



Incorporated Village of Upper Brookville

24 Wolver Hollow Road, Glen Head, NY 11545

www.upperbrookville.org

Phone: (516) 624-7715

Fax: (516) 624-7137

Mayor

Elliot S. Conway

Village Clerk/Treasurer

Tracy L. Lynch

Trustees

Edward J. Madden, Jr.

Antje B. Dolido

Carl A. Friedrich

Innis O'Rourke III, M.D.

April 28, 2022

Dear Neighbors,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health and good spirits. Despite the profoundly challenging times for you and the Village government, we together have accomplished much in the Village. It has been an honor to serve as your mayor over the past six years and to work with our dedicated Board of Trustees, Village Officials, volunteers and staff. Our goal is to make our Village the best on Long Island and New York State, with public health and safety as the paramount priority.

Old Brookville Police Department ends protecting Upper Brookville on June 1st.

First, I know you will join us in thanking the Old Brookville Police Department (OBPD) officers and staff for their superb job of protecting our village for 70+ years. These officers and the department are one of the most important reasons we live in this community. Fortunately, they are not moving far away. Virtually all the police officers will either remain with the OBPD and protect only Old Brookville, or transfer to the new Brookville Police Department.



Over a year ago, the Village of Old Brookville notified the five village partners protected by the OBPD that the current arrangement would not continue. How could one village make a unilateral decision that affects all of us? Under New York State law, a police department must be part of a single village as opposed to a consortium.

Old Brookville was the most populated village in 1949 and they became the sole employer of all the police and staff. Things were fine until the past few years when Old Brookville developed irreconcilable concerns about the future of our 6-village partnership. Their reasons are known to them alone. However, the mayor made clear his concerns about the projected high costs of retiree healthcare and their lack of voting control on important employee benefit matters. They were also facing large relative increases in the department cost over time that would be allocated to them in a new 5-year contract. From the outside looking in, it appears they made a fiscally responsible decision that may result in a higher level of Old Brookville resident protection with faster response times from a locally-based headquarters, and full control over the department without a significant increase in costs.

We immediately began the process of arranging optimal protection for our residents. The goal was to provide similar high quality police protection that was locally controlled, efficient and cost-effective, with local back-up of the car based in our village so we would have the fastest possible response times. This eliminated the Nassau County Police Department from consideration as our primary protection force. Police consultants helped us determine we were too small to have our own department. It was suboptimal and uneconomic.

We had simultaneous bilateral discussions with five different North Shore villages. Three had existing police departments. Two others considered joining a potential Upper Brookville Police Department that we would form and lead. Muttontown emerged as an early front runner, but they also were exploring other options and it took over a year to negotiate a final agreement. It turned out to be a great fit. We are similar demographically. We are contiguous and share some of the same roads. We share the same policing philosophy. And we reached a fair agreement for the allocation of future costs that bodes well for a long term partnership.



Muttontown Mayor Jim Ligouri, Police Chief Eric Irizarri, Elliot Conway and Village Clerk/Treasurer Tracy Lynch

The Muttontown and Upper Brookville Police Department (MUBPD) commences patrolling Upper Brookville on June 1st.

We are making exceptional progress on a seamless transition to the MUBPD. We expect the department will provide the traditional high quality police protection that our residents expect. We will be making use of new technology and additional resources. Carl Friedrich, Deputy Mayor and Deputy Police Commissioner, is meeting regularly with Police Chief Eric Irizarri to identify and resolve issues as they arise. Next week, you will be able to follow their progress and the open items with regular updates on the MUBPD page of our www.upperbrookville.org website.

For the first time in Village history, we will have a full time car patrolling 365 days a year, backed up by two Muttontown cars. The Muttontown cars will be backed up by Nassau County Police. Once the current Old Brookville Police Station is renovated at the corner

of 25A and Wolver Hollow Rd, the Upper Brookville car will be based in the same building that serves as the headquarters today.

This means faster emergency response times and more time to address problems unique to the Village, such as speeding on Mill River and Piping Rock Roads. The patrol car will check every street in the Village twice a day, on average.

