

PLEASANTVILLE POSTS



NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE OF PLEASANTVILLE | THIRD EDITION | SUMMER 2020

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LETTER FROM MAYOR

Dear Pleasantville neighbors,

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you." That sentiment resonates today as I think about the last few months and look ahead to our future. The articles in this newsletter report on an incredibly challenging period. At the same time, they remind us of the strength and goodness of our fellow citizens.

As I write this note, I'm pleased to report that the COVID-19 infection rate in Westchester County remains low, and the number of positive cases in Pleasantville is in the single digits. Collectively, New Yorkers have done a tremendous job in halting the spread of the virus. I thank the Pleasantville community for playing its part – wearing face masks, avoiding large gatherings, and practicing social distancing.

It's apparent that this work is not over. Our best route toward restoring some normalcy in our lives – and to protect one another – is to remain vigilant and wear masks. In June, the Village introduced #maskuppleasantville, a social media campaign encouraging residents to share their "masked-up" photos. We hope you'll share your photos with us.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in the difficult decision to keep

the Village pool closed this season. You can read more about the pool in this issue. In the fall, we'll ask people who have ideas and concerns to participate in planning the future of the pool.

I've lived in this good village for almost 35 years, and I have seen how Pleasantville people support our community in challenging times. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you can read about how the Village came together to provide meals to essential workers and support local merchants – acts of kindness that continue today.

In May, another crisis shook our community. After the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Pleasantville residents joined with millions of others across our nation to ask questions, seek change and demand equality for all. I, together with Police Chief Erik Grutzner and the Village trustees, applaud our citizens for using their voices. We commit to you that we will continue to listen and continue to improve. The article about police policies and procedures details some of the ways we are doing that. Pleasantville must be a place where every person of every background and identity is safe and respected.

And just last week, as Tropical Storm Isaias tore up the East Coast and did considerable damage in our Village, we were reminded again how it feels to be vulnerable. True to

form, within hours of the storm clearing, residents were reaching out to one another to see who needed help. Charging strips appeared on walls and porches, placed there by residents who had electricity, inviting use by anyone in need. Neighbors opened their homes and made space in their freezers so food wouldn't spoil, and people banded together to clear hazards and debris.

Amidst this chaos, the business of our community must continue. This month we'll take a step forward toward becoming a smart city by introducing a new parking app. And while technological advancements will improve operations and make us more efficient, we must also never forget to take the time to pause and appreciate the beauty of our surroundings. Next time you pass one of the many planters, pocket parks or gardens in the Village, please remember that you have the Village Beautification Committee to thank for their volunteerism and talent.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson quote reinforces for me that what lies within us here in Pleasantville is goodness, strength and resilience. With those qualities, we will see one another through anything that comes our way.

—Peter

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES DURING COVID-19

The pandemic has been challenging for all of us. With the weather improving, we are fortunate to have a village full of merchants offering socially distanced fun! Whether you need some retail therapy or a good read, are craving a cocktail or an iced coffee, need a haircut or fresh dry cleaning, Pleasantville has something for everyone.

Tired of cooking? Many of our restaurants are offering curbside takeout and delivery options. What's more, for those who are craving some outdoor dining at a safe distance, the Village has allowed restaurants on Wheeler Avenue and Washington Avenue to expand outdoor dining into the parking areas in front of their establishments.

In addition, Saturday night closure of Wheeler Avenue was tested for over a month but did not generate wide participation from businesses and did decrease take-out business for some restaurants. The opportunity to resume Saturday nights on Wheeler Avenue will definitely be explored again in the future. As of Phase 4, which started on July 6th, restaurants can now also accommodate up to 50% indoor dining.

"Our merchants have been hit hard and they need our support now more than ever," said Paul Alvarez of the Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce. "We encourage residents to support our local businesses by taking a night off from cooking and placing an order or by going shopping in town. Come out and support our businesses and be safe doing so."

