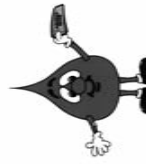


Village of
Montebello
BLOOD DRIVE

Saturday, January 26th
8:00am-1:00pm
Montebello Community Center
350 Haverstraw Rd, Suffern



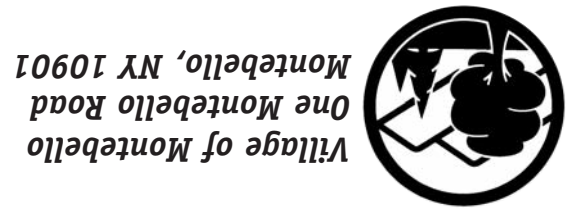
All Donors will receive a
FREE AMC MOVIE TICKET!

**Your Life-Saving Gift stays
right here at Good Samaritan!**



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Bon Secours Health System
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Village of montebello review

Jeff Oppenheim, Mayor, Lance Millman, Deputy Mayor, Melanie Golden, Stacy Caridi, Steven A. Sorrillo, Trustees



Greetings from the Mayor



The famous British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, once wrote, "If you're going through hell, keep going." Apt advice for a Village that just endured another difficult storm with prolonged power outages, property damage, road closures. Yet, our willingness to work aggressively to fix our problems allowed Montebello to restore electricity to residents faster than most municipalities in Rockland. Similarly, we are working to address ongoing financial

challenges in the face of declining real estate values and assessments. In order to avoid significant tax hikes we are utilizing every means possible to economize. Lastly, the Village is confronted by the problem of several abandoned properties, which adversely impact our neighborhood. Using Churchill's advice, we are determined to move proactively to fix each of these problems.

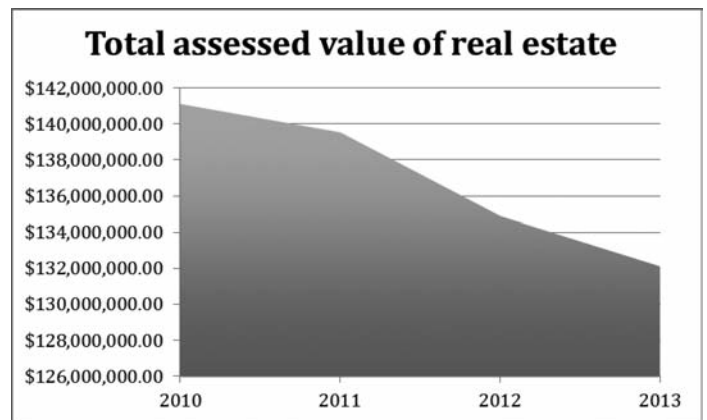
Our past experience with Hurricane Irene taught us some valuable lessons. First, we need to be persistent. Round the clock calls to O&R, specifying all outage areas during Hurricane Sandy gave the utility a clear map each day of whose power needed to be restored. Second, we need to communicate. Our Facebook page had more than 1500 contacts during the week of the storm and this allowed us to quickly identify and respond to problems in the Village. We were able to communicate important information in real time to many residents. If you haven't visited our page, please take a look in order to keep abreast of relevant news. Finally, we need to be organized. The dedication of the Village Hall staff and the Board of Trustees has been crucial. Every street in the village was surveyed and every call was addressed. For example, swift identification of the roads blocked by trees allowed us to open every road within 3 days of the storm.

Yes, the consequences of the hurricane will be with us for a while, but we will get past it. Clean up and repairs will take months. The village sustained damage to the Gorman Park in the Pines. Minor damage also occurred at the Community Center. Roadside pickup of debris will take months to complete and is being assisted by the New York State Govt. FEMA is also (hopefully) going to provide assistance and any homeowner needing help to compensate for uninsured damages can contact them at www.DisasterAssistance.gov. FEMA is still assisting us with the consequences of Hurricane Irene, and the bridge on Montebello Road is still awaiting replacement by the county.

The Village approved the 2013 budget in November. The budget is available on our website for your review. A minimal increase in expenditures is anticipated. Taxes will increase by 1.7%. This will cost the average household approximately \$25. We were able to hold down taxes in spite of a four-year downward trend in our total assessed real estate value (see chart below). This number represents the total amount of the Town Assessor's appraisal of taxable properties in our village. There are several reasons for the decline. These include certiorari claims, PILOT agreements, and reclassification of properties use. The net effect is that even with no increase in the tax rate, the revenue to the village declines when the assessed value declines.

