



## INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF UPPER BROOKVILLE

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ELLIOT S. CONWAY  
Mayor

TRACY L. LYNCH  
Clerk/Treasurer

June 16, 2017

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Your Board has been busy this year. Here is a summary of our significant initiatives.

We are trying to lower the cost of living in the Village while improving services and the quality of life for our residents. Over time, this should enhance the sense of community and the value of our homes. One way is to take advantage of the buying power of our 550-homes.

### **Property Taxes**

For the first time in 25 years, we did not raise property taxes in the Village. Even with increasing costs, we found savings in operations and changed the way we finance road improvements. Instead of expensing \$500,000 per year for roads, we are repaving our roads that are in need of major repairs and financing the cost with 15-year road bonds. This carries a much lower annual cost to our residents.

### **Old Brookville Police Department**

The Upper Brookville Police Commissioner served as Chair of the Old Brookville Board of Police Commissioners this past year, a position that rotates annually. The Commissioners successfully extended our Joint Protection Agreement with our Village partners of Brookville, Old Brookville, Matinecock, Mill Neck and Cove Neck for a 5-year term. We are also pleased to report that the OBPD PBA employment contract with the officers has been renewed for an additional five years.

As part of the Joint Protection Agreement, the Villages agreed to commission an independent study to review and report on the fairness of the current system of allocations of police protection costs among the participating Villages.

### **Road Improvement Programs/Bonds**

Given the high taxes, we believe our residents should enjoy smooth riding Village roads. After public safety, road maintenance is our largest single expense. Realtors advise that roads in poor condition combined with high taxes, depress property values.

We began an aggressive road improvement program in 2016. Last summer we re-paved Friendly Road and Chapel Gate Lane while Nassau County re-paved Wolver Hollow Road and Chicken Valley Road. This year we will re-pave Lawn Lane, Hillcrest Lane, Locust Lane, the remaining half of Linden Lane and most of Ripley. Nassau County completed Hegemans Lane and plans to reach Glen Cove/Oyster Bay Road by mid to late summer. Old Brookville is paving the end of Linden Lane and Brookville will repave poor sections, with us, of Old Cedar Swamp Road.

Complete plans for the 2017 Program are available on our website: <http://upperbrookville.org/2017-upper-brookville-road-construction-plans/>

As mentioned above, we are financing the road projects with 15-year bonds. Roads are estimated to have a 15-20 year life, depending on the amount of heavy truck traffic, so the bonds will serve to spread the cost of roads over the life of our roads and allocate the repair costs to the residents who will be using them. This is an opportune time to issue road bonds, as the cost of asphalt is tied to the price of oil and interest rates are extremely low.

### **Garbage Disposal District (GDD)**

The hundreds of residents who either joined or plan to join the new Garbage Disposal District (“GDD”) deserve the thanks of the entire Village. The GDD was designed to lower refuse collection costs, extend the life of our Village *and* private roads and improve the environment and quality of life in the Village. Our residents have seen their monthly collection cost reduced an average of 50% for both those in the GDD and those whose private carters matched the low GDD Village rate.

We have been advised that the GDD will reduce wear and tear on Village roads. Since road maintenance is one of our major expenses after police and fire protection, joining the GDD is the single best way for you to assist us in reducing Village costs, allowing us to hopefully be in a position to keep property taxes as low as possible. Addressing Village taxes and improving the condition of our roads will improve our property values.

Villagers are encouraged to join the GDD when their existing trash collection contracts expire.

### **Communication and Transparency**

In a Transparency Audit of 196 Long Island municipalities and agencies by the *Long Island Press*, the Village was rated A-. The audit rated the responsiveness to the NYS Freedom of Information Law. Nassau County agencies scored an average of D+. The average grade for 97 Long Island villages was C.

Since launched in early September 2016, the new Upper Brookville website has had over 22,500 page views. Sixty-five percent are first time visitors. The website includes local attractions and resources, including contact information for our schools, hospitals, parks and museums, along with Village officials’ bios, the Village history, Village news, Board meeting minutes, Village road atlas and property maps showing all lots. The website also has our 2016 audited financial statements.

In today’s world, prospective home buyers no longer jump in the car to drive thru and investigate a new community to live in. They use the internet and first look at a community’s website. We work hard to ensure our website design conveys the sense of why Upper Brookville is such an exceptional community to live in and raise a family.

