

September 2017
Update on the Village
Chief Gelardi



Office of the Mayor

112 Main Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-231-8502

Mayor's Newsletter

Dobbs Ferry Update

*Progress on Initiatives and Projects, **Action** on Climate Action Plan, Upcoming Events
... and Recognition for a Magnificent Career*

September 29, 2017



Orange Dobbs *Dobbs Ferry Waterfront* September
2017

Dear Residents,

We hope everyone is well and enjoying the change of season into fall. It is always nice to see the activity returning back to town following the quiet summer months.

Here is a quick update on **Dobbs Ferry**, important initiatives and infrastructure projects in progress, actions of the board, a look back on some recent events; a **Ferry Festa** reminder and recognition for a *very special person*.

Betsy Gelardi



After 32 years of devoted service to the Village of Dobbs Ferry, **Police Chief Betsy Gelardi** will be retiring at the end of this month.

Since joining the Dobbs Ferry Police Department on May 14, 1985, Betsy has had a remarkable career. During her time, she has served as Youth Officer, and was promoted to Sergeant, as well Lieutenant; and served as Patrol Division Commander, and Executive Officer for 10 years.

In July 2007, Betsy was promoted to Police Chief, becoming the first female ever to serve as Chief in the history of Dobbs Ferry and Westchester County.

Betsy has been honored to serve as First Vice President of the Westchester County Police Chief's Association; and co-chair to the New York State Counter Terrorism Unit for Zone 3 covering Westchester and Putnam Counties.

Throughout her career Betsy worked with 3 Chiefs, 7 Mayors, 6 Village Administrators, and 'more Trustees than she can accurately count'; and had the opportunity to work with 75 of the finest Officers and ancillary staff, forming lifetime friendships and spending more time and holidays with than her own family.

As a community we are sad that Betsy will be retiring, but we are also lucky and happy that Betsy came to Dobbs Ferry, giving so much of herself to keep our community safe, helping many of our citizens when they were in need, and setting the ultimate example of what it means to serve the public, and to be a Police Officer.

Under a Proclamation issued by the Mayor (presented to Betsy at a packed Village Hall at this past Tuesday's BOT meeting), **Friday, September 29, 2017** has been officially designated as '**Chief Betsy Gelardi Day**' in the Village of Dobbs Ferry.

We Love Betsy Gelardi, and we are grateful for her dedicated service to the community - ***Betsy made Dobbs Ferry a much better place*** - and we wish her and her family all the Best of Luck in the future.



Betsy with a future Police Chief?. With DPW Foreman and Volunteer Fireman Gary Gardner. A send-off by the Dobbs Ferry Seniors (With the Mayor and incoming Chief, Rick Guevara). 'One of the Boys'.

Congratulations to New Police Chief Rick Guevara

New incoming Police Chief, **Rick Guevara**, was presented and sworn-in by the Mayor

at the BOT meeting on Tuesday, September 26, with effect on Betsy's retirement date.



The Mayor with former Chief Betsy Gelardi and new Chief Rick Guevara at the Seniors Citizens Party this week. The event included an emotional send-off by the Seniors to Betsy.

Rick has been a member of the Dobbs Ferry Police Department for over 20 years, with over 25 years of experience as a police officer in law enforcement. He started his career in 1995 as a Police Officer in the Village of Chester, New York; up to the present he was a Sergeant in the DFPD and First Line Supervisor; he was also a Member of the Greenburgh SWAT Team from 2004-2008.

While Chief Guevara *has some big shoes to fill*, the Board is extremely confident in his abilities and skills to lead the Department into the future. Dobbs Ferry is also extremely lucky to have **the highest quality officers anywhere**, in particular **ranking Lieutenants and Sergeants with incredible experience and talent** who will help support Rick in his new role as Police Chief.

Please join the Board in welcoming Rick Guevara as Dobbs Ferry's new Police

Chief.

Also Retiring, Gary Gardner, Foreman, Department of Public Works



Gary Gardner, who grew up in Dobbs Ferry and has been an incredible employee of the village for over 30 years, most recently leading the Department of Public Works as Foreman, **will be retiring this month**. Gary did an amazing job running the DPW, which is a big job with a lot of responsibility. Gary has also done an excellent job preparing the department for this transition. While Gary will be dearly missed, residents should be assured that the essential work of the DPW - *keeping the village running and clean (and clear in the winter)* - will continue to be provided at the highest level of service.

Good Luck Gary We will Miss You

We will feature a special write-up on Gary Gardner in the next Newsletter Update, including a report on the department's transition.