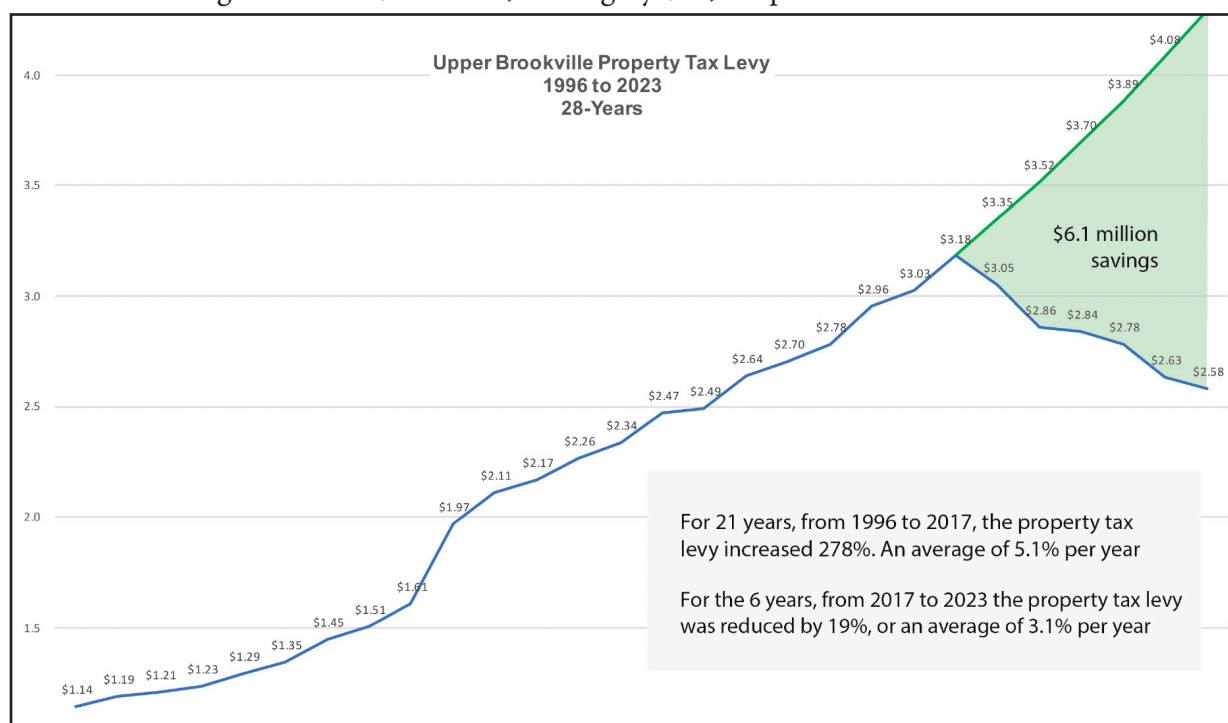
With a more equitable division of costs, we expect the operating efficiencies and common service border will bring our overall costs down. We agreed to divide the costs by a 50/50 weighting of population and the number of households. This way, the change in the relative value of property and the amount of non-taxable open space--factors that have nothing to do with police protection--will not impact our police budget.

Mayor Jim Ligouri and Police Chief Eric Irizarry attended our last Board of Trustees meeting. According to Mayor Ligouri, they are “prepared for the changeover and looking forward to a long and successful partnership with our village”.

While we will miss our OBPD friends when they move to their new departments, in the end, there will be almost twice the cars and police protection for residents of all the OBPD villages.

We are Lowering Property Taxes for the sixth year in a row.

This week we approved the 2022-2023 Annual Budget. The good news is we will be lowering village property taxes again. The exhibit below shows the property tax levy over 28 years. After annual increases that averaged over 5% for 26 years, we became the only village out of 550 in New York State that *lowered* the property tax levy in each of the last five and now the sixth year. The cumulative savings exceeded \$6 million, or roughly \$12,000 per household.



The green line on the top right of the chart shows the property tax levy if it had continued annually from 2017 at the historic rate of 5.1%. The green shaded area shows the savings achieved by lowering the tax from 2017 to 2023.

At the same time we expanded services, repaved problem roads and pursued other initiatives to achieve efficiencies and savings (e.g. the garbage district) and improved the quality of life in the village. Your Board of Trustees has worked hard to deliver excellent services while, at the same time, making living in Upper Brookville more affordable.

High taxes are one of the primary reasons cited by people leaving our state. Our neighbors are moving to Florida, South Carolina, and other low-tax states for more than the weather. There are concerns about the high crime rate attributed partly to bail reform. And the pandemic has taught us that we can work from almost anywhere as long as we have a computer, a cellphone and reliable Internet.

Verizon FiOS is Coming to Upper Brookville!

After years of discussions and lobbying, a 5-truck caravan of Verizon FiOS trucks finished installing fiber optic cable on the overhead poles on Wolver Hollow Road and Chicken Valley Road two weeks ago (see photo). Unofficially, I understand they anticipate completing the build out of Upper Brookville by the end of September, 2022.

It seems that the cost of maintaining the old and dilapidated copper wire landline infrastructure was just too high. AT&T ceased landline service in Upper Brookville last year, and they had been relying on Verizon to service their wires and equipment.

The FiOS service will deliver high speed internet and telephone landlines but, until there is a change in the New York State regulatory environment, *it will not include cable television*. For now, no new franchises for video service will be granted by Verizon to the Village, or any other municipality in NYS.

However, you'll be able to subscribe to YouTube TV which has 85+ channels of entertainment including local channels, news, live sports, recording without storage limits and six accounts included for about \$65 without a cable box, or contracts. Typical movie channel streaming services can be added.

