indian Hill Park, and has asked Verizon to evaluate the site within 45 days. Consideration of installation of additional cell towers at various locations throughout the Town due to gaps in coverage adversely impacting the ability of police and emergency personnel to respond to emergency calls. Public and officer safety were cited.

PROPOSED BIKE AREA/PUMP TRACK PARK AT KATONAH MEMORIAL PARK

As previously reported, the Recreation and Parks Department and Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee have been evaluating the proposal of those requesting the siting of an approximately one acre bike area/pump track in Katonah Memorial park. The evaluation has been exhaustive considering matters including area, stormwater drainage, potential impact on

existing programs and activities, potential impact on neighbors, cost and oversight, among the factors. The Department, RPAC and the proponents have moved away from evaluation of any proposed sites within the developed portions of the park and now are evaluating the undeveloped 10 acre “Zema” property as a possible location (click [here](#) for Google earth). The same exhaustive evaluation would be undertaken. Should the Zema location be a possibility for siting the Bike Area/Pump Track, we need to allow sufficient time for the Town Board to evaluate it in discussions with the proponents, the neighbors and the community generally. In light of the timelines, I have asked that the Town Board be provided the evaluation by the third week in March. The evaluation should consider the same criteria/points applied to previous sites. I attach a satellite view marked with an outlining of the entire Zema site, though, as mentioned above, a bike area/pump track would occupy approximately one acre of site with access from Anderson Road.

UPDATE ON CON EDISON GAS LINE WORK ON ROUTE 117 IN BEDFORD HILLS/MT. KISCO

Please see the notice below just received from Con Edison regarding resumption this Spring of the gas line work and restoration of the roadway.

“CON EDISON WORK NOTICE UPDATE

*Con Edison’s paving contractor is scheduled to permanently restore the **Southbound side of North Bedford Road between Norm Avenue and Woodland Road.***

*Milling and paving is scheduled to begin in **Early Spring.***

Preparation work involves milling or removal of the existing top layer of asphalt, to contour the roadway. Typically, roadways are paved within two days of being milled, weather permitting. During paving operations sections of roads will be closed with limited traffic, including driveway access.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and we appreciate your patience during any inconvenience this work may cause.

*For more information please contact **Westchester Regional & Community Affairs at 1-914-925-6361** or e-mail dl-WestchesterRCA@coned.com”*

For sewer design updates Click [here](#)

BOND RESOLUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT 2018 PORTION OF 2018-2027 CAPITAL PLAN

The Board approved a SEQRA resolution and bond resolutions (several of which are subject to permissive referendum). In a February 1, 2018 memorandum to the Town Board, the Town Comptroller summarized the Capital Plan (which is posted to the Town’s website under the Finance Department page):

“Click [here](#) for a copy of the Town Board approved Capital Plan for 2018 through 2027. The projects included in this ten year capital plan were submitted by the department heads in an effort to give the Town Board information about their department’s needs over the next decade. At the end of 2017, the Town’s outstanding debt will be \$39,895,073. That amount includes \$16,470,000 of debt attributed to the water filtration plant. The approved capital plan adds \$23,445,638 in debt for all funds over the next 10 years and based on the amount of debt being retired on a yearly basis over the next ten years, the projected additional amount of borrowing required to finance the projects is manageable and taking into account the fact that the Town amortizes outstanding debt at an accelerated rate, the projected additional debt would be absorbed with little or no impact to the tax levy. A breakdown by fund is outlined below:

General Fund	\$ 7,040,850	30%
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Highway Fund	\$11,418,537	48%
Park Districts	\$ 1,883,000	8%
Water Districts	\$ 1,769,917	8%
Sewer Fund	\$ 1,200,000	5%
Lighting Districts	\$ 133,334	1%

Included in the plan are projects for traffic safety throughout the Town, vehicle replacement for the police department, recreation, building and highway, equipment replacement for various departments. The plan also includes funding for facility improvements at the three hamlet parks, town owned cemeteries and other municipal facilities, as well as IT upgrades, road rehabilitation, and parking in Bedford Village and in an effort to continue with the Town’s pledge to reduce its carbon footprint, the plan includes funding for new zero emissions or “green” parks equipment and engineering for geo-thermal systems for the Town House and 425 Cherry Street.

As in the past, this capital plan will be updated every two years in order to address additional needs unforeseen at the time this 10 Year Capital Plan was adopted.”

With respect to the Bond Resolutions which the Board approved at the February 6 meeting, Comptroller Zambrano made the following remarks to the Board:

“Good evening there are five bond resolutions before the Town Board for approval. These resolutions will allow borrowing to fund 2018 projects approved by the Town Board. The first resolution “A” is for \$1,037,767 majority of money going for projects that have live of 5 years or less like equipment, minor expenses like cameras, safety equipment and decentralization of waste water treatment as well as IT upgrades throughout the Town. The second resolution “B” is for \$125,000 for 10 years and it includes funding for projects like septic replacement and sewer hookup at Town owned buildings that would hopefully happen later this year or in early 2019 as well as paving at 21 Park Avenue for the recreation department. Resolution “C” is for 15 years and it’s for \$1,713,295; this money is for repairs and upgrades at the town parks in the three hamlets. Resolution “D” is for \$311,750; this money is for improvements to town owned buildings. The last resolution “E” is for \$700,000; this money is for work at the new highway garage.”

REVISION IN JULY AND AUGUST 2018 TOWN BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Summer months are away months and many of our residents are unable to attend two meetings in July and two in August. The Town Board approved the following changes to these summer month meetings. We have cancelled the July 3 meeting and retained the July 17 meeting which was previously scheduled. We cancelled the August 7 and August 21 meetings and have replaced them with a single meeting to be held on August 14.

APPROVAL OF RE-ISSUING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR SOLAR INSTALLATIONS

Municipal Facilities

You may recall that last July the Town issued a Request for Proposals for solar panels and other systems for Town facilities. We received no proposals, which we learned was due to the fact that New York State had not settled with the electric industry on incentives and utility obligations regarding solar power provided back to the grid.

In late 2017, New York State published guidelines that define the future value of distributed energy resources (a/k/a, the VDER value stack). As of early 2018, solar developers can now use this value stack to estimate future project income from the local utilities, based on specific project locations. We understand that New York’s resolving these future values of solar electricity means that solar developers will be more attracted to investing in potential solar projects such as those in our RFP.

The NYS Public Service Commission issued an “implementation order” in September on the “value of distributed energy resources,” following which was substantial work in sorting out valuations with electric utility distributors in the State, such as NYSEG and Con Edison. We understand that there now is a “level playing field” and basis on which solar developers would take an interest in our RFP.

The Board approved re-issuance of an RFP. The RFP which we’ll be issuing hasn’t significantly changed from what we issued last July, however, we now are cautiously optimistic that we will receive one or more proposals which would benefit the Town.

I ask you to please send me an e-mail at supervisor@bedfordny.gov should you have any questions or comments on this report or any of our work on the Town Board.



Chris Burdick
Town Supervisor