

# FARMINGDALE VILLAGE REPORT

Mayor George "Butch" Starkie  
Deputy Mayor Patricia A. Christiansen

Winter 2009

Trustee Cheryl L. Parisi  
Trustee William Barrett  
Trustee Ralph Ekstrand

## Moving In The Right Direction



Wainscott light fixture chosen to replace all street lights on Main Street.

### KEEPING RESIDENTS INFORMED...

While our country continues to struggle, the Village Board continues to work hard looking to obtain funds for Main Street and our Village residents.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS

**Residential Rehabilitation Program** has had several residents apply. To date, we have been able to help two Village residents make repairs to their homes. We have two applications still in the process of being evaluated and approved.

**Main Street Facelift "Streetscape" Funds** has \$36,000 approved and an additional \$30,000 in the process of being approved. A grant was also received from the Farmingdale Chamber of Commerce.

**A Commercial Rehabilitation Grant** for \$20,000 for Village merchants has been applied for and is waiting final approval from Nassau County.

### IMPACT STUDY OF DOWNTOWN to Assess Impacts of Future Development

The Village has received five (5) proposals in response to our RFP (Request for Proposal). The Downtown Revitalization Committee, which has been expanded to include seven (7) Village residents with a broad range of expertise and ideas on how the Village of Farmingdale should evolve, are reviewing the proposals and will make their recommendations to the Village Board.

A \$50,000 joint downtown visioning project between Nassau County and the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale was approved by the County Legislature on Monday, December 15, 2008. County Executive Suozzi along with Dave Mejias visited Farmingdale to give Mayor Starkie the good news. As part of the County Executive's support for Cool Downtowns, the visioning plan for Farmingdale provides a means to engage stakeholders and community residents through a series of workshops and public meetings, to plan for the future of the downtown. This will be done in conjunction with the Village's larger comprehensive plan, and hopes to identify areas within the downtown that are prime for mixed-use development, economic rejuvenation and housing, while maintaining a "small town" feel. The downtown has a busy Long Island Rail Road station, which makes it a prime location for transit oriented development.



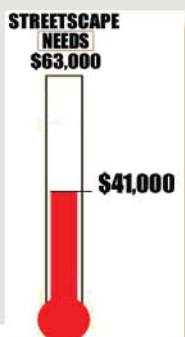
**COURT GRANT** - The Village applied for and received a grant to purchase security cameras, wood blinds, and office furniture for the court. The security cameras will be positioned to allow for 24 hour monitoring of Village Hall and Village Green.

**VERIZON GRANT** - The outdoor movie screen and projector were purchased.

### ADDITIONAL GRANTS BEING SOUGHT -

The monies for the below grants are available and will be distributed. Hopefully, the Village will be the recipient of several.

- Brownfield Opportunity Area Grant** has been applied for from New York State
- Shared Services** - \$25,000 grant from New York State
- Transportation Development Grant** - \$50,000
- Inventory Grant** - \$10,000



# Beautification Committee

On several cold and windy Saturday mornings in late November and early December members of the Village Beautification Committee gathered at Village Hall where they were met by volunteers from our local Boy Scout troops and young people from Howitt Middle School and the high school to decorate our Village for the Holiday Season. Warmed with coffee, hot chocolate, bagels and muffins and the



Several inches of snow fell on Dec. 31st. welcoming in the new year..

company of each other they began by hanging garland on the Village Green Gazebo, fresh roping and bows on the perimeter fence and signs in the Green. They proceeded to hang wreaths on all the lamp posts on Main Street, bows on all our welcoming signs throughout the Village, decorate the Melville Road and Merritts Road triangles with bows, lights and roping and string garland at the Railroad Station. Three lit trees were placed at Northside Park and at the Village Green Gazebo. Members of our DPW Staff manned the bucket truck and strung lights on our Tri-Centennial Tree at Village Green in time for our Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Our Village was ready to celebrate the holiday season. Special thanks to all those who volunteered and gave of their time and talent to our Village.