Only by raising taxes significantly could we fully compensate for this decline in real estate tax revenue. However, we are determined to avoid big increases. We are being very frugal with your money. For

example, no elected official or appointed board member has received any pay increase in 6 years. Employees are receiving very small increases based on COLAs. Every aspect of the budget is scrutinized to save money. Almost 50% of the budget is spent on road maintenance and garbage pickup.



Yet we are also very mindful that our infrastructure must be maintained. We increased the budget for road paving by 20% so we don't fall behind on repairing the roads in our village. By fixing the roads proactively we minimize the need for future bonds to pay for extensive repairs. Currently the village has only 2 outstanding bonds, and these will be fully repaid in approximately 7 years.

Montebello, like many other municipalities, has a problem with foreclosed and abandoned properties. Currently there are about 7 such properties in the village. Other municipalities are certainly in worse condition, but this is of little consolation if one of these houses is near your own. Montebello is determined not to permit such properties from adversely affecting the property values of the neighborhood (please see article inside). We are utilizing rigid enforcement of our property maintenance law and our code in order to keep these homes in good condition. If circumstances warrant, the Board is also willing to seize title to abandoned properties in compliance with NYS law. There is no reason that the citizens of the village should suffer from the secondary consequences of abandoned or foreclosed homes.

Some of the challenges that Montebello faces are inevitable, whether as a consequence of Mother Nature or of the regional economy. However, defeat and suffering are clearly optional. We prefer to avoid both of these by focusing on solutions to our problems. Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts, concerns, ideas and complaints. The number for Village Hall is 845-368-2211.

HURRICANE SANDY

If you sustained losses or damage from Hurricane Sandy, you may be eligible for disaster aid. For information or to apply: www.DisasterAssistance.gov



FEMA

FACEBOOK

The Village of Montebello is on Facebook. Please visit us and join the discussion. This is a great way to find out important news affecting our Village.



SODIUM VAPOR LIGHTING/ NYSERDA Grant Awarded



The Village of Montebello is working with Orange and Rockland to convert streetlight bulbs to the more efficient sodium vapor which uses less energy and saves money. This season 8 light bulbs will be replaced at O&R's expense. In addition, the Village received a \$757 grant from NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research Development Authority) to replace appliances at Village Hall with Energy Star rated products.

FREE NOTARY SERVICE FOR ALL MONTEBELLO RESIDENTS

We have two licensed Notaries at Village Hall. Their services are available to residents who need documents notarized at no charge.



SECURITY ALERT

A recent home burglary in Montebello demonstrated an unusual modus operandi. Consequently, there are several precautions that should be observed by everyone:



1. These criminals struck at dusk (6-8PM). Make sure that if you are not home at these hours that there are lights on and perhaps a radio/TV so that your house does not appear unoccupied as night falls. Thieves generally don't enter homes that they believe are occupied.
2. Report any suspicious cars during the day to the police. Such cars might even be those that wouldn't normally arouse suspicion, such as expensive cars or SUVs.
3. Make sure that there are no exposed security system wires near your front door and that all the doors are securely locked.

HISTORIC MONTEBELLO

The George S. and Mary E. Conklin House, built c. 1870, on Haverstraw Road, although greatly expanded and altered, can still be seen as an early farmhouse, with the original gabled roof section defined by the large brick chimney on the original left façade. (The two-bay section to the left of the chimney, along with the repeated gable section at the rear are much later additions.) George was a house carpenter and so probably built this house himself. The Conklins lived here with their daughter Amelia through at least 1887. W.F. Gurnee bought it by 1911; a large Gurnee clan, most of whom were farmers, resided in Ramapo by 1880.



WHEN A TREE FALLS IN THE WOODS, THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

By Lance N. Millman, Deputy Mayor

Well, there seems to be a lot of confusion by our residents as to this question. I hope to simplify the answer for most scenarios, but of course there will always be more complicated questions and answers. In all cases, one should always refer to our tree law and ask questions at Village Hall.

