

INC. VILLAGE OF FLORAL PARK
Board of Trustees Meeting – Jul 18, 2017

Belmont Park

Trustee Fitzgerald reported that last Monday, July 10th, our local elected officials on the State level held a Listening Session to gather input from the local communities on the upcoming proposed RFP. Trustee Fitzgerald thanked all the residents that took time to come to the meeting to speak or just to listen to the input from our surrounding communities and other interested parties. On reflecting on the meeting, from the common input of our residents it is clear that Floral Park and its residents have a significant stake on any transformative project that may occur at ‘beautiful’ Belmont Park. To that end, at this point it would appear that Floral Park would be best served during the upcoming process if the following were done:

- The Empire State Development Corp’s conditions in the RFP are as wide ranging as possible to not restrict or discourage various ideas that have been or could be put forth from being vetted;
- The RFP should ensure that any proposal takes into account the entirety of Belmont Park to ensure that all proposals retain and build upon the historic nature of the Park;
- As mentioned over the past decade or so, a community advisory board similar to the one at Saratoga should be established to ensure that the surrounding communities have input during the entire process.

Tree Committee

Trustee Fitzgerald said he looks forward to working with the newly established Tree Committee whose main charge will be to continue to improve our means and methods of ensuring that the tree landscape that exists in our Village remains a hallmark of the Village. The committee will be meeting during the coming weeks and he will provide updates as we move forward.

Fire Department

Trustee Pombonyo extended her congratulations to the Floral Park Fire Department EMTs Lynn Willie, Patricia Luger and Christal Pepe who received awards presented by NYS Senator Elaine Phillips at the 1st Battalion Awards Ceremony held in Mineola on July 5th. Our three EMTs helped a Floral Park woman to deliver a beautiful baby boy in her home in the middle of the night. At the ceremony were many firefighters and their families, including a large contingent from Floral Park, the proud parents and their new baby, Chief Michael Longobardi, and the Mayor and Fire Commissioner.

Our firefighters continue their weekly drills with an inter-department drill with South Floral Park, a mutual aid department. The drill will focus on hose handling and responding to propane emergencies. Our engine and ladder companies will also be drilling to enhance the coordination of these two vital fire department functions.

In the important area of capital improvements, planning is underway to replace the 25-year old fire engine used by the Active Company on Atlantic Avenue. A new engine will include important safety features such as a larger nozzle and hose to direct greater amounts of water on fires more quickly; a greater variety of updated equipment to fight the more complex fires the department encounters; increased capacity in the cab for additional firefighters and their bunker gear so they can travel to emergencies, fully prepared, more quickly; storage for ladders, including those which are 24 feet and now required; and other important firefighting features. Due to the increasing size of the newer firetrucks, interior structural modifications at the Active Firehouse will also be necessary. This important capital improvement will be discussed in greater detail at future Village Board meetings.

Our Floral Park Fire Department also participates in volunteer community activities. This spring, our fire department teamed with our police department to greet students with special needs, provide exciting tours of their departments, and form positive bonds with the children in their roles as first responders, community helpers and friends. The fire department will be returning to our schools to meet again with our students with special needs and display their equipment. This past Saturday, our fire department participated in a Pet Fire Safety Day at Jo-Mar Grooming and Boarding on Covert Avenue.

Finally, all are invited to the Elmont Fire Department parade this Saturday, July 22nd, 6:00 pm on Hempstead Turnpike by Belmont Park. Our Floral Park Fire Department is participating in the parade.

Floral Park Public Library

Trustee Cheng reported that E-magazines are now available at the Library. You may go to the Library's website and access countless magazines for free.

The Summer Reading Program, Lego and the Chess Club are in full swing with many participants.

Police Department

Trustee Cheng reported that for the first six months of the year, the Police Department issued 1,297 moving violation summonses. That is 18% over the same period in 2016.

In June, the following summonses were issued: 2 for speeding, 2 for red lights, 36 stop signs and 229 other vehicle and traffic law violations.

Third Track

Trustee Cheng reported that most residents know, the Capital Project Review Board approved the budget for the MTA Capital Projects which included the necessary money for the Third Track.

For the past 17 months, Trustee Cheng said he has been involved with almost every meeting with the Village, the MTA, the LIRR, and the Governor's Office. Throughout these meetings, we repeatedly stated that there was a host of other projects that should be completed before embarking on a project we still do not know the real purpose of.