ActionDobbs Ferry Adopts

Climate Action Plan



At the most recent meeting on September 26, the Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a **Climate Action Plan** ('CAP'). The CAP is the result of an extensive amount of work by the **Energy Task Force** - *with the full support of the board* - which has led to significant actions by the village to make Dobbs Ferry a more sustainable community into the future. These actions not only improve the environment, but they also improve the village's economic bottom line.

Here is a link to the CAP (or you can get a hard copy at Village Hall):

https://www.dobbsferry.com/sites/dobbsferryny/files/uploads/df_cap_final_2017-09-26_1.pdf

The CAP recommends common sense approaches to improving air quality, lowering energy costs, enhancing transportation and accessibility, and reducing the community's carbon footprint.

Here is just a sampling of the village's clean energy projects and designations achieved over the past 7 years:

- In 2011, Dobbs Ferry became the first municipality in Westchester County to install a significant number of LED street lights, replacing almost half of its lights with the new technology. (Subsequently, the City of Yonkers, hearing of Dobbs Ferry's experience then undertook a full streetlight conversion the following year.) In 2015, Dobbs Ferry completed the conversion of its streetlights to LED.
- In 2012, the Village completed the full retro-commissioning of the Dobbs Ferry Public Library's heating and cooling systems and installed new lighting controls and LED lights in this facility.
- In 2012, Solar PV, totaling 68 kW, was installed on two municipal buildings (the Library and the Department of Public Works). The Library installation includes an educational display providing information about the solar energy generated.
- In 2012, LED lighting was installed in the Dobbs Ferry Community Center
- In 2013, a comprehensive energy tracking software system - *Utilitrac* - was installed in the Library to track energy consumption and to help set benchmarks for greater efficiency.
- In 2014, the Village installed LED lighting throughout Village Hall and the Police Station
- In 2014, the Village earned New York State's Climate Smart Communities' Bronze Certification, the highest level yet awarded through this program.
- In 2016, Dobbs Ferry collaborated with Hastings on the solarization initiative as part of '*Solarize Westchester*'; as a result, a total of 85 homes in our communities will be generating their own electric power going forward into the future.
- In January 2017, Dobbs Ferry was designated a Clean Energy Community through the State of New York. Dobbs Ferry is the first village in the state to receive this designation (and the second community with a population of less than 40,000). Not only was this a point of pride, it also made the Village eligible for state funding for energy efficiency projects.

These are examples of the success which Dobbs Ferry has achieved over the past 8-some years, creating greater sustainability and improving the environment. *But not only that* the actions taken have also significantly improved Dobbs Ferry's economic bottom-line. This is a key component of the CAP. Each project and/or initiative must undergo a detailed economic analysis and return scoring. This A sensible, bottom-line

approach has served Dobbs Ferry well; helping to identify the best long-term investments, which has achieved even greater savings over time.

In Dobbs Ferry we have coined the phrase '*What is good for the environment can also be good for business*'.

Of course, like so many actions and initiatives undertaken in the village, it takes dedicated volunteers to make things happen. The village would to recognize the members of the Energy Task Force for their dedication and hard work over the years, and work going forward:

Chair, **Nina Orville**; Members, **Robert Baron**, **Cathy Bobenhausen**, **Anilla Cherian**, **Kathy Dean**, **Susan DeGeorge**, **Renato DiRusso**, **Holly Malekian**, **Jeffrey O'Donnell** (former), **Padriac Steinschneider**, and **Denise Woodin** (Secretary),



Members of the Energy Task Force at the September 26 BOT meeting following the board's adoption of the Climate Action Plan

Credits & Acknowledgements

Local Government Officials and Staff

- Mayor Hartley Connett
- Village of Dobbs Ferry Board of Trustees
- Charlene Indelicato – Village Administrator (2016- Present)
- Marcus Serrano – Village Administrator (2009 - 2015)
- Elizabeth Dreaper – Village Clerk/CSC Coordinator
- Department of Public Works Officials and Staff
- Finance Department Officials and Staff

Community Stakeholders

- Dobbs Ferry School District
- Mercy College
- Master's School
- St. John's Riverside Hospital
- St. Christopher's, Inc.
- Garden Club of Dobbs Ferry
- MetroNorth Railroad
- Churches and Synagogues
- Dobbs Ferry local businesses
- Dobbs Ferry community residents

