

Inc. Village of Floral Park
Board of Trustees Reports
May 19, 2020

Belmont Project Update – Deputy Mayor Kevin Fitzgerald

As most of you are aware last Wednesday the judge in our Article 78 pleading against the Empire State Development Corporation (ESD) ruled in favor of the ESD in all nine causes even though the judge stated “*the Court recognizes that the approval of the Project goes against the VILLAGE’s legitimate concerns with respect to the scope of the project and the impact on its residents*”. Over the past week a number of residents asked me for my reaction to the decision. I think it can be best summed up as a disappointment. Disappointment on a number of levels but primarily that the judge along with the entire ESD Board read and heard the hundreds of comments and concerns by our residents, but never once asked **even one** question to the staff of the ESD that coordinated the project on how those concerns where to be addressed or lessened. I am disappointed that they did not question the team and the process to ensure that the surrounding communities concerns were properly mitigated. (Just as a matter of context, our Village Board just recently heard a request for a take-out restaurant to open on Jericho Turnpike and our Board asked over 20 questions of the owner.) If the proper time and attention would have been given to the concerns of the people that will most directly be impacted, I strongly feel that they would have realized that there are serious affects and that additional changes were necessary which would ultimately lead to a better and more welcomed project. I think one does not need to look any further than the Third Track project to see a successful project for all involved due to the coordination of the developers and the Village and its residents.

I would like to re-iterate that we were never against development at Belmont Park as long as the affects to our community were minimal. It would seem even more evident now that the whole SEQRA process and the ESD’s mandate to give "primary consideration to local needs and desires" under the UDC ACT, needs a complete overhaul or else something similar will happen to other communities throughout the state whereby the concerns of residents are at best, marginalized.

The Village Board, Administration and Department Heads have already started initial discussions on how we can use the tools and assets available to us in order to best mitigate the impacts that we have the ability to control. We are determined to ensure Floral Park is a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Beautification Committee – Deputy Mayor Fitzgerald

Over the past weekend, the members of our volunteer Beautification Committee led by Donna Sanchez, were out in force planting flowers in the various pocket parks as well as

the median on Floral Parkway. I would like to thank all of the volunteers (and I understand some of their children) for their continued efforts in keeping the Floral in Floral Park. Additionally, I would like to thank Deputy Parks Supervisor Larry DeCiantis for his and his team's efforts in supporting the committee and its requests. I would be remiss also if I did not recognize the efforts of our homeowners who all year round keep their properties looking beautiful. It certainly adds to the charm of our hometown.

Recreation and Pool Departments – Trustee Pombonyo

Trustee Pombonyo announced that it's great to see our tennis players back at the Rec Center enjoying singles games in this beautiful spring weather. Since Saturday's reopening, there has been a steady stream of activity on the courts which are open daily from 8am to noon and 2pm to 9pm. This schedule allows for over 40 matches everyday and over 80 players daily to enjoy a game of tennis. Be sure to call to reserve your tennis time on the day you wish to play: 516-326-6334. See the Village of Floral Park website and the Recreation Facebook page for more information.

We are all eagerly anticipating the Governor's reopening of recreational facilities. Stay tuned.

Floral Park Conservation Society – Trustee Pombonyo

Trustee Pombonyo encouraged all in Floral Park to enjoy these beautiful days outdoors. A walk outside Centennial Gardens is a most enjoyable experience, and we remind all of the importance of continued social distancing. We'll be sure to keep all in Floral Park posted about our Gardens reopening. We know you can't wait.

Covert Avenue Chamber of Commerce and Our Businesses – Trustee Pombonyo

Trustee Pombonyo thanked the leadership of the Covert Avenue and Floral Park Chambers of Commerce for their tremendous work in providing our businesses with daily reports on the resources and funding that are available to support them. Adding to our business expertise are our local attorneys and legislators at our county, state and federal levels, all of whom we thank for their accessibility, useful information, and willingness to respond to questions and solve problems.

And, to all of you, please continue to SHOP AND TAKE OUT LOCAL! Help our Covert Avenue, Tulip Avenue, Jericho Turnpike and other important businesses to survive and thrive. Enjoy all their excellent products and services!

Honoring Our Graduates! - Trustee Pombonyo

As our college graduations are now under way, when you see a graduate, please offer your congratulations and best wishes for their success. The Class of 2020 has made Floral Park proud.

Fire Department – Trustee Cheng

Thanks again to our Fire Department members. I again wish to thank each and every member of the Fire Department for responding to fire and rescue calls during this time. We continue to pray for your safety and continued health.

Third Track – Trustee Cheng

I have been informed that 3TC has sent a letter to the residents in the Charles Street area regarding the installation of the sound walls between Main Street and Beechhurst. As previously stated, that work will begin in the fall which is one year earlier than originally scheduled.

We had been told that the Tunnel to the Park was scheduled to be painted the week of May 11 and reopen May 18. This did not happen. First, there was difficulty in procuring the paint from Sherwin Williams. I informed 3TC that since there is a Sherwin Williams store in New Hyde Park, I would be happy to pick up the paint for them. That issue has been solved and the painting will be done this week. However, we were informed today that in order to meet ADA compliance, handrails have to be installed prior to the opening of the tunnel. We have been told that handrail work will be done early next week, but please note that 3TC does not have the handrails yet. There is also an issue regarding the placement of the handrails and the operation of the gate at the tunnel. More to follow.