1. If a tree falls and hits our house or fence or property and is lying on the ground, do we have to report we are cutting up a tree prior to cutting it up? Answer: No (exception: in a conservation easement) However, taking pictures is recommended for your insurance and to prove, should a question arise, that it was already down. Be sure to have it cut up by a licensed contractor or by yourself as owner.
2. If a tree falls and hits our house or fence or property and is leaning on the property it hit, do we have to report we are cutting up a tree prior to cutting it up? Answer: Take a picture and fill out an application for a permit as a precaution. If it is necessary to remove as an emergency, file as soon as possible thereafter.
3. If a tree falls on our property and hits nothing and is lying on the ground, do we have to report we are cutting up this tree? Answer: No permit needed, but see No.1.
4. If a partial part (large branch or 1/2 of divided tree) of a tree falls and is lying on the ground and I only want to cut up the part that fell? Answer: No permit needed, but see No. 1.
5. If I want to cut up the balance of the tree in #4 above, what do I do? Answer: It depends on the portion of the tree that is remaining. If a double tree loses one tree, then the other half is considered a live tree and you should take a picture, fill out a permit and proceed with a licensed contractor.
6. A dead tree exists on my property and I want to take it down. Does this count towards my annual tree count or is this separate? Answer: Dead trees do not count towards annual count, but you must fill out a permit, pay a \$10 fee and have the dead tree verified before taking down by a licensed contractor. Take a picture and attach to your application. (Unless an imminent, verified danger, but, if so, file as soon as possible thereafter).
7. A dead tree is in my conservation easement and is no danger of harming my house or family. Can I remove this? Answer: No trees can be taken down or removed from the conservation easement without approval from the Village Board.
8. A live tree is in danger of falling on my house or is endangering the safety of my family. Can I remove this? Answer: You will be able to take this tree down once you have taken pictures and applied for a permit and receive approval. There is no cost for the permit. In a true emergency not permitting an application first, document the condition and apply as soon as possible after the removal, and include the contractor's certification.
9. A dead tree is in danger of falling on my house. Can I take it down? Answer: Yes as in No. 8 above, but you must pay a permit fee of \$10.00 to take down dead trees that will need to be verified.
10. Can I include the dead tree as a live tree in my total number count and avoid paying the \$10.00 fee. Answer: Yes, but it will count towards your number of live trees allowed each year. Dead trees normally do not apply to the count.
11. If I want to build a pool or do an addition on my house, do the trees that need to be removed count towards my allowed trees? Answer: No, they do not. But you must get a building permit, and include a map showing the construction and any necessary tree removal. The Building Inspector will make sure that only trees in the way of construction should be removed. If you wish to remove more, they will be subject to the tree removal permitting process.

These are just some scenarios that may occur. Of course, if there is imminent danger, then you take a picture of the tree and notify the office through filling out a permit immediately after the removal and include the written explanation of your tree contractor. Please refer to our tree law which can be found on our village website. Residents always have the right to cut up the trees themselves instead of using a licensed contractor.

We realize that this is a difficult situation for all, but think about the other option if we did not have a tree law. There have been residents who illegally cut down 20-100 trees on their property and

| JANUARY 2013 | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------------|--------|--|---|--|---|--------|----------|
| | | | 1 <i>CLOSED</i> <i>NEW YEAR'S DAY</i> | 2 | 3 <i>Parks Commission</i> 7:30 P.M. | 4 | 5 |
| | 6 | 7 | 8 <i>Planning Board</i> 7:15 P.M. | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 <i>Board of Trustees</i> 8:00 P.M. | 17 <i>Zoning Board of Appeals</i> 7:45 P.M. | 18 | 19 |
| | 20 | 21 <i>CLOSED</i> <i>MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</i> | 22 | 23 <i>Historic Preservation Commission</i> 7:30 P.M. | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| | 27 | 28 | 29 <i>CDRC</i> 9:30 A.M. | 30 | 31 | | |

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | FEBRUARY 2013 |
|--------|---|--|---|---|--------|----------|----------------------|
| | | | | <i>Parks Commission</i> 7:30 P.M. | 1 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4 | 5 <i>Planning Board Workshop</i> 7:00 P.M. | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 <i>Planning Board</i> 7:15 P.M. | 13 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> | 14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> | 15 | 16 | |
| 17 | 18 <i>CLOSED</i> <i>PRESIDENT'S DAY</i> | 19 | 20 <i>Board of Trustees</i> 8:00 P.M. | 21 <i>Zoning Board of Appeals</i> 7:45 P.M. | 22 | 23 | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 <i>CDRC</i> 9:30 A.M. | 27 <i>Historic Preservation Comm.</i> 7:30 P.M. | 28 | | | |