It will be great to have an alternative service provider and Altice (formerly Cablevision) is more likely to bring their "A" game to our Village. It may be coincidence, but Altice has commenced installing their own fiber optic cable throughout the Village. Workers tell me they



Verizon FiOS installation trucks on Chicken Valley Road April 6, 2022.



Optimum Fiber optic cable installation on Wheatley Road and Route 25A - April 19, 2022

expect to finish the same time as Verizon. I expect we will all be beneficiaries of very healthy competition and a greatly modernized telecommunications infrastructure.

We are one of the lowest density areas on Long Island and among the last to be energized when the power goes out following large storms. The redundancy from a second source of phone landlines and internet should improve the health and safety of our residents.

Networking and Public Policy

We believe it is crucial to maintain strong relationships with our elected representatives. When our quality of life, our rights, our economic well being and our open space comes under attack, there is strength in numbers. The Village has an active voice with the Town of Oyster Bay Officials, the North Shore Mayors, State Senators, State Assembly Members and our Federal House and Senate Members as well as the Governor's Office.

The Village is represented on the Executive Board of the Nassau County Village Officials Association (NCVOA) and the Finance Policy Committee of the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM).

Recently, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced a plan in her Jan. 5 State of the State Address to cancel single-family zoning laws by directing municipalities to allow "accessory dwelling units" in residential zones. By joining with the other Town of Oyster Bay Mayors, Supervisor Saladino, Representative Suozzi, Assemblyman Montesano and all our Elected Representatives, by February 18th the Governor dropped the plan. Newsday reported the reason was "strong opposition by mostly Republican officials from local governments on Long Island and by some Democrats, including Rep. Tom Suozzi and Long Island state senators".

A few years ago, by joining together, we were able to stop the Oyster Bay to Rye Tunnel proposed by Governor Cuomo.

Pressure from Oyster Bay elected officials led by Supervisor Saladino restored outdoor dining during the pandemic.

Strong relationships with our elected representatives have yielded regulatory wins and, with the hard work of our Village staff, significant grant awards. Grants are effectively a partial return of the income and property tax we all send to the Treasury, New York State and Nassau County. So--- grants are an important source of revenue.

Starting 2022-2023 the Village's \$3.2 million budget includes \$2.6 million of revenue from property taxes and \$522,000 from charges, fees and transfers from federal and state governments (including grants). Property taxes will account for 83 percent of local general revenue in the 2022-2023 budget.



Mayor Conway with then Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul on June 9, 2021 at the Annual New York Conference of Mayors discussing the reopening of businesses on Long Island

Grants received include:

- Congressman Suozzi was instrumental in securing our \$178,144 grant under the American Rescue Plan.
 - We are installing new Village road name signs designed to New York State standards with the proceeds of a \$50,000 grant from Senator Gaughran.
 - Under the CHIPS road grant program we receive about \$50,000 annually.
 - Senator Gaughran was instrumental in helping re-purpose our \$250,000 Village Hall grant.
 - Legislator Lafazan has pledged \$50,000 from Nassau County for the Village Hall, as well.
 - We were awarded a competitive grant of \$20,000 for the cost of preparing our files for digital scanning.
 - With very strong support of all of our elected officials (Senator Jim Gaughran, Assemblyman Mike Montesano, former Supervisor Laura Curran, Supervisor Joe Saladino and Legislator Josh Lafazan) as well as the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM) and the Nassau County Village Officials Association (NCVOA), we were able to champion, extend and modify the expiring Shared Services law. Governor Cuomo signed it into law as one of his last official acts. Having resurrected the legislation, we plan to apply for a Shared Services Matching grant of over \$600,000 in connection with the formation of our new police department.
 - Senator Gaughran and Assemblyman Montesano introduced legislation that was signed by Governor Cuomo to reimburse the Village for about \$30,000 in school tax paid on our 24 Wolver Hollow Road property. They also advanced a number of bills that did not become law; one for deer management, and another designed to have New York State compensate us for the cost of road repaving, first responder police and fire protection associated with the Planting Fields Arboretum Historic State Park. In 2020, Planting Fields reported 450,000 visitors. The average daily traffic to Planting Fields was 73% of the village population and its tax-exempt 400 acres total 12% of the village land.
- Partly in response to these legislative efforts, NYCOM is championing aid to municipalities with large amounts of tax exempt land this year as one of their high priority initiatives.

Legislator Lafazan was very helpful in shepherding our acquisition (for no payment) of the cul-de-sac at the end of Lawn Lane that was owned by Nassau County.



Congressman Tom Suozzi delivered Upper Brookville's American Rescue Plan check on August 12, 2021.

The Existing Village Hall Property at 24 Wolver Hollow Road

What about the existing property?

We purchased the \$1.65 million property across the street from the OBPD Headquarters, in December 2020. Our plan was to renovate the main house, which had been gutted by the previous owner, for our Village Hall. However, the estimated renovation costs following pandemic-related supply chain shortages proved wildly uneconomic.