Planning is underway for the spring and summer season and we need volunteers! Since our Village is hosting the 2009 US Open in June, we want all our visitors to witness for themselves our beautiful Farmingdale Village. Please call Village Hall and leave your name and telephone number to help with our beautification efforts.

## VILLAGE SECURES FREE REVERSE 911 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Nassau County recently purchased and signed on with SwiftReach Networks and is now making their SWIFT911™ notification system available to all County villages and municipalities. The Village will have all fees waived as part of our agreement with Nassau County Police Department. This agreement was made possible by Nassau County Legislator Dave Mejias when he asked the Village if it would provide Nassau County access to our water tower at our Eastern Parkway, for radio antennas, as they implement their new Digital Land Mobile Radio System.

Last month Mayor Starkie signed a contract with SwiftReach Networks, Inc. to implement their SWIFT911™ Emergency Notification Service, which is a reverse 911 system. The system is capable of contacting and notifying all residents and businesses in the event of an emergency. It will also be used to, as appropriate, for non-emergency activities or events throughout the Village.

Mayor Starkie said, "This is a cost-efficient way to notify all Village residents not only with emergency issues but also with

upcoming roadwork and neighborhood specific or special events. Residents and businesses will be notified regarding their participation and roles. There is no need to contact anyone at this time, the Village will reach out to the community when the system is established and functioning."

To ensure contact is made, the system will continue to call a home until a person answers the call or it is picked up by an answering machine. Because this program uses a map of Farmingdale in a grid, calls can be made to specific neighborhoods with information affecting only that area.

"Before implementing SWIFT911™, we had to make individual calls and/or go door-to-door with fliers and use Village personnel and volunteer resources. Our current method is labor intensive, costly and difficult to mobilize and carries an unacceptable margin of error. With this new reverse 911 capability the Village can make 9,000 calls in less than 30 minutes," stated Mayor Starkie.

The Village will not have to invest any money in hardware or software to implement this service. Further information will be forthcoming as well as posted on our website ([www.farmingdalevillage.com](http://www.farmingdalevillage.com)) about the new system as the Village works with Swift Reach Networks to get on board and establish its emergency notification system and educate the public in its use.

## LET'S BE CLEAR! 3 HOUR PARKING REMAINS FREE!



The public can park free of charge in any 3 hour parking stall as has always been Village policy. The 12 Hour Parking Permit applies to merchants and their employees and NOT the residents of the Village of Farmingdale. The Village policy had been to issue 12 hour parking permits free of charge. However, once issued, they were yours for life. Last October, the Mayor and the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to collect a \$25.00 fee for the purchase of 12 hour parking permits from all merchants and their employees beginning in January. Annual renewals will enable the Village to keep permits current. **Previously issued 12 Hour Parking Permits are NO LONGER VALID.**

The funds raised will be held in a separate account to be utilized for the repair and maintenance of the Village lots.

The Mayor and Board adopted a budget this year that reduced revenue from fines by \$100,000. We installed additional signage in our lots to assist our residents with adhering to Village parking regulations. We did not stripe parking stalls on Main Street after the roads were paved to save the public thousand of dollars as well as preventing parking tickets for parking out of stall. We have pledged to reduce our dependency on revenue from fines. We have kept that promise.

### New Arrival in Village



Route 109, Farmingdale, NY





# TAX REASSESSMENT SCHEDULED VILLAGE SEEKS TAX BASE REBALANCING

On Monday, December 15th at 7:30 pm at a Village Board meeting there was an open discussion between residents and the Board of Trustees concerning the merits of conducting a reassessment of all properties within the Village of Farmingdale. Commercial property tax refunds and associated costs have amounted to \$1,100,000 over the past 5 years. The Board believes we need to stop this trend to ensure the financial stability of our Village. In response to inquiries from residents, the following information was prepared.