| MARCH 2013 | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------|--|---|---|--------|----------|
| | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | 3 | 4 | 5 <i>Planning Board Workshop</i> 7:00 P.M. | 6 | 7 <i>Parks Commission</i> 7:30 P.M. | 8 | 9 |
| | 10 | 11 | 12 <i>Planning Board</i> 7:15 P.M. | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| | 17 <i>ST. PATRICK'S DAY</i> | 18 | 19 <i>VILLAGE ELECTION</i> 7:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M. | 20 <i>Board of Trustees</i> 8:00 P.M. | 21 <i>Zoning Board of Appeals</i> 7:45 P.M. | 22 | 23 |
| | 24 <i>PALM SUNDAY</i> | 25 | 26 <i>CDRC</i> 9:30 A.M. | 27 <i>Historic Preservation Comm.</i> 7:30 P.M. | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| <i>EASTER</i> | 31 | | | | | | |

**Valley National Bank
Site Plan Re-Approval**

Application of Valley National Bank, 1720 Route 23, Wayne, New Jersey 07470 for Re-Approval of a Site Plan entitled "Valley National Bank-Montebello", consisting of 1.56 acres located on the west side of Hemion Road approximately 500 feet north of Route 59 in the Village of Montebello, which is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 55.10, Block 1, Lot 5.2 in a PO (formerly VC) Zone.

The application was approved by the Planning Board at the November 13, 2012 meeting.

**International Christian Fellowship Church
Sign Permit**

Application of International Christian Fellowship Church, 506 Haverstraw Road, Montebello, New York, 10901 for a sign permit. The subject property is located on the west side of Haverstraw Road, 250 feet from the intersection of Viola Road in the Village of Montebello, which is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Sections 48.07, Block 1, Lot 52 in a RR-50 Zone.

The application was approved by the Planning Board at the November 13, 2012 meeting.

**Town of Ramapo—Public Hearing
Coe Farm Road Sewer Extension
Wetlands Permit**

Application of the Town of Ramapo, 237 Route 59, Suffern, New York 10901, for Approval of a Stream and Wetlands Permit entitled "Coe Farm Road Sewer Extension" to allow disturbance and construction within 75 feet of a freshwater wetland. The proposed construction is for the extension of sanitary sewer service from Coe Farm Road to provide gravity sewer service to an existing dwelling at 585 Haverstraw Road, which will cross 75 feet of wetland. The subject property is located on the west side of Coe Farm Road in the Village of Montebello, which is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Sections 40.20, Block 1, Lots 21 and 52 in a RR-50 Zone.

The application is currently adjourned to the January Planning Board meeting.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

**Yosef Emuna
96 Viola Road
49.05-11-15
Public Hearing**

Application of Yosef Emuna, 129 Grandview Avenue, Monsey, New York in reference to his property at 96 Viola Road, Montebello, New York, which was submitted to the Village of Montebello Zoning Board of Appeals for variances from the requirement of Article IV Section 195-13, Use Group m, Column 2 (Minimum Lot Area); Column 4 (Front Setback); Column 5 (Front Yard) and Column 8 (Side Yard) of the Zoning Local Law of the Village of Montebello to permit construction, maintenance and use of an existing single family dwelling and a new single family dwelling. The premises is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 49.05, Block 1, Lot 15 in a RR-50 Zone.

The application is currently before the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and will return to the Planning Board.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Anyone interested in obtaining a plot in the Community Garden should sign up at Village Hall. The Village will be adding 9 additional plots for the 2013 planting season.



CANDLE SAFETY

By Chris Kear, Fire Inspector

With the winter months upon us and holidays nearing, there will be an increase in the use of candles for many reasons. These include but are not limited to, the wonderful scents of the holidays, religious purposes and ambiance. Although there are no laws against having candles, there are several 'rules' that must be followed to ensure the safety for all.

- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. And especially if you leave you home.
- Keep candles at least 12" from any type of combustible. (anything that can easily burn)
- Use candles on a sturdy uncluttered surface.
- If you use a base for your candle, make sure it is made of a non-combustible material.
- Light candles safely. Keep your hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- Never let a candle burn all the way down. Extinguish it before it gets too low.
- Never use a candle (open flame) if oxygen is being used in the home. (medical purposes).
- Try never to use candles as light during power outages. Have flashlights and spare batteries available.
- Never leave a child alone in a room with candles burning.
- Never touch or move a candle when being used or just after extinguishing. Candle wax is extremely hot as a liquid.
- Never extinguish a candle with water.
- ALWAYS make sure that the candle is COMPLETELY out after extinguishing!