If you are interested in writing for the Village newsletter or the website, please contact our Village Clerk Tracy Lynch at Village Hall.

### **E-Mail**

On our website’s home page you can sign up to receive Village emails. We have over half of our 1,700 residents’ email addresses. If you have not provided your email address to the Village, please do. It is time consuming and costs more than \$500 each time we mail letters to all our residents. Email is more efficient, faster and a relatively cost free form of communicating with residents. To date, we have notified our residents on a wide array of topics including school bond, budget and Board votes, resident surveys, Village meetings, the garbage district, LIRR usage survey, impending storms and police matters. Your email address will not be released to any outside firms or persons without your approval.

Recently, we negotiated a Village wide offer of one-year discounted home heating oil delivery. The price could only be fixed for 48 hours. By the time you would have received a mailed letter, the offer would have expired. This is an example of a benefit we could not offer without the ability to communicate by email.

## Ultra Fast Fiber Optic Internet

Extraordinarily fast internet is on the way. Netherlands-based Altice purchased Cablevision last year and they are starting to plan for the installation of a 10-gigabit fiber optic internet service for subscribers in the Village of Upper Brookville.

## Clean Energy

Upper Brookville recently became the first Village on Long Island designated a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). We are eligible for up to \$100,000 in state grants for further clean energy initiatives. Funds will be used to:

1. Convert our streetlights to elegant, energy-efficient LED lighting. The LEDs reduce the Village's electricity bills and last far longer, cutting maintenance and replacement costs. The Village stands to save over \$110,000 during their 15-year operating life.
2. Install an efficient, energy saving central air conditioning system in our new Village Hall building at the Planting Fields, and,
3. Make energy efficient LED bulbs available to residents. LEDs are now virtually indistinguishable from incandescent bulbs. The average American home has 45 light bulbs. If each homeowner replaces 8 bulbs with LEDs, the savings in electricity and related costs in Upper Brookville over 8 years is projected to be \$1.1 million. Here's the math: <http://upperbrookville.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Upper-Brookville-savings-from-switching-to-LEDs.pdf>

## Solar Energy

We are investigating with New York State officials the potential for a local Community Solar farm on State land to benefit residents of Upper Brookville. The facility has the potential to significantly reduce our electricity costs for years to come and help achieve the State's future goal of 50% of energy generation from renewable energy sources.

## Village Signs & Logo

We've installed 'Village of Upper Brookville' signs at key entry points to the Village and more are on the way.

We adopted the pheasant as Upper Brookville's new Village logo for our welcome signs. Pheasants were plentiful in the Village until the fox, raccoons and red tail hawks thinned their numbers.



## Beautification

As most people know, investments in and maintenance of one's property affects the beauty, cleanliness, and overall amenities of all of our properties and our neighborhoods and, as a result, affect the value of our homes. The same is true for Village land and our roadways.

As part of a new Upper Brookville Neighborhood Association, a Beautification Committee is in formation and will be taking on projects throughout the Village—starting with plantings around the Village welcome signs. Please call Tracy Lynch at the Village Hall if you wish to serve on the committee and/or make a financial contribution. Suggestions for areas of improvement are welcome.

We plan to enhance the Village right-of-ways (ROWs) by planting grass on bare earth and ticketing trucks and vehicles who create deep furrows by parking and turning on the shoulder of our roads. Vehicle operators/owners will be held accountable for the damage they cause.

The Village is searching for an appropriate and safe road marker to discourage vehicles from driving and parking on the shoulder of our roads in non-emergency situations. We are working on sources for residents to be able to purchase them at a discounted cost.

## **LIRR Oyster Bay Line**

Improving LIRR service on the Oyster Bay line would be a huge step forward for the North Shore and the Village of Upper Brookville residents.

We have some of the best real estate in the metropolitan area, but it is undervalued because of the long and difficult LIRR Commute. Infrequent trains, changing at Jamaica, too many stops and failure to service Grand Central Station, divert ridership to Manhasset, Syosset and Hicksville stations or their personal automobiles. The LIRR is reluctant to invest in electric trains because management believes the Oyster Bay line ridership is low.