As it turns out, while an unrelated matter, with the unexpected breakup of the police department, the OBPD Headquarters building reverts to our Village this June. We will make it our new Village Hall and police substation (see below).

That means we may no longer need 24 Wolver Hollow Road. If Zillow is to be trusted (see chart to the right), the 5.5 acre site may now be worth considerably more than we paid for it in December 2020, before the pandemic.

The Jericho Water Company reached out to us regarding their interest in buying a one acre parcel off Rt 25A for a future well and pumping station, but with no water tower. We have had informal, conceptual discussions on the subject. If approved, they would be required to enclose it in a building resembling a small, Upper Brookville residential home.

Jericho Water District has delivered safe and plentiful water since 1923. The District covers 37 square miles and serves over 58,000 people. The water delivered to your tap in Upper Brookville is a blend of water pumped from 25 wells up to 700 feet deep, that draw primarily from the Magothy Aquifer. They can store over 12 million gallons. Locally, there are six wells in Muttontown, three in Brookville and two in Old Brookville. An operational well on our site would, one day, enhance the Upper Brookville drinking water supply.

We may keep another acre for Village purposes, and sell the main house and cottage on 3.5 acres to a future homeowner.

Before making any decisions, we will be seeking resident input on the future use of the property.



Zillow estimates the property may have increased in value by roughly \$1 million since its December 2020 purchase by the Village.

The New Village Hall Saga

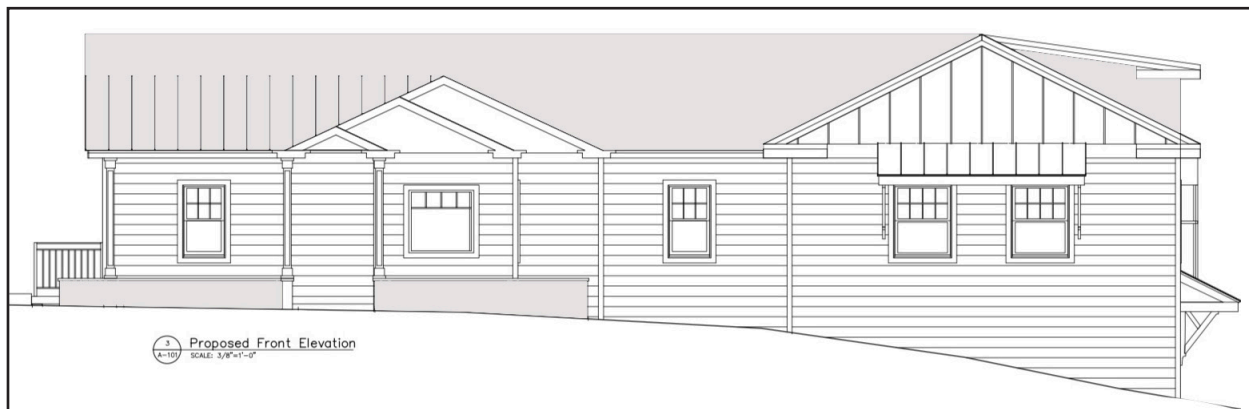
Last Summer we were literally washed out twice from our village hall at the Planting Fields Carriage House site by flooding from major storms. Fortunately, we had an alternative. Our temporary Village Hall is in the cottage at 24 Wolver Hollow Road. We moved there in 2021 following two serious floods that damaged some of our historic property records at the Planting Fields Arboretum location. In fact, it cost the Village over \$20,000 to have many of our paper records freeze-dried to avoid total destruction.



The Village declared a State of Emergency after the Village Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum flooded twice in 2021 following two massive “100 year” storms. The offices, file and meeting rooms had six inches of water.

In June, we expect the Old Brookville Police Department (OBPD) to vacate the existing headquarters and relocate to a site in Old Brookville. They will serve and protect Old Brookville residents only. A newly created Brookville Police Department will serve and protect Matinecock, Mill Neck and Cove Neck. Their base will initially be at the Brookville BOCES Outdoor and Environmental Education Center.

The Village of Upper Brookville was incorporated in July of 1932. One of the Board’s first official acts was to purchase the site of the existing OBPD headquarters with the proceeds of voluntary contributions from all its residents. At the time, the Board of Trustees wisely felt the location was central and the property would be a strategic asset for the Village one day. The Old Brookville Police Department was formed in 1949, and five years later they moved into a newly constructed police headquarters building on this Upper Brookville parcel. Upper Brookville has leased the site to the protected Villages for \$1/year for the past 70+ years.



From the front on Northern Boulevard, the new Village Hall will look very much like the Old Brookville Police Station headquarters.

Following a renovation starting in June, partly funded by a \$250,000 grant from New York State, the building will become our new Village Hall and Police Substation as well as an Emergency Refuge and Community Center.

The Garbage District

Our current 5 year carting contract with D.F. Allen for the Village Garbage District expires this June. Every 5 years we put the Garbage District out to bid. This year, the bids were all a bit higher due to inflation. Our current carter, D.F. Allen, was the highest bidder by an average of over \$20 per month.