FACTS: More than 1/3 of all home candle related fires occurred in the bedroom.

On average, a candle fire in the home is reported to U.S. fire departments every 40 minutes.

Over 1/2 the fires related to candles are because combustibles and candles are placed too close to each other.

For additional candle safety information please log onto to www.candles.org or www.nfpa.org/education.

On behalf of myself and my family, have a safe, healthy and wonderful holiday season!

FROM THE DESK OF THE VILLAGE CLERK/TREASURER:

Village tax bills will be mailed out before the end of December and are due no later than January 31, 2013. After January 31st penalties will be added each month. If you pay your property taxes through your mortgage company, you will not receive a bill from the Village. You will receive a receipt upon payment from your bank. Please contact Village Hall with any questions at 368-2211.

The next General Election for the Offices of Two Trustees and One Village Justice in the Village will be held on March 19, 2013 at Village Hall from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. Anyone not registered to vote can pick up a Registration Form at Village Hall or may contact the Rockland County Board of Elections at 638-5172.

On behalf of the staff at Village Hall we wish all of our residents Happy Holidays!

change their landscape and the views that the adjoining neighbors had prior to this tree leveling. Do we want to allow residents to clear lots and ignore the basic beauty of our village. This also creates flooding and ponding issues. We recognize the rights of our land owners, but let me ask you this: Did you have to get approval and permits for the building of your house, and were there possible limitations on how and what you can build? The answer is "yes", and this should be no different than the right to remove trees.

I thank you for your understanding of why we must have this law and hope the above has anticipated and answered most of your questions. As I said at the outset, the above is general, and your situation may be unique, so please ask first.



DEBRIS CLEAN UP/COYOTES AND WOLVES

By Steven A. Sorriolo, Trustee

We in Montebello have survived the recent storm relatively intact. Many of us have lost trees and tree limbs and even experienced some minor damage to our homes and structures. Most of us lost power for several days but we survived the ordeal with a minimum of cost and irritation. We must consider ourselves fortunate when we

compare what we have endured to the people who live along the coast. We now have to deal with the aftermath. Trees and branches are down everywhere you look and they need to be removed. The New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) will be assisting us in the clean-up effort. The Mayor and members of the Board of Trustees surveyed every street in Montebello and catalogued every area where tree debris has accumulated. This list was forwarded to the DOT. Beginning sometime during the week of December Fifteenth the DOT will be sending trucks to pick up the debris in the Village. The process is expected to take two to three weeks. We have also been informed that if the DOT misses some areas the Town of Ramapo will than follow up and remove what is left. It is important to note that only debris left along the curb or edge of your property will be picked up. No one is allowed to go onto your property to remove any of this debris. This will be of great help in maintaining the pristine rural nature of our community. Also it must be noted that we will incur no cost in this clean-up effort.

Recently it has come to our attention that there appears to be at least two separate packs of coyotes roaming the neighborhoods of Montebello. One has been spotted in the Coe Farm Road area in the northwest quadrant of the Village and one in the Pines. Each pack it is reported consists of several members. In addition there has also been a report of a wolf spotted in Berbit Park. The park runs along Spook Rock Road east of the golf course. Coyotes have been known to take cats and small dogs and other small animals, wolves are typically pack animals but in this case only one was spotted. They are far more dangerous than coyotes but both should be completely avoided. We have asked the Department of Environmental Conservation for assistance in removing this danger. We have not, as of the time of writing this piece heard back from them. You should be aware of this situation and take proper precautions to protect your family and pets. In this area it has not been uncommon to encounter such animals as well as bears and snakes. If you do observe these animals or any other unusual animals we urge you to call the Department of Environmental Conservation, Wildlife Concerns at 845 256 3000.

Finally it is the Holiday Season. The children will be home from school and playing on or near the roads. The roads themselves may be wet and slippery. Please be cautious. To all of you have a happy and safe holiday.



