

## **From the Mayor's Desk...July 19, 2016**

I hope everyone has been enjoying their summer. There's a lot going on, so I'll get started...

### **A Word about Drones**

I thought you might be interested to learn about the current rules on the use of drones on public property such as parks. Our code specifically prohibits the use of all motorized vehicles within all village parks (except, of course, registered vehicles that can drive on the road in Scenic Hudson Park). So, that means that it is not legal to use a drone in one of our parks. Incidentally, a recent visitor to one of our parks launched a drone and it ended up stuck in a tree above a playground. Fortunately, there were no children playing at the time, but you can see how this could be a problem. Our code was written well before the wide availability of drones to consumers so it is possible that the rules could be updated. I expect the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee will be reviewing the rules as they relate to drones, but for now, they are not legal to use in any of our parks.

### **Town Hall Restoration Project Update**

Many of you have asked me why the construction on the Town Hall has been taking so long. I am sure you have noticed that the scaffolding has been up for over a year and not much work has gotten done since the beginning of the year. The reason for the lack of progress is that we had a significant dispute with the low-bid contractor over the quality and quantity of work being performed. It took us several months to "build our case" against the contractor, but those efforts have paid off. The Board of Trustees recently terminated the contract with the construction company and the performance bond company was brought in to complete the work. After many meetings with all of the new construction personnel in the last few weeks, I am pleased to report that we expect work to commence again around August 1<sup>st</sup>. If all goes as planned, we expect the project to continue until at least the end of this year. The remaining work to be completed includes window restoration, terra cotta fabrication and installation, brick replacement, painting, and some brick repointing. I know you all share my desire to have a beautifully restored Town Hall – we will stay on top of the contractors to ensure that happens as soon as possible.

### **Main Street Benches**

One of the important goals of the 2014 Main Street Streetscape Master Plan {link} was to identify "street furnishings" that would be appropriate to locate within our downtown area. Street furnishings such as new benches and tables, trash and recycling receptacles, trees, and new signage can greatly enhance our Main Street and the comfort of its visitors.

We are continually seeking creative sources of funding to help us enhance our historic downtown. In fact, we were just awarded a \$10,000 matching grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway to be used toward the purchase of 20 World's Fair benches to be placed in various locations and to replace many of the existing dilapidated benches.

We also recently started a "Main Street Bench Sponsorship" program. For a tax deductible donation of \$1,500, a new bench will be installed on Main Street, with a small bronze dedication plaque inscribed with a brief message from the donor. If you are interested in sponsoring a bench, please complete your Main Street Bench Sponsorship form online {link}. Payment can be made online or by mail.

### **Remembering our neighbors Caitlin, Janet and Jack O'Hara**

Twenty years ago this past Sunday, on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1996, TWA Flight 800 tragically crashed on its way to Europe. All 230 passengers onboard were killed, including Irvington residents Caitlin, Janet and Jack

O'Hara. Although it has been 20 years, there is still a profound sense of loss in the Village. While I did not know the O'Hara's before that fateful day, it has been an honor and a privilege to work with the family on many charitable village causes through their work with the O'Hara Foundation. The foundation has been a tremendous asset to the Village, including providing critical funding for what is now known as the O'Hara Nature Center. It is wonderful that such an amazing family has left such a legacy in our Village and beyond.

Last night, we honored the memory of Caitlin, Janet and Jack with a moment of silence before our work session.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Smith, Mayor  
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