The Village Board awarded the 5-year contract to Emmi Industries. They currently service the entire Village of Matinecock and are highly regarded by the Matinecock Mayor. Tracy Lynch and I recently met with Joe Emmi, the President. He was friendly, smart and outgoing. We believe he will serve the Village well. His 8-yard trucks are about 20% smaller than many of those collecting now in the Village. That means less driveway wear and damage. And for the first time, the trucks will have electronic trackers, so we can determine when the garbage and recycling was collected.



With Joe Emmi, President of Emmi Industries, next to his 8-yard truck on April 8, 2022

The rate for the first two years is \$60 per month per household, for two weekly pickups, that will include recyclables and certain larger objects. The monthly rate increases to \$62 in years 3 and 4 and \$64 in year 5. This reflects an average monthly rate of \$61.60 for the full 5-year period. Note that the Village does not charge the 9.25% sales tax while private carters do—so the monthly rate is an effective average of \$56.40 for the full 5-year period.

The Village Board appreciates the efforts of D.F. Allen, who provided high quality service to the Village over the past five years. They will continue collecting until their contract expires on June 30, 2022.

If you are in the District already, we greatly appreciate your continued participation because it benefits us all.

If you are not in the District, there could not be a better time to join!

We created the Village Garbage District in 2017 in order to reduce wear-and-tear on Village roads, private roads and driveways caused by multiple heavy trucks from seven village carters leap-frogging from house to house. The creation of the District saved residents about \$200,000 over the past five years due to the low District volume pricing plus the savings from competitors who lowered their rates to match the District pricing. We've been advised that having a single carter could potentially extend the life of our roads by 25%, which will save about \$2.5 million in property tax over time. That's almost our entire property tax levy for a single year.

With fewer homes in the District, the volume pricing will increase and competitors will be able to raise their rates if they continue to match the price.

Cell Reception

For the past six years, the Board of Trustees has been exploring available options to improve cell communication in the Village to address health and safety concerns of all residents.

Village residents have made it clear to the Board that almost all rely on cell phone communication in their daily lives. For many, it is their sole means of communication. Some rely on cell phones for health monitoring and Telehealth services.

In many areas of Upper Brookville, cellular reception is poor to non-existent. Due to our open space and low density, we are often one of the last communities to be re-energized when the power goes out after a major storm. When the power is out a cellphone can be a lifeline. However, if the power is out and you have no cell reception, it may be impossible to reach the 911 operator, the police, the fire department or EMS.

In 2020, the police department considered replacing the 90 foot police antenna behind the Old Brookville Police Station with a 120 foot monopole. At that time, we investigated with AT&T adding cellphone transmitters to a similar monopole in the same location. However, a few of our other village OBPD partners wanted to share the revenue from a potential cell tower. Unfortunately, that was not permitted in the lease, and we were advised it may not be permitted under the New York Constitution. The idea was then tabled.

When control of the property reverts to Upper Brookville in June, the cell tower again becomes an option in the heart of the Village that could benefit over 200 of our homes.

We've been asked, "what would the Village do with the \$100,000 in annual income from the tower?" The Board has been discussing adopting individual private roads as village roads, following (a) the request from a significant majority of the residents and (b) prior repaving to Village standards. As an alternative, we've discussed offering free Village trash removal. Regardless of the use of funds, Village residents will benefit by an additional \$100,000 annually with better and more reliable cell service.

As we continue to investigate options, please be aware that the Village has neither approved nor signed any cell tower lease, or taken any official actions to approve a cell tower installation in the Village. I can assure you that, before any official action is taken pertaining to considering the installation of a cell tower in the Village, the Board of Trustees will strictly follow all appropriate procedures, including the holding of public hearings with full disclosure and ample opportunity for all residents to be heard. We do not anticipate any developments of substance in connection with this issue until the fall of 2022, at the earliest.

Generator Program

We addressed the problem of power outages following storms and our low density in some new ways. In August 2020 following Hurricane Isaias and a two week power outage, we instituted a generator program that combined discounted pricing for generators, propane tanks, installation and first year servicing. We waived the Village permit fees for these items. Because the generators were in short supply nationwide with pandemic supply chain and worker shortage problems during the pandemic, we



extended the program to mid year this year. We are delighted to report that 25 homeowners took advantage of the program.

Tree trimming by PSEG and the Village and Telephone Pole Upgrades

We addressed the problem of power outages following storms by working with PSEG to identify trees or branches over power lines or otherwise in a condition that called for trimming or removal. PSEG took down 70 trees that threatened power lines in the past year. The Village continues to monitor tree health and the need for trimming or removal. We plan to remove 15 more problem trees or large branches in the coming months.



Fallen tree on the wires off Linden Lane.

In 2020 PSEG completed their “pole hardening” program to replace all our existing telephone and power line poles with taller and stronger upgrades.