FROM THE DESK OF THE BUILDING INSPECTOR

Lawrence Picarello

Post Sandy, this office has seen a large number of Building Permit applications for permanently installed backup generators. This office has been, and will continue to process those applications in a timely fashion, providing all required information is provided. This office is also aware of portable generators being used, and although these are not subject to a building permit, they must be used with extreme caution. There was one local death last year from a portable generator in Chestnut Ridge, N.Y. The following information is from the Consumer Product Safety Commission:

Portable Generator Safety

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC):

- From 1999 to 2010, nearly 600 generator-related carbon monoxide (CO) deaths have been reported to the CPSC.
- CO poisoning from generator use causes an annual average of 81 deaths. The majority of the deaths occurred as a result of using a generator inside a home's living space, in the basement or in the garage.
- One generator produces as much CO as hundreds of cars. CO from a generator is deadly and can incapacitate and kill you within minutes.
- Portable generators are useful when temporary or remote electric power is needed, but they can be hazardous. The primary hazards to avoid when using them are carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock or electrocution, and fire.
- The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) would like you to know that there are simple steps you can take to prevent the loss of life and property resulting from improper use of portable generators.



To Avoid Carbon Monoxide Hazards:

- Always use generators outdoors, away from doors, windows and vents.
- NEVER use generators in homes, garages, basements, crawl spaces, or other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Install battery-operated or plug-in (with battery backup) carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home, following manufacturer's instructions.
- Test CO alarms often and replace batteries when needed.

To Avoid Electrical Hazards:

- Keep the generator dry. Operate on a dry surface under an open, canopy- like structure.
- Dry your hands before touching the generator.
- Plug appliances directly into generator or use a heavy-duty outdoor- rated extension cord. Make sure the entire extension cord is free of cuts or tears and the plug has all 3 prongs, especially a grounding pin.
- NEVER plug the generator into a wall outlet. This practice, known as back-feeding, can cause an electrocution risk to utility workers and others served by the same utility transformer.
- If necessary to connect generator to house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified electrician install appropriate equipment. Or, your utility company may be able to install an appropriate transfer switch.

To Avoid Fire Hazards:

- Before refueling the generator, turn it off and let it cool. Fuel spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.
- Always store fuel outside of living areas in properly labeled, non-glass containers.
- Store fuel away from any fuel-burning appliance.



MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED

By Melanie Golden, Trustee

Thanks...

Thank you to all of our residents who participated in our Village Hurricane Sandy and Thanksgiving food drives. All food was delivered to People to People, which prepared emergency food packs for area residents without power due to the super-storm. Items such as granola bars, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, tuna fish and drinks were included in the much needed and appreciated emergency kits. The Thanksgiving-related food, like canned corn, stuffing mix and cranberry sauce, was also provided to local families, many still suffering the after-effects of Hurricane Sandy. The food drive, which was publicized on the Village's website and Facebook page, was such a success that we hope to make a Thanksgiving food drive an annual event. As many of you may know, our Village Community Garden sets aside a portion of its space to grow and donate food to local food pantries. An annual food drive would add to the Village's efforts to help provide food to neighbors in need. So look for the kickoff of our second annual food drive in next fall's newsletter. Also, don't forget to join the Village's Facebook page to keep posted on Village news.

More thanks...

While so many of our residents were greatly impacted by the effects of Hurricane Sandy, I am thankful that we all remained safe. And, I am thankful for the sense of community that was shared during the superstorm. There were so many neighbors helping neighbors. As power was restored to one area, people living there opened their homes to others who were not so lucky.

I know that there will be challenges going forward to address the impact of this superstorm and the Village is here to help wherever we can. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can help.

Patrick Farm Update:

Since our last newsletter: The Supreme Court of Rockland County (Justice Thomas Walsh) annulled the Town of Ramapo's final approval of the Patrick Farm development. The matter must go back to Ramapo's Planning Board for architectural review prior to any future approval. The developer filed applications with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for certain environmental permits. The Village of Montebello requested a public hearing on the matter so that local residents have an opportunity to be heard in connection with the applications.

As always, you can go to www.rosa4rockland.org for more information.



NEGATIVE EXTERNALITIES

By Stacy Caridi, Trustee

Micro economists use the term "negative externality" to refer to a cost that is incurred by someone not involved in a particular transaction. For example, a chemical plant that spills toxins into the groundwater imposes a cost on society. Similarly, cigarette smokers who suffer health problems cause higher medical costs to be incurred by the general public. It has

been proven that homes in the vicinity of abandoned and neglected properties experience a decline in property values. Such an externality means that your property value is affected if your neighbor neglects his/her home. It is a legitimate purpose of local government to take action to prevent such externalities from affecting your property value.

Montebello has a property maintenance law that is specifically aimed to preserve your property value by preventing neighborhood blight. For example, it is a requirement in the village that lawns are mowed to an appropriate length. Yards must be kept clean from abandoned vehicles. Refuse needs to be properly contained. In addition, Montebello has a tree law that provides some oversight in order to preserve the green quality of our neighborhood that benefits property values.

