

# Mayor's Newsletter - September 7, 2015

Dear Residents,

The Village would like to wish *Everyone* a **Safe** and **Happy Labor Day**.

We hope everyone had a great summer, although it seemed to go so fast. But looking ahead, the change to fall season is always special in Dobbs Ferry. The colors of the Hudson River Valley put on a beautiful natural show; the village takes on a new energy as families return from vacations, the downtown gets busier, and the kids return for another exciting school year. As school begins, we want to wish all the administrators, teachers, and kids - our **Eagles!** - a fun and successful year. *You all make the village very proud.*

As the board of trustees moves into the upcoming fall sessions, here is a quick update on things going on in the village, some items and events to look forward to on the village calendar, and a look back on a great summer event.



Dobbs Ferry Festa    Saturday September 26th, 2015

**Dobbs Ferry's 14th annual Ferry Festa** is scheduled for **Saturday, September 26th**.

Main Street and Cedar Street will both be closed from 1:00 PM until 8:00 PM to provide the stage for a block party. Music, food, games, events, and fun will be enjoyed by a crowd that has exceeded 15,000 in previous years.

If you have not done so already, vendors can pick-up an application at Village Hall, or you can download one from the following link:

If you have questions about Festa, please call the Village Clerk at 231-8504, who can help direct you, or call Paddy Steinschneider at 914-693-6454.

This is a big annual event and we look forward to seeing everyone downtown at the Festa this year again.



**Gould Park Pools to Remain Open September 8th - 9th**





Due to the expected excessive heat, The Gould Park pools will remain open Tuesday, September 8th and Wednesday, September 9th from 3 pm-8 pm. The Memorial Park Pool will be closed for the season.

**Update on Waterfront Park**





It has been just about 3 months since the new waterfront park has re-opened ... and what a beautiful place it is.



So many people - residents, friends, visitors and tourists - young and old - have been communicating how much they love the new amenities and beauty of the park. In the early morning hours you will see people strolling and jogging along the meandering new pathways, or walking their dogs; for others it is a time to simply sit on one of the many benches throughout the park to enjoy the quiet morning solitude of the river. During the day there is a lot of other activity; workers coming for a cool break from the office, people enjoying the spectacular views from the new pier. At dusk, many are in the park; families with young kids in the new playground area, people using the new work-out apparatuses for some healthy exercise, and couples of all ages simply enjoying a lovely river walk ... all with the backdrop of a beautiful Hudson River sunset!

It is really hard to find any other words to describe the new park, other than ***it is simply spectacular.***

Of course, like any new projects of this scale, there are always things that are not quite finished, or which need to get worked out. Here are a couple of notes:

**Boat Dock** - A self latching gate has now been installed on the gang plank leading from the shore to the floating docks. This was an as-yet-finished contractor item which was required by the village for safety, liability, and insurance purposes. At the next board meeting on September 8, the trustees will consider adopting a new 'Boat Dock Policy' This policy (which will ultimately be adopted into the village code) should allow the docks to be opened for public mooring within the next 2 weeks. Among other things, the policy includes a docking limit of 4 hours and prohibits overnight mooring from 11 pm - 5 am (same as the park hours). For public safety, diving, or swimming, or launching from the docks will be prohibited; also, crabbing and fishing will not be allowed from the floating docks or gang plank (fishing and crabbing are of course allowed from the pier and other shore areas along the park). **The opening of the new floating dock is another exciting step forward as Dobbs Ferry is doing more to embrace its natural relationship with the Hudson River.**

**Speed hump installed** - A hump has been installed in the lot as you approach the train station building. This was done as a precaution to help slow vehicles, making the area safer for pedestrians, commuters, patrons, and visitors. As the new park and amenities attract ever more visitors, the village will take any appropriate action necessary to make for a safe environment. *# safety first in Dobbs Ferry.*

**Geese** - The village has retained services to try and control the geese population through humane methods. This includes egg addling; park staff also employ noise makers during the day. The village is experimenting with other simple strategies which have had some success in other waterfront areas. There is some thought the dogs on leashes might be working as a deterrent too. The DPW parks team is doing a great job keeping the pathways cleaned of the geese droppings, although it's not an easy job. Hopefully some of the strategies being used will eventually convince the geese to go somewhere else. The village will do everything it can in the meantime to keep it clean from droppings.

**Parking - Facts and Ideas.** Over the past few weeks there have been some discussions, letters, and

views expressed on the parking policy at waterfront park. This is all good and the village of course will listen to all reasonable ideas and input on the topic. However, in having these discussions it is important to keep the facts in mind:

- 1) The waterfront park is open to everyone. There is no charge for admission to the park, and there are no restrictions on who can visit or use the park.
- 2) The village owns the parking lot.
- 3) The board has not changed nor adopted a new parking lot permit policy. The permit policy today is the same policy which existed before the reopening of the new park (some months ago the board did change the rates on a few resident and non resident permits which had not been modified in almost 8 years).
- 4) Over the years the village (i.e. tax payers) have made a large (and prudent) investment in the parking lot as well the park land area; there are significant on-going operating costs to properly maintain these assets.