Plan Contributors

- Dobbs Ferry Energy Task Force
 - Nina Orville- Chairperson
 - Robert Baron
 - Cathy Bobenhausen
 - Anilla Cherian
 - Kathy Dean
 - Susan DeGeorge
 - Renato DiRusso
 - Holly Malekian
 - Jeffrey O'Donnell
 - Padriac Steinschneider
 - Denise Woodin
- Mercy College
- Roots and Wings (South Presbyterian Church)
- Master's School
- Dobbs Ferry community residents

External Agencies and Partners

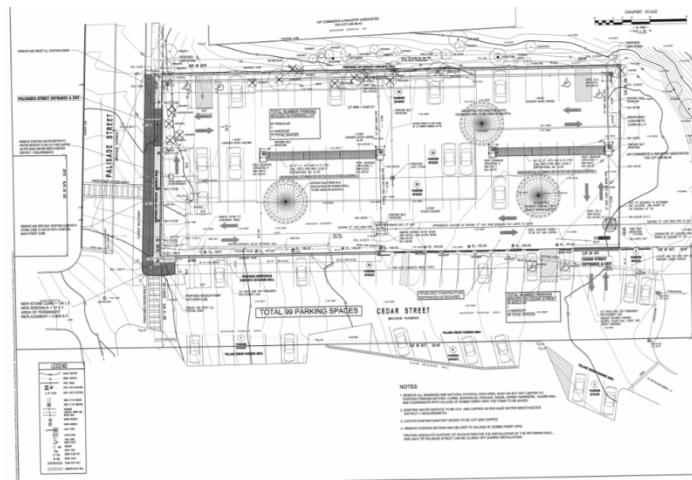
- [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation](#)
- [New York State Energy and Research Development Authority](#)
- New York State Climate Smart Communities

Quick Update on Infrastructure Projects

New Downtown Parking Facility



As reported in previous Newsletters, one of the key priorities of the village is the creation of a **new parking facility** to benefit the downtown area, to be located at **99 Cedar Street** (this is the old DPW site). Following removal and clean-up of the old facility which had been damaged by a fire, the village has been working to prepare the property to be converted to a municipal parking lot. A detailed design for a new facility to accommodate up to 90 new spaces has been completed by a professional (local) engineering firm.



Contractor bids have also been received and are currently under review by village department staff.

The new parking facility will be of great benefit to the downtown business merchants and residents, as well the *entire* community:

- Approximately 90 new (additional) parking spaces benefiting business merchants, shoppers, and residents living in the downtown area.
- Funding for the new facility is substantially from the fire insurance settlement and has been worked into the current fiscal year budget.
- As a municipal lot (meters) the new facility will be financially positive starting day one.
- It will give the village added flexibility and capacity to potentially address other parking issues beyond the downtown area (i.e. resident and non-resident commuter parking).

We will keep everyone posted on this parking project going forward.

Embassy Community Center Renovation Project



The full renovation and expansion of the village's **Embassy Community Center** continues to take steps forward on a fast track. **The first-phase for foundation construction is expected to break ground in October.** For the interior space, mechanical and electrical plans are being advanced; village staff, the Recreation Commission, as well the Facilities Committee are working together to finalize the interior fixtures, finishes and electrical ('FF&E') components.

This is the village's most important infrastructure project; to construct a new and updated Community Center facility to meet the future recreational and cultural needs of *ALL* the residents of the village, youth, seniors, *everyone*.

We expect to announce a ground breaking ceremony for October, and we will keep everyone posted as this important project moves forward.

The Funding Strategy to Improve the Infrastructure Needs of the Community

Since 2009, a key strategy of the current administration has been to increase revenues as a source of new funds to allow the village to invest in long-overdue infrastructure improvements, without having to place any additional tax burden on property owners.

This strategy has included: (1) a prudent approach to encourage sensible redevelopment projects, in particular commercial and downtown/business district properties that had laid empty or in disrepair for decades; (2) a more serious and professional approach to the operational budget and capital planning process; (3) an upgrade in the Treasury Department staff, procedures and process; (4) independent analysis and input from the Citizens Budget Committee; and (5) increased contributions directly from tax exempt institutions via the Dobbs Ferry Local Development Corporation ('DFLDC'), which was established by the current administration in 2010 with the express purpose of generating new revenues from tax exempts. *(The DFLDC has since generated ~ \$300,000 in revenues from various local tax exempts, some of which has been reinvested into the the community, including enhancements to the downtown, and funds to Mead House renovations and the Historical Society, which are helpful to bring more visitors to the village and increase economic activity)*

The strategy has led to:

- Redevelopment and upgrade of previously stagnant commercial properties, leading to higher valuations and higher property tax receipts. This means higher tax revenues.
- An increase in the village's Fund Balance (rainy day fund) now up to 15% of the annual operating budget, which is within policy range. This means the village can invest in the future with more confidence.
- An all-time record high balance in the village's segregated Recreation Fund. This

means the village has greater flexibility to fund critical infrastructure needs, without having to use tax payer dollars (Recreation Fund is paid for by developers).