In the wake of Hurricane Irene, some people have had questions regarding the tree law. Our staff at village hall is happy to answer all your questions (368-2211). To summarize, you are not restricted in pruning trees or removing fallen trees on your property. Utilities are never restricted from removing trees that they feel imperil utility lines. Permits (costing \$10) are required for removing big trees (having a caliper more than 4 inches at a height of four feet above the ground). However, there is no limit to the number of dead trees that can be removed and there is no limit to the number of trees that are threatening harm that can be cut down. Please be certain that you get a permit before taking action unless waiting might cause imminent harm. In such a case, take photos and apply for a permit after. Safety always comes first.

The purpose of the tree law is to prevent wanton clear cutting of properties and the overdevelopment that we have seen in other municipalities. Such activities constitute a negative externality because they lower everyone's property values. At the same time, the village is committed to make this law easy and friendly. Those who violate the law may find fault with our methods, but it is clear that our success is one reason that Montebello remains among the best places to own a home in Rockland.

Although home sales are rising and interest rates remain low, the real estate market crash has left our village with a number of abandoned or neglected properties. Our building department is actively issuing warnings and summonses to force compliance with our property maintenance laws. In cases where we have not found compliance, the Village Board has hired contractors to address certain problems (e.g. mowing the lawn). The cost of this work is applied as a lien against the title holder's property taxes. Therefore, taxpayers are not charged for these costs.

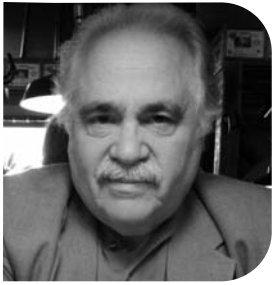
In addition, the Board is contemplating using a section of the New York State Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law (NYS-RPAPL Sections 19A) to take title of abandoned properties. This is a complicated and last resort method to address the problem of abandonment. Certainly the village would prefer that an absentee property owner (including banks and mortgage companies) cure problems on their own. However, it is simply not fair to all the other homeowners to see their property values hurt because of the negligence of others. A conscientious and dedicated local government is the cure for such a "negative externality".

MONTEBELLO IS AWARDED A \$612,000 GRANT.

Following Hurricane Irene, the village applied to FEMA and the New York State Office of Emergency Management for funds to purchase 2 flood damaged homes on Lake Road. These were the only 2 homes that met the criteria for participation in this program. With the consent of the owners, the homes will be acquired and demolished. Permanent open space/parkland will be created.



FEMA



FROM THE DESK OF THE VILLAGE ATTORNEY

Warren E. Berbit

Circumstantially, as was the case last year, I am writing this article on December 7th, but now some 71 years after the Day of Infamy. Irrespective one's personal view on the general subject – as to our historical role then and our role now as it has evolved as the world's seeming ombudsman – we owe a debt of gratitude to those who have served and continue to serve, placing themselves in harm's way such that we may all live in a secure and free environment.

I am sure that the impact of Hurricane Sandy will be mentioned at other places in this newsletter. As bad as it was, frankly, it is my view that the aftermath could have been worse, but for the diligence of your Village team. I do not know how hard other municipalities worked to help restore power and other services, and to assist with clean up and restoration, but I do know that our Mayor and Trustees, and our Clerk's Office, and other professionals worked very hard. I lost power until the evening of November 1st, but at my office, in a much more sheltered locale in a nearby municipality, we lost power until November 5th, and it was intermittent for days thereafter.

As I think was typical for our area, at home we lost 5 mature trees: one landed on one of our cars; a branch put a hole in the roof of the house at the front of my property; and, a huge neighboring tree reached far enough across the line to damage a post and rail fence in my backyard. All in all, not that bad. I am saddened by the loss of so many mature trees all around, especially the ancient pines and spruces. Be forewarned, while we understand the emergency nature of dealing with fallen or falling trees, there is a difference between that and trying to take advantage of the situation by cutting down trees not impacted by the storm, or not representing an emergency or danger, without complying with our Tree Law. This has already happened, and our Building Department and Village Engineer and Prosecutor will deal with such violations, which to me are more egregious given the apparent attempt to take advantage.