This spring, the greater Pleasantville community supported two grassroots efforts to help local businesses. One concept,



#rescuemainstreet, encouraged people to purchase a \$100 gift card from a merchant of their choice. Once purchased, community members put cards together for a gift card swap. Nearly 500 cards were purchased, raising \$50,000 for local businesses!

Pleasantville Hospitality for Hospitals, (#FeedingtheFrontlinePleasantville) was an effort that delivered meals from community restaurants to frontline workers at local hospitals. Spearheaded by Maria and Anthony Amato, volunteers delivered thousands of meals and snacks to our healthcare workers. The effort raised over \$40,000.

Please continue to support our local businesses this summer and beyond! Visit the Chamber of Commerce [website](#) for information on our merchants and special offers. And remember to shop, dine and support local safely this summer.

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VILLAGE OF PLEASANTVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT REVIEWS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In the wake of nation-wide protests to support the Black Lives Matter Movement, the Village administration and police force have fielded numerous questions about police policies and how the Village intends to address concerns about inequality.

Along with Mayor Scherer, Pleasantville Police Chief Erik Grutzner has been speaking with residents to address these questions, listen to their ideas and engage in conversation. One frequently asked question is whether the Village Police Department has adopted the use-of-force policies outlined in "8 Can't Wait", a campaign to restrict police use of force that has gained significant attention in the wake of the death of George Floyd.

The Pleasantville Police Department updated its use of force policy in 2019 using the New York State Department of Criminal Justice model as a guide. Today, our local policy already closely aligns with many of the tenets of 8 Can't Wait. In particular, a restriction on chokeholds and an officer's

duty to intervene when they see another officer using unreasonable force are two mandates in the most recent use of force policy that closely match 8 Can't Wait. That said, we continually strive to improve and are re-examining our use of force policies.

Another area of concern has been officer training. Residents want to be assured that their police officers have up-to-date training on fairness and equity in policing. The Pleasantville Police Department recognized the need for de-escalation training in 2016, driven in part by the recognition that officers need to be sensitive and empathetic when interacting with members of the special needs community. Since then, our officers have received training in implicit bias, procedural, de-escalation and communication. These concepts apply to every interaction between police officers and members of the public, and we are currently reviewing our training programs to ensure that they continue to support these policies.

As mentioned above, the Village has begun a comprehensive review of police procedures to align with Governor Cuomo's Executive Order #203, the NY State Reform and Reinvention Collaborative. The review will focus on six key areas: 1) use of force/de-escalation guidelines; 2) diversity, inclusion, and racial bias training; 3) police complaints and review procedures; 4) community policing practices; 5) general outreach and communication; and 6) outreach to specific communities.

Community stakeholders—including residents, schools/students, community/business organizations, and other government agencies—will all be engaged in the review process. There will be several opportunities for public comment and suggestions, all with the intent to align the services of the Village's police services with the values and needs of the Pleasantville community. Please continue to look for email and social media updates from the Village.

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SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN, #MASKUPPLEASANTVILLE, REMINDS RESIDENTS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF FACE COVERINGS

Although we've come a long way in reducing the spread of COVID-19 since its peak in Westchester County in April, the virus is still active and remains a potential threat to many. Healthcare workers and government officials now agree that wearing a facial covering when in public is the most effective way to protect oneself and help reduce the spread. Unfortunately, getting people to wear masks consistently, particularly young adults, has proven to be a challenge.

To help remind people to wear masks and remind the community that we are all in this together, the Village started a social media campaign encouraging residents to share their "masked-up" photos. And the response has been great! Please share your photos at maskuppleasantville@gmail.com

Mayor Peter Scherer commends residents who have adhered to the mask directive and attributes the Village's relatively low infection rate to their compliance. Scherer said: "The importance of wearing a mask **can not** be overstated. I believe it has helped keep many of our residents safe and that is clearly our top priority. That said, we've seen evidence that people are becoming increasingly lax, and we can't overstate how important it is to remain vigilant." He continued by reminding people to wear a mask when in areas that will inevitably place them in close proximity to other people, such as on Wheeler Ave. or other commercial areas.