East Norwich Fire Company (ENFC) and Northwell Health

By working closely with our neighboring municipalities with the helpful and active participation of the Town of Oyster Bay on the new ENFC, agreement we were able to memorialize and update the cost allocation methodology. This has lowered the cost of our fire protection. We expect to sign a new ENFC contract with the updated allocations with our partners, Muttontown, The Town of Oyster Bay, and Brookville in the upcoming months.

We have had preliminary discussions with Northwell Health who has offered to supplement the excellent EMS service we get from the ENFC. Conceptually, Northwell will work in concert with ENFC to optimize response times and coverage. Northwell has a paramedic on each vehicle and will transport clients to the hospital of their choice. If Northwell answers the call, the cost will be covered by insurance similar to an emergency room visit.

The plan will only be successful if multiple villages participate along with the ENFC so the education process is under way. Our objective is to improve the health and safety of our residents, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Planting Fields Road Repaving

We repaved most all of the rough riding roads in the Village over the past six years and Planting Fields Road is one of two that remain. We were awarded a \$280,000 New York State DOT grant, and we plan to seek bids to repave the road later this year.

Septic Tank Replacement Grants

If your leaching field or septic tank is in need of replacement, be aware that Nassau County

has a grant program that will pay up to \$20,000 if you replace your tank with a modern, environmentally friendly system. Contact the Village for details.

Pandemic

The pandemic seems largely over. We were fortunate early on to find a supply of 20,000 masks when none were otherwise available for our villagers, our police and workers employed in the village. We distributed 10 per household along with antibacterial lotion.

In early 2021 by working with Dr. Edward Zamecki of Z Medical Care in Glen Cove, we secured access to a supply of vaccines. Over the course of a month as eligibility changed, we were able to arrange for vaccination appointments for all the residents who desired a vaccination. They numbered in the hundreds. All the scheduling coordination was done by Tracy Lynch, Village Clerk, and her staff.

In April, along with Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joe Saladino, we recognized Dr. Zamecki with a Citation for his effort to vaccinate Upper Brookville among 1,500 Oyster Bay residents.



With Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joe Saladino awarding a Citation to Dr. Edward Zamecki and his wife Jolanta for successfully accomodating Upper Brookville residents who desired a vaccination among 1,500 Oyster Bay residents. May 19, 2021.

Supervisor Saladino was heroic during the pandemic and a great friend to Upper Brookville. He hosted over 40 regular (often weekly) calls with his 18 village Mayors to report important developments, find out what was going on in our villages and learn what Town resources we needed to cope with the pandemic. He included his department heads, and could not have been more generous with his time and the Town resources.

Over the years he has contacted the Governor and various Elected Officials to support important Village initiatives. He has been a steadfast partner in our fire protection and through various Intermunicipal Agreements. In January 2022, he joined with us to demand that Governor Hochul retract a policy initiative that would have destroyed single family home zoning laws throughout the state by allowing an additional “Accessory Dwelling Unit” on every lot.

Mailbox and Car Thefts

Readers of our Village emails know about the plague of mailbox thefts throughout the North Shore Villages.

Mailbox thieves steal personal information and checks. Using ink erasers, they change the check payment amounts and the payee name. By the time the fraud is discovered, the thieves are long gone.

The thieves have been captured red-handed multiple times by officers from the Old Brookville

Police Department, but then immediately released under the “bail reform” laws.

A local resident had a \$31,000 check stolen in March of 2021 that was used to open an overseas account. The cash was deposited in a new account opened in the name of the victim in Philadelphia, and then the account was cleaned out.

Mailbox thefts were followed quickly by widespread identity thefts. We recommended that residents install locking, heavy duty steel mailboxes, and many of you thankfully did. To date, we do not have a recorded theft from a locking mailbox in the Village. But, it served to simply push the thieves to raid the mailboxes in other villages that were easier to open.

We sought help from the U.S. Postmaster General as well as Nassau County Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder. The Commissioner had a group of detectives on his staff, led by Detective Lieutenant John Holmes, stake out our Village mailboxes in the wee morning hours over the course of a few weeks, without success.

Following a bit of legal research we determined, and the Commissioner’s office agreed, that the police could impound an auto used in the thefts. The last time the thieves were caught with stolen mail by the Old Brookville Police, the Nassau County Police impounded their car. That was about four months ago. And the thefts have stopped—for now.

Please empty your mailbox promptly following deliveries and consider installing a locking mailbox.

Car thefts continue in the Village and surrounding areas. Virtually all the car thefts investigated by the Old Brookville Police Department had the doors open and the key fob left inside. The same is true for all of Nassau County. Please remember to take out your key fobs and lock your car doors.

Local Flooding

Local flooding is a historic and serious problem in the Village. Storm water from Muttontown, Old Westbury, Old Brookville, and Brookville eventually flows to Long Island Sound. Much of the storm water flows through Upper Brookville, then Matinecock, on its way north.

The junctions of Wheatley Road and Brookville Road, the junction of Wolver Hollow and Chicken Valley Road, and Mill River Road, often flood. In the winter, black ice can be a hazard.