I finally plan to act on arranging for an emergency generator (perhaps this will be like washing a car and inducing rain? – once I have a generator maybe there will be no more outages?) As I mentioned last year (with so many parallels it is eerie), a generator is a serious piece of equipment. Be sure to check with our Building Department, and make sure – for your safety and the quality of the installation – that a licensed electrician makes the power connections, and a plumber the gas line connection (if you are proceeding that way). Also, placement is important because of exhaust fumes (and sound generation).

Shifting focus, as has been mentioned before, when a large scale project is proposed which varies from the uses permitted in our various zoning districts, initial jurisdiction rests with the Village Board, which is our legislative body. A significant project which falls into this category is a domed field and outdoor soccer complex proposed for Rella Boulevard, on the east side of N. Airmont Road. Quite some time ago the Village Board expressed enough interest to send this to the Planning Board to preliminarily review the project in detail, and report as a consultative arm of the Village Board. More evolved information was asked for, and now, around 6 months later, a submission was received showing the site plan in greater detail, and including a submission on drainage. The CDRC (Community Design Review Committee) sprung into action, reacting to the new submission, and the Planning Board placed this back on its agenda for ongoing discussions this month. Although the additional information supplied will prove helpful in moving towards a preliminary informed reaction, upon a quick review I note at least two voids continuing, re: lights and light pollution and re: noise generation, and the need to mitigate same.

The more information received, the more likely an informed preliminary decision can be made, which is a prerequisite to moving forward. This is a very significant project relative to the size of the Village.

It must be dealt with with care and attention to detail.

There was some interest in developing the 12 acre parcel west of the Hemion Road shopping center, across from Good Samaritan Hospital. Quite some effort was invested in evaluating a proposal for a large, medical arts building. This was withdrawn, apparently due to an issue pertaining to the land. Next, a shopping center with an anchor chain store expressed interest, but that interest has also waned. I understand that the owners of the adjacent corner strip mall purchased the vacant parcel. I have not heard whether an integrated use is contemplated.

The Mayor and I attended a Seminar in Beacon sponsored by NYCOM (New York Conference of Mayors), on the subject of what to do with and about deteriorated and abandoned properties. We are in the first stage of commencing the abandonment/take over process, at this juncture for two properties, which is permitted under the New York Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law ("RPAPL"), in particular Article 19-A thereof. A careful, due process oriented, diligent process is involved. We intend to proceed carefully, but vigorously.

I hope you all had a good Thanksgiving despite Sandy, the outages, etc., and that you have an even better Hanukkah/Christmas/Kwanza holiday with your family and friends, ushering in a bright New Year.

PLANNING BOARD

Ramapo Valley Sports Park

Assist the Village Board with the "Ramapo Valley Sports Park" Village Board Application for a Zone Change or Change of Use. The Applicant proposes to build a multi-sports park consisting of three outdoor fields and one indoor domed field. The total acreage for the parcels (lot 5 & 6) is 19.34 acres. The property is located on the north side of Rella Boulevard, zero feet east of the intersection of Airmont Road in the Village of Montebello, which is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 55.08, Block 1, Lots 5 & 6 in an LO-C Zone.

The application is currently before the Planning Board.

SMK-Rose Hill Subdivision—Public Hearing

Final Plat

Application of SMK Home Builders, 24 Waters Edge, Congers, New York, 10920 for a Final Subdivision Plat and a map entitled "SMK-Rose Hill" dated March 31, 2011, Latest Revision July 20, 2012, for a three lot subdivision which was submitted to the Village of Montebello. The total acreage for the parcel is 3.415 acres. The property is located on the south side of Rose Hill Road, approximately 600 feet west of the intersection of Spook Rock Road in the Village of Montebello, which is known and designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 41.17, Block 1, Lot 60 in an RR-50 Zone. The Applicant received Preliminary Approval on November 8, 2011.

The application was approved by the Planning Board at the September 11, 2012 meeting.

Suffern CDC, LLC Amended Site Plan

Application for Amended Site Plan from Suffern CDC, LLC (Raymour & Flanigan), 7248 Morgan Road, Liverpool, New York to add temporary parking spaces on the north side of the building, in an area approximately 0.3 acres, which was submitted to the Village of Montebello Planning Board for owner Suffern CDC, LLC (Raymour & Flanigan), 22 Hemion Road, Montebello, New York. Total acreage is 49.1 +/-, Section 55.06, Block 1, Lot 3.1 in a PI Zone.

The application was approved by the Planning Board at the October 9, 2012 meeting.