

From the Mayor's Desk – July 17, 2013

Historic District Information Meeting Tonight

Tonight (Wednesday 7/17) at 7:30 p.m., the members of the Historic District Committee will be conducting another informational meeting in the Irvington Public Library. The meeting will include an update on the Village's application to the state Historic Preservation Office to designate the Main Street neighborhood as an official historic district and continue the dialogue about the proposed historic district. Please plan to attend this important meeting – and don't worry, the Library is air conditioned!

Celebrations

It has been a great few weeks of July in Irvington. Our Independence Day Celebration had the best fireworks display in memory and was even more special since the long awaited (and twice rescheduled) celebration of Coach Gina Maher and the four time state champion Irvington High School Girls Basketball Team finally happened. I would like to thank the Irvington Recreation Department, the FACE Committee, the Irvington Volunteer Fire Department, the Irvington Volunteer Ambulance Corps and scores of volunteers for making July 4th such a great success.

This past Monday, I finally honored "Irvington's Humble Hero" Jack Degnan for his heroic life-saving act that was performed back in February. To refresh your memory, Mr. Degnan selflessly jumped down onto the train tracks to rescue a 22 year-old Mercy College student who was ill and fell onto the tracks. I am so happy that Mr. Degnan lives in our village.

After we honored Mr. Degnan, Irvington Police Chief Michael Cerone honored the Irvington Police Officers who have performed heroic or notable acts in the last year. Also honored was Irvington Volunteer Ambulance Corps Captain Ellen Lewit who, along with two police officers, was given a lifesaving award for resuscitating a 52 year old Irvington man who suffered a heart attack. Congratulations to all the award winners. While we take great pride in you every day, it is important to recognize your outstanding contributions publically.

Projects

In recent years, my colleagues and I have made a concerted effort to address the condition of our infrastructure. We have made and continue to make significant investments in our roads, drainage and water systems. Some items to highlight:

Mountain Road Water Tank

In the last month, we successfully completed the replacement of the 50+ year old water tank on Mountain Road. The 600,000 replaced a tank that was in poor condition, well beyond its useful life. This project took almost eight months, during which time the water tank was offline. The extra pressure the Water Department had to pump into the system during construction created tiny air bubbles in the water which caused the "milky" appearance of our tap water. This harmless curiosity should now be resolved for good (at least until we start the work on renovating the larger water tank on Riverview Road, scheduled for fall 2014).

Reservoir Valves

A few weeks ago, we successfully completed the replacement of the valves that control the level of the Irvington reservoir. The valves had not been used in many decades and were in need of replacement. Depending on which valves are opened, we now have the ability to lower the level of the reservoir by varying depths. Besides being useful for maintenance purposes, we also plan to use this newfound capability as a means of flood control along Barney Brook. By lowering the reservoir's level in anticipation of an oncoming rainstorm, we can use the reservoir like a very large retention basin that will hold back a significant amount of water, reducing the flooding impact downstream.

I want to thank Water Superintendent Jim Englishby for successfully managing these projects from the first design to their final completion.

Railroad Way/Safe Routes to School Sidewalks

While the Water Department has completed two major projects recently, the Department of Public Works has just begun two significant roads projects. The first is the reconstruction of Railroad Way (aka River Street). This is the road that leads to Scenic Hudson Park, adjacent to Bridge Street Properties. We will be removing the old railroad tracks, improving the drainage and upgrading the pedestrian walkways. It is a very narrow area in which to work, so you should expect there to be some minor delays when passing through the area. Besides the Railroad Way project, we will be investing approximately \$100,000 in road resurfacing throughout the Village later this summer. This work is being completed as part of a joint bidding process with the other river villages, so I will report on the details as soon as the bids are received later this month.

Lastly, I am pleased to report that the Village awarded a contract for the construction of the long-awaited Safe Routes to School Project. This project includes the installation and reconstruction of sidewalks and pathways in and around some of our schools, especially the Dows Lane School and the High School / Middle School campus. The project, which also includes an educational component, is being completed jointly by the Village and the Irvington School District and is funded by a Federal grant.

Looking Ahead

While I am very proud of the progress we have made, there is much more to be done in the coming weeks and years. In addition to the afore-mentioned Riverview Road water tank renovation, we are planning major flood mitigation projects on Station Road and in Hudson View Park, renovating/repairing the outside of Village Hall, and replacing water mains near Halsey's Pond and Dows Lane. These projects are in addition to regularly scheduled maintenance like road work, storm drain maintenance and sidewalk repairs.