

From the Mayor's Desk...September 13, 2018

Primary Election Day

Just a quick reminder that today is Primary Election Day in the State of New York. You can vote at your regular polling places, the polls opened at 6am and close at 9pm. Generally, you must be a member of the party holding the primary to participate in that primary. However, the Reform Party allows voters who are not enrolled in any party to participate in their primary elections.

Not sure where your polling place is? You can look it up here:

<https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>

Remembering 9-11

I want to thank everyone that joined me at Scenic Hudson Park on Tuesday morning to commemorate the attacks of September 11th, 2001. While we will never forget the fallen on that terrible day, we will always remember the heroism of the first responders and the togetherness we felt as a nation in the days and weeks that followed. Additionally, we cannot abandon those still suffering with illness related to the response in the days and months that followed. It is an absolute tragedy that more people will have died from diseases related to response than from the actual attacks. Let's ensure that these victims are properly cared for and that our government officials do all they can to make their care and treatments as easy and comprehensive as possible.

Tree Well Replacement

In addition to all the infrastructure related projects I detailed in my last message, we are also in the process of replacing many of the tree wells on Main Street. We are fortunate to have many tree experts in the Village, including Trustee Mark Gilliland. Through the efforts of Mark, Trustee Connie Kehoe, the Tree Commission, the Irvington DPW, and with the support of the entire Board of Trustees, the inadequate tree wells on Main Street have been redesigned to be ADA-compliant and appropriately-sized trees have been selected. Some things considered when selecting the new trees included: aesthetic value, maintenance, general hardiness, size at maturity (to stay out of the power lines) and stress tolerance. While it may appear the Village is killing "healthy, mature trees" the majority of the trees on Main Street were not healthy – many were too big for their root system and growing into the overhead wires. As violent storms become more and more common, these trees were becoming more and more dangerous. By replacing the trees and providing better tree wells, we expect to have healthy and safe trees for decades.

Sharing the road works both ways...

I will allow myself a small rant in this issue. As everyone knows, traffic and pedestrian safety have been a priority in Irvington for a long time. We have identified changes in behavior by individuals as being the single biggest determination of lasting improvements in safety – the police are not always going to be there to enforce the laws on drivers or pedestrians. So we, as

residents, have to decide to always do the right things while driving or walking. I have, in general, seen an improvement in this area, with one glaring exception: cyclists. I understand the desire to want to get a great workout on a bike and nothing beats the feeling of wind on your face on a beautiful day as you pedal on the open road (it beats the semi-damp smell of my basement on my Peloton bike anyway). However, all cyclists – even the most serious cyclists – are REQUIRED to follow ALL traffic laws. Stopping for red lights and stop signs on a bicycle is not only a good idea and required by law, it can also be a matter of life and death for the cyclist that has decided to ignore commonsense and the law. Just last Sunday, I was pulling onto Broadway from Main Street at a green light when two Greg LeMond wannabes came flying through the light after weaving in between a line of cars stopped at the red lights on Broadway! This is not a rare occurrence and we need cyclists to stop the insanity before there is a tragedy – a completely avoidable tragedy.

I am happy to report that the Irvington Police Department has been stopping and ticketing bike riders – but as I wrote above, we need the individual bike riders to change their behavior if we really want this dangerous practice to stop. Thank you...Rant over.

In closing...

I will close the same way I did with my last email: There is a lot of work going on in the Village and I apologize for the inconveniences the projects are causing, especially on Main Street. I continue to ask for your patience and understanding as we (and our friends at Con Ed) complete these important projects. I am certain that these projects will improve the beauty of Main Street when we are done.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Smith, Mayor
bsmith@irvingtonny.gov