- The strategy has allowed the village to design and execute a long-term capital infrastructure plan which addresses critical needs, while at the same time deliver 8 consecutive years of historically low village property tax rate increases.

- The village has delivered low taxes and a long-range capital plan while also maintaining its 'A' municipal debt rating. This means the village saves on interest expenses.

With the above in mind, the Board has taken action to approve the issuance of approximately \$7.6 million (in total) of long-term Bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes ('BAN', short-term) to fund critical capital improvement projects, including;

- Embassy Community Center renovation and expansion project*
 - Gould Park Pool upgrade*
 - Memorial Park Pool upgrade*
 - Fire Department large rig equipment (end of life replacements)
 - Fire Department / Village Hall structural upgrade (for above equipment)
- (* Funding for these projects will also be considered from the Recreation Fund)



The village will also be replacing significantly all of the on-street parking meters - 136 double meters and 24 single space meters - with new technology meters. The new meters can be programed for multiple payment options in the future; making for easier payment options and enhancing revenue collection for the village. This project is being paid from Capital Project Funds.

In Dobbs Ferry there is a lot of improvement going on - *and more to come* - because the village has undertaken a sound financial strategy to improve its facilities, which will benefit the quality of life for current and future residents.

Choose Your Ride



The Dobbs Ferry Police Department, with sponsorship from the Dobbs Ferry Youth Services Council, has rolled out its new promo car for the ***Choose Your Ride Program***. The car will be used as a prop to help promote taxi cab rides for anyone who might be impaired. For the current phone numbers, please call the Dobbs Ferry Police Department at 693-5500.

Its simple. Drink. Drive. Go to Jail.

New Flashing Light Pedestrian Crossing



The new **flashing light pedestrian crossing system** has been operating at the corner of **Broadway and Clinton Avenue** for a few weeks now.

But what most people don't know - or have not been doing - is to make sure to **PUSH the BUTTON** before you cross Broadway. **The button will activate the flashing lights on top of the pedestrian signs on both sides of the street.** The flashing lights are on a timer and will stay flashing for about 15 seconds. Plenty of time to get across the street at a normal waking pace.

It makes a big difference when the lights are flashing - Drivers are more apt to see the

lights and stop. As they should.

This flashing light system is part of a broad village and community-wide effort to enhance pedestrian and traffic safety throughout the Village. Along with 'Slow Down Rivertowns', Safe Streets, Route 9 Project, the installation of new sidewalks on Beacon; crossing lights at Springhurst School Beacon steps, and raised crosswalks and speed humps at various locations around the village - there is a lot of effort and work being done in Dobbs Ferry to enhance pedestrian safety.

Pictured above with the Mayor are former DPW Foreman Gary Gardner (retired) and former Police Chief Betsy Gelardi (retired). Gary and Betsy were both instrumental in fast-tracking through the red-tape procurement and installation of the flashing light system. Jennifer Dorman, who works in DPW Administration, also did a great job cutting through the NYSDOT bureaucracy. It took a lot of work to get this done as quickly as it did.



Dobbs Ferry Fire Department - Thank you!



Thank you to the Chief, Assistant Chiefs and all the volunteer members and the families of the **Dobbs Ferry Fire Department** for organizing the annual **911 Memorial Ceremony** at the Waterfront Park; in addition to the full support and participation of the **Dobbs Ferry Police Department**, and the **Dobbs Ferry all-**

volunteer Ambulance Corps and **EMS**; also **Commander Bill Florin**, **American Legion Post 1048 for the Colors**, and **The Auxiliary** for all you do. To all the **Boy Scouts** and **Girl Scouts** who led us in the Pledge of Allegiance; to **Joe Ronney** who sang the National Anthem (beautifully); to **Father Joseph** for his reading and spiritual words; to the **DPW Staff** who take great care of the parks for all occasions; to the **Village Staff** and the **Trustees** ... and to **All the Residents and friends and family** who came out to participate in the ceremony. It was a great event.