When the new park was re-opened in June, it was expected there would be a higher level of use, including changes in traffic flow and the number of cars; the beautiful walkways and amenities combined with a popular new cafe at the train station are indeed bringing more visitors. This is a good thing. In correctly anticipating these changes, the board, along with the Village's Public Safety and Parks Department, decided it best to first wait and see how things work; how were the flows changing? what times and what days? etc. In short, take some time to see how things are working - what is working well, or not so well. This is a prudent approach.

The board will certainly listen and take input from residents on ideas concerning the waterfront parking lot permit policy. *Nothing is cast in stone*. However, it is first important to take some time to see how things are working first. The park has only just re-opened after a long +2 year hiatus. It is smart to see how the flows develop over a little more time, and then make decisions (if needed) when we all have more information.

The board will certainly be open to all reasonable ideas and suggestions - balanced with the needs of the village, public safety, the quality of life for residents, and the economic well being of tax payers.

### **New Scoreboard in Gould Park**





This past Saturday the new scoreboard at Gould Park went into action.

It was fun to be back on the field at Gould Park with many residents cheering-on the Eagles players, cheerleaders, and coaches for the first high school football game of the 2015 season (it was a nice start for the Eagles! winning 40-0 over Haldane)

The new scoreboard looks great ... and it is a great community story too:

Thanks to the initiative and generosity of many residents, led by Alan Straub, the volunteer supporters of the Dobbs Ferry Touchdown Club and other local Team Booster Clubs - in partnership with the The village of Dobbs Ferry, the Dobbs Ferry Local Development Corporation ('LDC') and The Dobbs Ferry School District - funding was secured to acquire and install a brand new state-of-the-art scoreboard.

The scoreboard has video replay capabilities which will also provide the village and school district with a new digital community messaging board.

The new scoreboard initiative is another example of the strong level of volunteerism in Dobbs Ferry. It also demonstrates the value of the Dobbs Ferry LDC, providing non-tax payer funding to support community goals, upgrade village assets, and promoting economic development. **AND**, it reflects the strong working relationship between the Village and the School District; partnering on this and other projects and initiatives

which improve our community's assets and resources, improving the quality of life for all residents, and partner in efficient ways to save tax payer monies. ***It is all good.***

### **Issue Regarding Conservation Easement on Waterfront**



There has been concern in the community regarding access to the waterfront conservation easement on the river behind the Landing. Specifically, action taken by the Homeowners Association to lock the gate to the foot bridge over Metro North leading to the waterfront.

The village took action sometime ago in response - specially the issuance of a summons stipulating the locking of the gate was in violation of the conservation easement and the original site plan approval for the Landing. The matter was again before the local court last Thursday. The Judge has ordered, on an interim basis, that the gate be opened from 9 am-5 pm for the residents of the Village. It can be locked at night – with a key fob. In the opinion of the court, this order is consistent with the easement which specifically provides access for residents during daylight hours only. The Court also stayed any fines which were accumulating. This matter is due back in Court in November following the interim period.

The village board is planning to discuss the matter (interim ruling) with the Homeowners Association (representatives); it can be discussed and determined if all parties can see the interim ruling as a potential long-term compromise in the best interests of the Village, all the residents, and the Homeowners Association too.



We will keep everyone fully posted on this matter.

## Dobbs Ferry Historical Society



It was a great day in Dobbs Ferry on August 9 for the 10th annual **Road to Freedom March**. Many residents - young and old - came out to participate in the march through the village following part of the route of the Continental Army as it departed to Yorktown, Virginia in 1781.

Afterwards everyone came back to the historic **Meade House** to see costumed recreations by some very talented performers - it seem like George Washington, General Rochambeau, and Alexander and Elizabeth Schulyer Hamilton were actually back in Dobbs Ferry!

It was very educational, and so much fun too.

Congratulations to Mary Donovan, the board, Village Historian Richard Borkow, and all the members and supporters of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society for all they do to preserve and celebrate the history of Dobbs Ferry.

Please become a member of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society. Its a great investment in the village's History.

**Here are some nice pictures from Road to Freedom 2015**













Here is information on the  
Hudson River Community Education Program Fall 2015 Program Schedule





**REGISTER NOW for the Hudson River Community Education (HRCE)  
Program**

**Fall 2015 Session – Classes begin September 28<sup>th</sup>**

**We have something for everyone.....**

- Arts & Crafts
- Business & Finance
- Cooking
- Dance & Music
- Driver's Education
- Fitness
- Games
- Language & Culture
- Personal Growth
- Technology
- Writing

[Click here](#) to review the [HRCE Fall 2015 catalog](#) online and register for one or more courses. Register online, by mail or in person. Any questions? Visit the HRCE page on the Dobbs Ferry UFSD website ( [www.dfdsd.org](http://www.dfdsd.org) ), email us at [HRCE@dfdsd.org](mailto:HRCE@dfdsd.org) , or call us at [\(914\) 693-1500](tel:9146931500), x3148.

Well, that is about it for now.

Enjoy this beautiful Labor Day Everyone ... and please feel free to contact the board with any issues or concerns you have. We will keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Mayor Hartley Connett