North Shore Mayors met with Senator Marcellino recently and he agreed to survey our residents to determine the level of interest in an improved LIRR electric service for the Oyster Bay line. If this service can benefit you, please take 5 minutes and fill out the one-page online survey:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/questionnaires/carl-1-marcellino/lirr-oyster-bay-branch-constituent-survey>

## **Village Meetings**

The Board added a public comment period to the agenda for the start of each meeting. Residents are encouraged to attend these monthly meetings at the Village Hall in Planting Fields Arboretum Historic State Park. The Board also adopted “Rules of Decorum at Public Meetings” that are designed to ensure good order, efficiency and civility: <http://upperbrookville.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Rules-of-Decorum-at-Public-Meetings.pdf>

## **Employee Handbook**

The Board adopted an updated Village Employee Handbook. The Handbook is intended to give information about the main features of the Village’s employment policies, practices, benefits and certain other general information, and may be found here:

<http://upperbrookville.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Upper-Brookville-Employee-Handbook-03-20-17.pdf>

## **Traffic on Wolver Hollow Road**

The West Shore Road closure funneled commuter traffic onto Wolver Hollow Road creating significant backups during rush hours. Working with Senator Marcellino, a brief traffic study was conducted and implemented, that adjusted the timing of specific traffic signals, which eliminated significant congestion at the Old Brookville Police Station.

## **Driveway and Private Road Repaving**

Last year a number of residents took advantage of the option to repave their driveways at the Village rate, following completion of the Village roads. Contact Tracy Lynch at Village Hall if this is of interest.

## **Personnel Changes in the Village**

We were fortunate to rehire Tracy Lynch as our full time Village Clerk. Formally part time, she is now at the Village Hall every day of the week. Barbara Miller retired as Court Clerk after decades of service. Margaret Grady has taken over the Court duties. Sergio Tedesco is now our Building Inspector, replacing Matt Moed. Matt, sadly, passed away after serving the Village faithfully and energetically for many years. Peter MacKinnon, Esq. joined as Village Attorney. Michael Schwerin retired after serving as Trustee for 8 years and was replaced by Ed Madden, a resident for over 20 years. Innis O’Rourke is our new Zoning Board Chairman, replacing David Helme who served for 10 years, and was joined by Philip Wachtler as a new Zoning Board member. Jodie Burns Chairs the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee for the Village, replacing Antje Dolido, Willets Meyer, Esq. is now Chair of the Ethics Committee, joined also by Arvind Lall, Esq.

## **Dead Tree Permits**

We are no longer charging a permit fee to remove trees that are dead, dying or dangerous. You still need a permit, however, to ensure the Village agrees with your diagnosis, and an inspection by a Village representative is still required.

## **Summer Employment**

We are looking to hire two strong and conscientious Villagers to supplement our road crew this summer for three days a week. Workers should be 18 years or older. If you are interested, please contact Tracy Lynch at the Village Hall.

## **Village Stickers/ Free Admission to Planting Fields**

Please email the Village Clerk to get your free Upper Brookville car stickers. Among other important benefits, these stickers entitle you and the occupants of your vehicle to free admission to the Planting Fields Arboretum Historic State Park.

## **Election on June 20<sup>th</sup> at the Village Hall.**

We have our annual Village election this year on Tuesday, June 20, 2017 at the Village office at Planting Fields. Voting is from noon to 9pm. Trustees Bill Campbell and Ed Madden are up for reelection for 2-year terms. Village Justice John Pieper is up for reelection for a 4 year term.

Village positions, such as Trustees, the Justices and members of our various Boards are all uncompensated. If you are pleased with the work the Village officials are doing on your behalf, please take a few minutes to register your support and vote.

## ***Thanks!***

We are fortunate to have exceptionally gifted, dedicated and caring Village employees, officials and board volunteers. Our police and volunteer firefighters provide first class protection to our residents and their property and are the subject of many personal communications of thanks throughout the year sent to the Village. I am thankful each day for all their individual contributions towards making Upper Brookville the outstanding community that it is.

We appreciate the ongoing support of neighboring village governments during the past year—in particular Winnie Citarella, Brookville Village Clerk and Carol Schmidlapp, Centre Island Village Clerk.

Thanks to each of you who attended a meeting, called or wrote the Village to express your views. While governing decisions may not always please all residents, we all benefit when diverse points of view are expressed in a thoughtful manner and when residents participate in the process. Collaboration makes our work easier, more fun and we usually get more accomplished.

Each day when I drive through the Village I am impressed by the gorgeous place we all get to call home. I am deeply grateful to every Villager for the privilege of being your Mayor and for your support and wish you a prosperous 2017.

Sincerely,



Elliot S. Conway  
Mayor