This project was different than the one promulgated 10 years ago. With no residential takings and no support from the Villages of Westbury and Mineola and only temporary support from the Village of Garden City, only Floral Park and New Hyde Park officially stood against the Project.

Despite our constant questioning, the process moved forward which resulted in a superficial Scoping Document, a superficial DEIS and a FEIS that answered some but certainly not all of our concerns and questions.

On June 30, the day the CPRB had to veto the MTA Capital Project Budget or it would pass de facto, the Village signed a Memorandum of Understanding that took well over 20 hours of face-to-face meetings as well as countless hours of phone and email correspondence. All of the discussions were confidential and we were not authorized to discuss same in public. The Senate then voiced its objections and its intention to veto the Budget.

It was my hope that the newly appointed MTA Chairman, Joseph Lhotta, who had been given 30 days to develop a plan for the LIRR and MTA would use that time to prioritize all of the projects and concerns regarding Penn Station and the LIRR. Things became fast and furious on July 11th when our State Senator informed us that she believed the budget was going to be approved and we should finalize our Memorandum of Understanding.

Without our hard line during negotiations, none of the Villages affected would have received any monetary compensation as mitigation of the Project's impacts. It was Floral Park and New Hyde Park that demanded construction mitigation, quality of life mitigation and monetary compensation during construction and a serve fund that would compensate all of the Villages for any post construction impacts as well as some Station improvements.

Mayor Longobardi has summarized the Memorandum of Understanding and its benefits for the Villages in a recent Mayor's Message. Trustee Cheng urged all interested to please review the Memorandum of Understanding and contact any Board Member regarding its content. While not perfect, we were able to attain some measure of comfort and some monetary benefits that hopefully will partially mitigate the disruption the Project will cause here and in our neighboring communities.

Recreation Department

Trustee Chiara reported that the Recreation Center and Pool is where the actions is during the summer months for many of our Village residents. Both the youth programs and adult programs are providing fun and friendly competition for all those participating.

Our swim team, "The Pirates", won their first swim meet on July 17th against Williston Park. The team is looking forward to a successful season.

A variety of special events are taking place at the pool with Movie and Sundae Night on Friday, July 21st.

Trustee Chiara thanked Superintendent of Recreation Kurt Meyfohrt and Pool Director Tom Dillon and all the Recreation and Pool staff who make sure that all our residents have an enjoyable experience at the Recreation Center and Pool. They are all doing a great job!

Mayor's Report

Mayor Longobardi reported that along with Trustee Chiara, he had the pleasure of attending the reopening of Firestone on Jericho Turnpike on Saturday, July 15th. The Mayor wished them much success.

Mayor Longobardi reported that the Board of Trustees is currently reviewing two applications to open restaurants in Floral Park. Floral Park is a great location and a beautiful Village to open a business and we look forward to having them here.

Mayor Longobardi stated that Oh Yes Productions was issued a film permit for a Netflix movie to be filmed in the vicinity of Village Hall on Thursday and Friday, July 27th and 28th. Set up for the set has already begun. There will be many trucks and crews around during this time and it may be difficult to access the area. This is the first movie filmed in Floral Park and we welcome the crew and stars of the film, Adam Sandler, Chris Rock and Steve Buscemi.

Mayor Longobardi reported that Ex-Fire Chief and current Secretary of the Floral Park Fire Department, Joseph O'Grady, was awarded the New York State Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year. An active member of the Floral Park Fire Department since 1984, Joe is the Chairperson of the Nassau County Firefighters Operation Wounded Warrior Organization. We are extremely proud of Joe for being the recipient of this prestigious award and for all the great work he has done to benefit our residents and all of our wounded warriors for so many years. Congratulations Joe!

Mayor Longobardi thanked Felix Procaccia for filming the Board of Trustees meetings for us and for other municipalities as well.

Mayor Longobardi said that as stated in Trustee Cheng's report, the Third Track Project has been approved by the State Assembly, Senate and Governor's Office. Mayor Longobardi thanked Trustee Cheng, Village Administrator Gerard Bambrick, Village Attorney John Ryan, Counsel for the Third Track Michael Murphy from Beveridge & Diamond, members of the Third Track Task Force and our friends in New Hyde Park for the many hours of work and effort they put into this project. No one wants this project but it is, unfortunately, happening. Many hours of negotiations took place in order to protect Floral Park and New Hyde Park which resulted in the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. We will stay vigilant and use the Memorandum of Understanding to enforce the protections which have been put in place for our residents and businesses.