There is also a separate issue on Donna Drive.

We resolved the terrain issue at Wheatley Road and Brookville Road by working with a local resident. We are also progressing on a likely solution for Donna Drive.

On March 15th, Legislator Joshua Lafazan presented the Village of Matinecock with a check



Locking mailboxes installed in 2021 helped stop mailbox thefts in Upper Brookville.

for \$1.8 million dollars for resolution of the Thorne Lane drainage issue. This funding was allocated from the County Capital Project after the Nassau County Department of Public Works determined that the drainage system was undersized, causing frequent flooding in the area.

We have worked for years with the Village of Matinecock to find sources to fund this important project from multiple potential sources, and are ecstatic they were able to secure this transformational grant. Once completed, the project will allow the Upper Brookville storm water that floods Wolver Hollow and Chicken Valley Roads to continue on to the Long Island Sound. Photos like the one below should become a historic relic of a bygone era.



Massive flooding on Wolver Hollow Road after Tropical Storm Elsa blew through the Village on July 9, 2021.

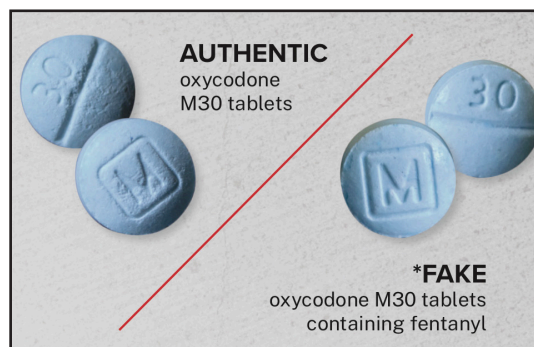
Marijuana Opt Out

In 2021 over 95% of the Nassau County villages, including Upper Brookville, passed Local Laws opting out of permitting marijuana retail dispensaries and/or on-site consumption establishments in the Village. Municipal officials who have opted out cite the legal and practical challenges surrounding the detection of drug-impaired driving, higher local public safety and EMS costs and the risk of increasing teenage access to a drug still considered by many to be a pathway to addictive narcotics.

Drug Education: Fentanyl

Upper Brookville actively participates in Nassau County Police Commissioner Ryder's Commissioner's Community Council (CCC). The goal is to increase community and officer safety and reduce crime.

The Commissioner is currently educating communities on the increasing local opioid dangers, especially fentanyl, responsible for the most fatal overdoses countrywide in recent years. Fentanyl is being added to counterfeit Oxycodone, Adderall and Xanax pills manufactured by Mexican drug traffickers. A lethal dose is 1-2 milligrams. This is



From DEA December 2021 Report on the epidemic of counterfeit pills at [DEA.gov/OnePill](https://www.dea.gov/OnePill)

about 1/100th of the size of the sugar packet you find on your restaurant table.

In May 2021 the DEA reported that 26% of the counterfeit pills they tested had a lethal dose of fentanyl. In December, they reported seizing over 20 million counterfeit pills laced with Fentanyl.

Commissioner Ryder has been to the Village a number of times, and has provided us great support whenever we have reached out to him and his officers.

The Upper Brookville Real Estate Market

The Village real estate market was quite strong in 2021.

We've followed the number of homes sold, the median price, average price, and total sales for the past six years. In 2021, 42 homes sold--a number that is twice the average of the previous five years. In all, about 28% of the homes in Upper Brookville changed hands over the past six years.

The median price in 2021 was higher than 2016 but still lower than the peak in 2017, just before the loss of the State and Local Tax Deduction in 2018.

YEAR	HOMES SOLD	MEDIAN PRICE	AVERAGE PRICE	TOTAL VUB YEARLY SALES
2016	24	\$1,600,000	\$2,203,704	\$52,888,896
2017	18	\$2,337,500	\$2,557,778	\$46,040,004
2018	19	\$2,300,000	\$2,401,316	\$45,625,004
2019	21	\$1,590,000	\$1,756,429	\$36,885,000
2020	15	\$1,800,000	\$1,757,927	\$26,368,905
2021	<u>42</u>	\$1,900,000	\$2,136,048	\$89,714,016

139

Transparency

At a recent Village meeting, a first-time visitor asked if the Village could be "more transparent" about things that are going on. One of our Village goals is to always be one of the most transparent in New York State.

A few years ago the Long Island Press conducted a "Transparency Audit" of 196 Long Island municipalities and agencies. 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.

Detailed meeting minutes for all the roughly 60 Board of Trustee meetings over the past 6 years have been promptly posted to the Village website www.upperbrookville.org, as are about 70 news articles of local interest. The website has about 90 pages of information including the history of the village, trustee and village official bios, detailed street and property lot maps, a form for electronic lookup of property tax information with an ability to pay taxes on-line, and information about deer, raccoons, natural gas installations and the Village Court and Boards meeting calendar.