WE WILL NEVER FORGET



Trustees at the 911 Memorial Ceremony
Vinny Rosillo, Vic Golio, the Mayor, Donna Cassell, Nicole Sullivan, and Larry Taylor
911 Memorial Monument - Dobbs Ferry Waterfront Park - September 2017



The Goats are Gone :(



... ***But they will be back.*** In the Spring. The goats ate just about all they could in the time they were there. The Board, along with the DPW, the Conservation Advisory Board (CAB), and expert landscape and horticulturist input will then assess the next steps in this great view shed project.

The Goats got lot of attention. And they did a good job eating (away) a lot of the invasive shrubs, ground cover and poison ivy inside the fenced-in area between High Street, Palisade Street, and Station Plaza.

More updates on this project ... ***and hopefully a return of the Goats***

in the Spring of 2018



Village Event and Program Reminders







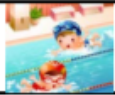
Let's Celebrate! 1-8pm Rain or Shine

SATURDAY, OCT 14, 2017

[BECOME A VENDOR](#)

Ferry Festa is Dobbs Ferry's largest community event, an annual street fair with festivities, crafts, entertainment, music, and vendors. Join us for our 16th year of celebration on downtown Cedar and Main Streets.

Fall 2017 Night & Weekend Programs

Thursdays		Saturdays		
<div>Archery (6 weeks)</div> <div>October 5, 12, 19, 26</div> <div>November 2, 9</div> <div>Students will learn about safety with a bow as well as learning archery skills and techniques.</div> <div>Co-Sponsored by the Sleepy Hollow Bowmen</div> <div></div> <div>3 sessions</div> <div>I: 6:15pm – 6:45pm</div> <div>II: 6:45pm – 7:15pm</div> <div>III: 7:15pm – 7:45pm</div> <div>at Springhurst Elementary School Gym</div> <div>Grades: 2-8</div> <div>Max: 12 per session</div> <div>Fee: \$60.00</div>		<div>Karate (8 weeks)</div> <div>Begins October 7</div> <div>Students will learn the fundamental of martial arts. Martial arts is a great way for children to build self-esteem and increase concentration.</div> <div>Parents- Don't just watch! Learn along-side your child. This is a great opportunity to spend time with your child, while having fun!</div> <div>9:00 – 10:00am</div> <div>At Ryu-Renshi-Dan Karate School</div> <div>96 Main Street, Dobbs Ferry</div> <div>Grades: K - 12</div> <div>Min: 10</div> <div>Fee: \$110.00 child</div> <div>\$90.00 parent</div> <div></div>		
<div>Swim Lessons (6 weeks)</div> <div>At the Lanza Activities Center at The Children's Village</div> <div>Echo Hills, Dobbs Ferry NY 10522</div> <div>THURSDAYS</div> <div>October: 12, 19, 26</div> <div>November: 2, 9 16</div> <div>Fee: \$90.00</div> <div>4:50-5:20pm</div> <div>5:20-5:50pm</div>		<div>Swim Lessons (8 weeks)</div> <div>At the Lanza Activities Center at The Children's Village</div> <div>Echo Hills, Dobbs Ferry NY 10522</div> <div>SATURDAYS</div> <div>October: 14, 21, 28</div> <div>November: 4, 18</div> <div>December: 2, 9 16</div> <div>Fee: \$120.00</div> <div>10:10-10:40am</div> <div>10:45 – 11:15am</div> <div>11:20-11:50am</div>		
Preschool Aquatics (ages 3-5)	Level 2 (ages 6 & up)	Parent & Child Aquatics (ages 6 months – 3 years)		Preschool Aquatics (ages 3-5)
		Preschool Aquatics (ages 3)	Preschool Aquatics (ages 3-5)	Level 3/4 (ages 6 & up)
Level 2/3 (ages 6 & up)	Stroke & Turn (ages 6 & up)	Preschool Aquatics (ages 4-5)	Level 2 (ages 6 & up)	Open Swim 11:00am-12:00pm Adults: \$4.00 Children: \$2.00 Under 3: Free
		Level 3/4 (ages 6 & up)	Stroke & Turn (ages 6 & up)	

For further information: Please contact Kendra Garrison at 693-0024 or via email at: KGarrison@dobbsferry.com

Sign up either online at <https://www.dobbsferry.com/recreation-department>

or in person at the DF Rec Center located at the Memorial Pool Office on Palisades Street

Well thats about it for this Newsletter edition.

Please stay safe and enjoy the outdoors as the weather gets cooler and the colors change. Don't forget **Ferry Festa** coming up October 14th - *hope to see everyone there*. We will be back in touch later in October.

Sincerely,

Mayor Hartley Connett

September 29, 2017



Patrol Boats at Dusk Hudson River Dobbs Ferry