As a reminder, the Governor's Executive Order pertaining to masks mandates the following:

- Masks must be worn in public when social distancing cannot be maintained (6 feet between another person).
- Masks are required in order to enter a business. Patrons can be denied access by business owners if they are not wearing a mask.
- Employees are required to wear masks when interacting with customers and/or are within 6' of another person.
- Restaurant employees are required to wear masks at all times. Those seated at tables are not required to wear a mask, and up to 10 people may sit together.

LOCAL ENFORCEMENT: Local governments and businesses are responsible for enforcing NYS COVID-19 regulations. The Village continues to educate and warn violators and act upon complaints. Please report social distancing violations to the Police Department at 914-769-1500, or during business hours to 914-769-1989.

"The reality of our situation is that local government enforcement is one piece in the fight against COVID-19," said Scherer.

"We need a high degree of individual responsibility and the community's commitment to adhering to social distancing rules."



We are all in this together

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PLEASANTVILLE INTRODUCES PAY-BY-PHONE PARKING APP

The Village of Pleasantville is offering residents and visitors an easier way to pay for parking with the introduction of a mobile parking app this summer. The Village has contracted with PANGO, a third-party provider already in use in several other municipalities across Westchester County as well as 100 cities around the world. The PANGO app can be downloaded onto iPhones or Android phones and tablets for free and requires basic setup, including entering and storing a credit card number. Users can also enter up to three (3) license plate numbers, allowing multi-vehicle families to have all of their information in one place.

The Village is currently equipping parking meters with stickers that indicate the zone in which they are located, along with a QR code that also carries this information. Additionally, signs are being erected on all Village streets that have paid parking to remind people in which zone they are parked.

The Village chose PANGO from among several companies in large part because it is compatible with the software already in use by parking enforcement officers and integrates on a single device to enhance

efficiency. The program also does not have a minimum payment threshold amount required for users and offers a single source to pay for all metered and pay station parking in the Village. Whether you park at a 15-minute meter by the train station or use the parking lot behind Dunkin' Donuts, you can pay via PANGO. Those who use PANGO to park will pay 16% more per parking visit to cover fees charged by PANGO. For example, a one hour stay on Wheeler Avenue which would cost 75 cents in parking fees will now result in an 87 cent charge to the user's PANGO account. All forms of alternate payment at existing meter devices will continue to be accepted, including quarters, EZ-Park cards, dollar bills and credit cards.

Village Administrative Aide Noreen Regan says that a pay-by-phone app is a convenience that drivers increasingly expect and an important step in the Village's journey to become a 'smart city.'

"The Village of Pleasantville is constantly looking for ways to be more efficient and improve operations," said Regan. "This initiative is driven by our commitment to providing for and responding to the needs of our residents, in addition to our desire

Following is the step-by-step process:

- Park at a metered or pay machine spot.
- Open the PANGO app and either scan the QR code on the meter or enter the Zone number for that street.
- Choose the license plate number for the car being parked.
- Enter the amount of time for which you plan to be parked, which cannot exceed local time enforcement limits. For example, if the parking spot allows for a maximum of one hour, PANGO will only allow you to pay for up to an hour. Time limits are also posted on meters and signs.
- Press "start parking."
- Receive a text from PANGO five minutes prior to time expiring.
- Add additional time if desired, assuming an extension is permissible based on the time limit for that spot.

to remain fiscally responsible. The pay-to-park app is one example of how consumer behavior is changing, and we will build on this as we introduce additional technology."

The Village reminds users of the app that any questions or issues can be directed to PANGO. They offer a customer service hotline that is staffed 24/7. Questions about Village parking in general can be directed to Noreen Regan at nregan@pleasantville-ny.org or 914-769-1975.

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UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE POOL PLANS FOR 2020 AND BEYOND

In May 2020, the Board of Trustees made the difficult decision not to open the Village pool for the 2020 season due to ongoing health concerns about COVID-19. There were many factors concerning the COVID-19 guidelines that the Board of Trustees considered. In the end, it determined that with a pool of our size, it would be very difficult to maintain social distancing.