Library – Trustee Chiara

The Nassau Library System has acknowledged the Floral Park Library for being Number One in circulation of materials to patrons during the Coronavirus pandemic. Congratulations! The library staff continues to be innovative during these times to avail themselves to our residents. They are doing a fantastic job!

Some Library updates: The children's departments along with the young adult department now have their own YouTube channels for viewing library events. It is another way for patrons to find out what is currently being offered by our Library. Through AARP, the Library is offering a link to a tax preparation software program for free. The Library has been continuing its virtual chair yoga, they conducted a "Thrill of the Grill" summer cooking class and the children have the opportunity to be shown virtually how to make a "fairy" garden in Centennial Gardens.

The winner of the Star Wars Trivia challenge was Thomas LaBrec, who won a \$25 amazon gift card and the winner of the Riddle challenge was Debra Risetto, who won a \$10 gift card to Tulip Bake Shop. Another challenge is being planned for next week. Continue to check the Library website www.floralparklibrary.org and Facebook page for current events.

I am very thankful for our creative library staff for their continued efforts, constantly offering new activities to our community during these times. They are really showing their

talents and abilities, by keeping connected to our community, encouraging us to stay active and vibrant.

Building Department – Trustee Chiara

Although the Building Department is still accepting permit applications, currently, construction for non-essential work is still not permitted due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Governor has not yet lifted restrictions on construction. Individual homeowners, however, are permitted to do work themselves on their own homes with no restrictions.

Recently, there have been a number of inquiries about backyard pool permits. The backyard pool permit application and regulations are online. A pool permit is required for any installation. Please check on the FPBuildings@FPVillage.org website for updates and information regarding permits and regulations. It is always advisable to contact the Building Department before starting any construction projects.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Dominick Longobardi

Before the opening of the meeting the Mayor announced that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing mandate, seating would be limited in the Village Hall Courtroom. The public can participate by Zoom video-conference (Click Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84154850449?pwd=eVdvdVN2a3dHamJlbnk56Q3hQMWNEQT09>; Meeting ID: 841 5485 0449, Password: 690620) and by tele-conference (Call 1-646-558-8656; Meeting ID: 841 5485 0449, Password: 690620). A public comment period will take place during the board meeting. The Mayor also stated for the record that various Trustees, Department Heads, and employees were participating in select locations at Village Hall and remotely, all in accordance with CDC guidelines. The Mayor opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and then held a moment of silence for those that have passed away or are sick due to COVID-19 in our community and asked all to please keep their families and friends in our prayers.

The Mayor reported that there is a lot of activity going on with the Village Board and staff to prepare reopening facilities in the near future. Currently, the Village is complying with all of the Governor's Executive Orders. The Village was able to legally reopen the Village tennis courts this past weekend following COVID-19 operating guidelines to ensure the safety and health of the residents, public and employees. I am happy to report everything went very well. The Village is still receiving many calls as to whether or not the Floral Park Pool is opening this summer. I assure everyone that the Board of Trustees' greatest wish is to open the Pool for the Floral Park families as soon as it can, when it can. Once the Village is notified about any changes in the State's and the County's Executive Orders, the Village Board will make its decision with consideration to the timing and limits of Governor Cuomo's orders. In the meantime, the Village is making plans with pool staff for the facilities as if the Pool would reopen sometime this summer. The Board of Trustees is working very hard to meet the staff needs to accommodate operating changes.

Mayor Longobardi welcomed former Floral Park resident, Jim Quigley who was attending remotely from Calabash, North Carolina. Jim is the father of Village Clerk, Susan Walsh. Both Mr. Quigley and Mayor Longobardi recognized Susan for the great job she is doing as the Village Clerk keeping the Village running smoothly, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor Longobardi reported that the Memorial Day Parade had to be cancelled, however, the Village is planning other ways to recognize the Memorial Day holiday following Executive Orders and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. On a positive note, DPW Superintendent Kevin Ginnane, who is President of the American Public Works Association, Long Island Branch, organized a “Celebrate Our Country’s Heroes” event on Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 16th, to recognize medical staff working on the front lines at the Northport VA Medical Center. Kevin invited Long Island Villages’ and Towns’ DPW workers and members of the Long Island Sanitation Officials to participate. Over 40 vehicles representing villages and towns on Long Island caravanned from Mineola to provide over 200 meals for the medical staff. I joined Superintendent Kevin Ginnane and Floral Park DPW employees who volunteered their personal time on the front lines of this pandemic to serve the meals and I thank all of them for their time and efforts. I would also like to recognize Williston Park Mayor Paul Erhbar who also attended. It was a fantastic day and showed the true spirit of Floral Park, sister villages and towns, public works and sanitation workers on Long Island.

As Long Island awaits more orders from Governor Cuomo, the Village continues to comply with providing all essential services, and with all social distancing and public health and safety mandates. This is a reminder to residents who are sheltered in place to please follow CDC guidelines to protect not only themselves, but the public and the citizenry, especially our elderly. Please wear protective equipment including masks and gloves, and follow all social distancing rules. Please be patient, kind and take good care of each other. “We will get through this together.” Thank you.