Q. What is a reassessment?

A. A reassessment, or revaluation as sometimes it is called, is an examination of the properties located in a municipality for the purpose of determining the values of those properties in relation to one another. Each municipality determines by budget how much money must be raised each year from real estate taxes in order to cover its obligations. Those taxes are assigned to property owners based upon the assessed valuation of their properties. A reassessment program studies all of the properties in the municipality in order to make sure that they are not being overtaxed or undertaxed. The program attempts to create a fair and equitable system where each property owner pays only his or her fair share of the burden.

Q. Why is Farmingdale reassessing properties in the Village?

A. The short answer is: to stabilize the residential tax base and to bring an end to millions of dollars of tax certiorari refunds, which burden the village on an

annual, ongoing basis.

Q. How will reassessment stabilize the residential tax base?

A. At one time, Farmingdale had a total assessed value (its tax base) of \$22,807,709. Over the past 17 years, that base has dropped to \$18,490,759. The reason? Tax protests (called tax certiorari proceedings) brought by commercial property owners claiming that they were over-assessed. These proceedings almost always result in the lowering of the assessed values of the affected properties and the refund of overpaid taxes for the years under protest. Whenever one property owner's assessment is reduced, everyone else's share of the tax burden is increased.

The taxes of the Village are basically paid by two different components of our community - the residential component and the commercial component. Seventeen years ago, the portion of taxes paid by the residents of Farmingdale was 49% and the portion paid by the commercial property owners was 51%. As a result of the assessment reductions affecting commercial property owners who challenged their valuations, the residents of Farmingdale today pay 60% of the Village's taxes and the commercial owners pay the other 40%. Thus, over the past 17 years, the residential property owners have picked up a significantly increased tax burden.

Unless something is done, that trend will continue and at some point the residents will pay a higher proportion of the taxes and the commercial properties will pay a lesser proportion of the Village's tax burden. If the current assessment

system were to continue and if the Village's tax requirements were to theoretically remain exactly what they are today, taxes would continue to rise for residents. Their portion of the tax burden would just continue to rise.

The Village's reassessment program will, based upon state regulations, freeze the proportionality of the tax burden to be borne by the residential community and the commercial community at the approximately 60% and 40% level which exists today. That will prevent the residential base from inheriting a greater proportion of taxes over the next decade and will thus stabilize the residential tax base.

Q. How will reassessment address the problem of tax certiorari refunds?

A. With respect to commercial properties, a reassessment program will assign fair and defensible values to each parcel. That will do two things: it will diminish the incentive of commercial property owners to challenge their assessments since there will be little likelihood of a future reduction and it will all but eliminate the exposure of the Village for refunds for overtaxed properties in the future.

The reassessment of commercial properties will greatly reduce tax certiorari exposure on a go-forward basis.

If you have any questions, the Board can be reached via email, phone or at a Village Board meeting. The email addresses and phone numbers are available on the website.



**DPW was hard at work on New Years Eve clearing away snow and sanding and salting the roads.**

## SNOW EMERGENCY RULES

In the event of a snow emergency, cars need to be removed from streets within 4 hours after the snow fall has stopped. They are then required to remain off the streets for 18 hours.

Please keep your sidewalks clean and clear of all dirt, snow or ice (within 4 hours of snow ceasing between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm) and other materials.



Mayor Starkie stopped in to say hello to the women who are part of the American Association of University Women.

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## New Village Website

### Merchant Participation Essential

The Village launched their new website in September. The goal is to bring community and business together by creating a site that shows off the Village and all it has to offer. Merchants were contacted and asked to participate, free of charge. All that is required is a photo of the business, name, address, phone, hours of operation and website (if they had one). The Village would do the rest. To date, we have 30 out of approximately 125 businesses within the Village participating. We continue to encourage merchants to participate on the website and hope that you, the resident, will visit the site often. With the US Golf Open returning in June, the Village is planning a great week with USGA help. We hope that our website will offer a taste of the Village's hospitality. This can only happen if merchants participate.



**SIGN- UP for "CONSTANT CONTACT" ON THE VILLAGE website to be notified about future "on the Village Green" Events**  
[www.farmingdalevillage.com](http://www.farmingdalevillage.com)



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