"This decision was not reached lightly and we understand that people are disappointed. Personally, I am disappointed for my own children," said Board Trustee Nicole Asquith. "However, after much consideration of the factors and challenges involved in operating the pool during the pandemic, the Board determined that this decision best protects the safety and public health of Village residents."

At the same time, the Village is evaluating the work necessary to ensure a viable Village pool for the long-term future. At almost 70 years old, the pool is still operational but will inevitably require a significant investment in the near future. As such, the Village has engaged pool design consultants and engineers to evaluate the range of options, from rehabilitation to total reconstruction.

On June 22, the Mayor and the Board held a work session during

which a pool consultant and an engineer from Aquatic Pools & Water Parks, Inc. discussed the current state of the pool and presented initial early design options for repair and improvement. Full recording of the work session can be viewed on PCTV.

In response to the high level of community interest in the pool, Mayor Scherer and the Board held a Virtual Town Hall on June 25 dedicated to this topic. After the discussion, the Board reaffirmed its previous decision to keep the pool closed for the current season. It also continues to plan for future large-scale renovations and improvements.

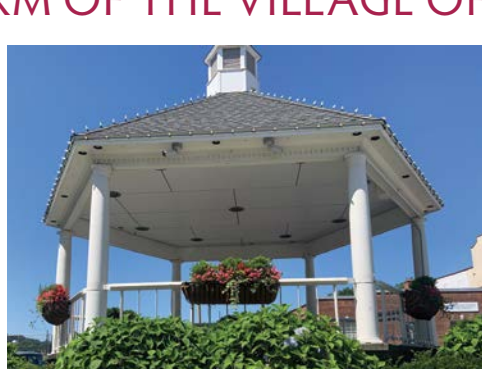
"The Village knows how much our residents value summers at the Pleasantville Pool and one of our top priorities is working on plans for the 2021 season and beyond," said Matt Trainor, Superintendent of the Parks and Recreation Department.

We welcome residents to join in discussions regarding the future of the pool and will be sharing information on how to do so in the coming months. Please be sure to sign-up for news alerts by visiting the village website at <https://www.pleasantville-ny.gov/subscribe>, and like or join the Village Facebook page at [Facebook.com/Village-of-Pleasantville-NY](https://www.facebook.com/Village-of-Pleasantville-NY).

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BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE DEDICATED TO ENHANCING THE CHARM OF THE VILLAGE OF PLEASANTVILLE

More than two decades ago, a group of Pleasantville residents looked around at some of the main areas of the Village and decided that they wanted to improve upon its aesthetics. Led by their chairman, Dan Turner, the group sought to form a Beautification Committee, and brought the idea to the Village Board of Trustees. Kathy Dinkel, who has been involved since its inception, now heads the committee which creates and maintains about 80 planters and multiple pocket parks throughout the Village.



Sleepy Hollow had a similar clock and the committee knew that it would become a focal point for our Village. Over \$60,000 in donations from residents and businesses allowed for not only the purchase of the clock but also for its ongoing maintenance.

Reflecting on the day the clock was installed, Mrs. Dinkel said, "It was so fabulous. We did a ribbon cutting on Pleasantville Day, with many dignitaries in attendance. We read the names of the people and businesses who donated, and the community was so proud and delighted."

"Pleasantville has been my home for more than 40 years and it is such a charming place," said Kathy. "We raised our children here and have loved the small, friendly atmosphere of our village and all the many interesting people. Being a walking village, it's been very gratifying to be able to make a difference by enhancing the charm of the village with our colorful planters, gardens, pocket parks, trees and plantings."

From Nonna Square to Memorial Plaza, the post office to the clock on Washington Avenue, the work of the Beautification Committee can be seen in multiple places throughout the Village. In fact, the efforts to raise funds for the Village clock were driven by the Beautification Committee in 2004. At that time, only the Village of

"Our group of dedicated volunteers has been fabulous over the years and many long-term friendships have been formed," said Kathy. "We also welcome anyone who would like to join us. You don't need to come with a green thumb, just with interest." To contact Kathy, email beautification@pleasantville-ny.gov.

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