Audited Financial Statements for the past 5 years are posted on the Village website.

During the past five years we sent over 100 emails to roughly 750 residents describing local developments and time sensitive information. Subjects included storm warnings, legislation alerts, tax information, power outages, school budget votes, discounted home heating oil, school board elections, car thefts, dogwood trees, the LI Cross Sound Tunnel, red light cameras, phone scams, AT&T Landline outages, airplane noise, COVID testing, COVID-19 face mask giveaway, mailbox thefts, the Village Hall, the Old Brookville Police Department, COVID vaccine appointments, garbage pickups, FEMA assistance, noise ordinance, Accessory Dwelling Units and Operation Natalie--Drug Education.

Our website visits are estimated at over 100,000 since its creation in September 2016.

The Coffee and Tea with the Mayor sessions have been well attended and, provided civility is maintained, few subjects are off-limits.

Aircraft Noise

Other than taxes, incessant and deafening aircraft noise is the biggest continuing complaint from residents. The planes will pound us at low altitudes for hours on end. Often, their engines strafe us with noise before waking hours in the morning. Outside in the summer, residents are forced inside to continue a conversation. It has considerably diminished the quality of our lives on the North Shore.

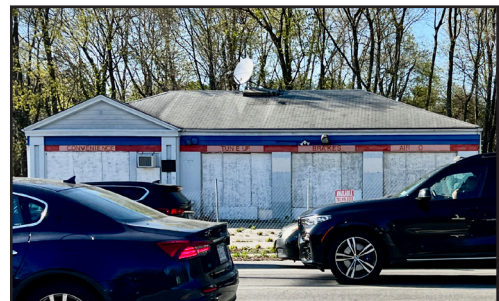
In June, 2019 Congressman Suozzi achieved a breakthrough with the FAA when they agreed to increase the minimum altitude over Upper Brookville from 2,000 to 3,000 feet. It turned out the FAA assumed it was only a temporary agreement--so now they are flying low again.

We worked in a group determined to solve the problem led by Town of North Hemstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth two years ago, and there was significant momentum to file a lawsuit against the FAA. It was a complicated process that required up to \$300,000 from the affected municipalities, which all were eager to donate. The pandemic got in the way, and Supervisor Bosworth did not run for reelection last November.

We look forward to organizing a new group to take up the issue in the fall. Please let the village know if you'd like to participate.



On June 17, 2019 U.S. Congressmen Tom Suozzi and Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania held a press conference in Old Brookville with local Mayors and Village of Upper Brookville Trustee and Deputy Mayor, Ed Madden (on the right) on how the constant noise has negatively impacted the residents' quality of life. Congressman Fitzpatrick, a member of the House Aviation Subcommittee, added that it is not just a quality-of-life issue, but one that affects public health and the environment.



The former Gulf Station in Old Brookville has been boarded up since November of 2013.

Shuttered Gulf Station in Old Brookville

At the NE corner of Routes 25A and 107 an abandoned gas station has stood for many years. The property is in Old Brookville. The final disposition is unresolved at this time.

Changes

State Senator Jim Gaughran may no longer represent Upper Brookville after the November election, depending on the court rulings on the district maps. We appreciate his steadfast support of our Village initiatives and wish him the best. If the proposed map stands, his replacements will be State Senators Kevin Thomas and Anna Kaplan.

At the Village level, Linda Scherer is our new Assistant Clerk replacing Lisa Mancuso who left to become the Clerk in Plandome Manor. We are delighted to have Linda join us and wish Lisa all the best in her new position.

This has been an unusual year for our extended Village family. In that I include our Village Trustees, Board Members, Officials, volunteers, employees and our residents.

We all have friends and loved ones who either struggled with COVID themselves or supported someone close to them who was afflicted. Our Village staff did an amazing job organizing the vaccinations, and dealing with the extended State of Emergency caused by two floods, the recovery of village documents, and the eventual move to 24 Wolver Hollow Road. They dealt with the police transitions and COVID interruptions--often working from home--on top of all the normal business.

It was not business as usual. For example, the pandemic put some restrictions on building inspectors and code enforcers going out to conduct in-person inspections--all work that simply could not be done remotely. You can't do a home inspection virtually; someone has to physically be there. Although a lot of people may say "well, we don't want to hear about COVID," in fact COVID was a reality that delayed the normal operations quite a bit.

We appreciate the vast majority of our residents who were extraordinarily kind and understanding in their communications with the Village despite unique and stressful situations. We appreciate all our residents who reached out to ask questions, make comments and express concerns that helped us all find ways to better Upper Brookville, and leave it in place for future generations to improve.

We are all part of the team, and that team includes residents. There is a seat at the table for everybody in the Village. If you have a constructive suggestion or concern, we'd like to hear from you.

We look forward to meeting each of you in person. To stay up-to-date, please be sure to sign up for Village emails on the home page of our www.upperbrookville.org website.

Yours sincerely,



Elliot Conway
Mayor