

State of the Town Address
January 6, 2016

Happy New Year everyone and welcome to the first meeting of 2016 of the Mamaroneck Town Council. For the past three years I've taken the opportunity at the first Town Board meeting of the year to review the accomplishments of the previous year and outline some of the plans for the year to come. This is my State of the Town Address.

2015 was a very good year for the Town in many ways and 2016 should be as well. The Town continued to run efficiently with the good work of the Town staff and Town Council. We continued to provide residents with a high level of service in police and fire protection, garbage collection, ambulance service, snow removal, street repair, tax collection, building department services, recreation programs, senior services, and court services. Our surplus recovery plan continues to be successful and we are projecting an increase in our surplus levels for the fiscal year end of 2015. For 2016 we approved a budget that is within the state imposed tax cap.

In early December, 195 countries reached a landmark accord in Paris to lower planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions. A week later, leaders in San Diego committed to a legally binding pledge to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in half and transition to renewable energy by 2035. In today's world we are faced with a climate change crisis lacking federal and state regulations to address it. That is one of the reasons it is so important for local municipalities to take action. In fact, the most important climate work being done is on a local level and being carried out in cities like San Diego, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York and in municipalities like ours around the country. I believe the Town of Mamaroneck has an opportunity and obligation to be part of the solution to climate change while protecting our community and saving money.

We have to make sure the Town and its residents are resilient to extreme weather, sustainable for the future and maintain and improve our quality of life. New York State government has taken some initiatives. Last month, Governor Cuomo announced the creation of a new Clean Energy Standard mandating 50 percent of all electricity in New York come from clean and renewable energy sources by 2030. NYS is creating energy project opportunities for municipalities by lowering total project costs to support greater use of clean, renewable and sustainable power. The Town of Mamaroneck has taken advantage of these opportunities this past year.

When I first became Supervisor, I along with the Town Board, created a Town environmental committee, called the Sustainability Collaborative. Members of the committee are experts in their fields of sustainability, energy, green architecture, and more and they are volunteers.

They've helped the Town accomplish projects that have reduced our energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

The most notable Town program is the Energy Performance Contract that we completed in 2015. As I have reported previously, the Town worked with Honeywell Systems to conduct energy improvements and facility enhancements to the Town Center, Hommocks Ice Rink, and Fire House and to upgrade all the street lights to LED's to reduce energy costs, save money, and reduce carbon emissions. We closed out the project in late 2015 and look forward to cost and energy savings in the coming years. We will have precise *savings* figures for the first quarter of the energy performance contract in the next few weeks. So stay tuned.

Excluding the energy performance contract, the Town saved \$67,000, about 25% of our energy costs in 2015. These are important statistics because these reductions not only improve our environment but reduce our operating costs and the property tax levy.

2015 saw other important projects as well. The Town and Sustainability Collaborative have been working with Sustainable Westchester, a County-wide nonprofit focused on environmental programs for municipalities. I sit on the board and executive committee. The Town participated in the Solarize campaign resulting in 72 residents' homes being outfitted with solar panels. Mine included. The Town was awarded a \$100,000 grant to study the feasibility of creating a microgrid to provide an alternate power source for the Town Center, MHS, and Sarah Newman Nursing Home, all critical facilities. The Town Board is reviewing the opportunity to participate in the Municipal Solar Buyers Group that will build solar installations on Town property creating an alternate and renewable source of power. We've been monitoring the progress of the Community Choice Aggregation program to secure electricity at a lower fixed rate for residents.

The Town was awarded a Long Island Sound Futures Fund Grant to implement green infrastructure in the 2016 renovation of the Town Center parking lot. The green infrastructure will reduce the amount and improve the quality of stormwater runoff from the Town Center that runs into Mamaroneck Harbor. The \$150,000 grant will enable the Town to include permeable pavement, a rainwater harvesting system, a biofilter, two raingardens and eight catch basin filters in the renovations. The best time to retrofit a facility is during construction so it was critical to improve the parking lot with green infrastructure during renovation if possible.

The Town received a small grant to hold pharmaceutical take back days this year. We collected over 150 pounds of unneeded and expired pharmaceuticals removing them from the waste

stream and most importantly preventing them from being thrown down the drain or toilet leading them to LIS.

The Town created an Information Technology (IT) Dept. in 2015 recognizing the need to have full-time and professional attention to its technology and security needs.

These projects will benefit the Town in 2016 and the years to come.

In addition to the national discussion on climate change, there is a national discussion of and concern for aging infrastructure in our nation. This hits home on the local level in regard to sewers, roads and water projects. In 2016 we anticipate planning for large infrastructure repairs and improvements. The Town has been working with the County and other municipalities in the Long Island Sound watershed to analyze and repair its sanitary sewer pipes. We will complete a Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study in 2017 that will guide our repairs going forward. Homeowners will be asked to look at their individual sewer lines connecting to the Town's system as well. As part of Westchester Joint Water Works, which is our drinking water provider, we are looking at the prospect of enormous and unavoidable costs to comply with federal regulations. The Town will have to borrow money to pay for these large, expensive and necessary projects.

In 2016 we plan to renovate Police Headquarters which is a project we've been talking about for at least ten years. We will buy two new pieces of fire apparatus: a new engine and new ladder truck. We will continue to work through a grant from 2015 to update our zoning code and site plan approval process to improve stormwater runoff. That will work well with the update of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program on which the Coastal Zone Management Commission has been working.

We will focus our energy in the beginning of 2016 to amend the site plan approval process to include certain residential changes. We will also plan for and work toward the 2017 assessment update required by the State in order to maintain a 100% assessment value level.

Finally, we will work to improve communications to all residents through new and old methods aided by a consultant and a new website.

I want to thank my fellow Town board members for their dedication to the Town. To Ernie Odierna for acting as Deputy Supervisor, to Abby Katz for her attention to detail and skills in traffic matters, to Jaime Elkind Eney for enthusiastically representing the Town at community events and her careful attention to detail, and to Tom Murphy for his big picture vision and wise perspective. I also want to thank the Town staff and volunteer members of our boards and commissions for their commitment to the community. Thank you for the time and effort you

devote to the Town. We are lucky to have Steve Altieri as the Town Administrator who creates a professional infrastructure for the Town and to have such a wonderful community in general. I appreciate the opportunity to serve as Town Supervisor for another term and look forward to working with the Town Council, Staff and Volunteers for another productive year.