As you can see from the accompanying photo, the Village Board has moved into holiday mode. As we turn the page to the new year, some changes are coming to Village government.

For almost three years 49 State Street has functioned as Village Hall and Village Court. We knew, back in 2014, that accommodating our newly formed Village Court at Village Hall was a temporary solution and that at some point one of us would have to relocate. That time has come. Village court has grown; those with court appearances are sometimes lined up on the State Street sidewalk, waiting; meetings at Village Hall have had to be cancelled because an arraignment has been suddenly scheduled for the conference room.

On October 30 the Village purchased 127 Main Street from Lifetime Assistance for $250,000; Village Hall— will be moving there in January. The court will remain at 49 State Street; all Village, Zoning, and Planning Board meetings and workshops will continue to be held at 49 State Street. Smaller committee meetings may now take place in a conference room at the new location; we will post all meeting locations.

We looked at options to our overcrowded situation over several months before this purchase. We inquired more than once about renting court space from the Town of Sweden on days when Town Court was not in session. The Town was not interested. We looked into renovating the third floor of the police department to house a court, but renovations and an elevator were too expensive. We approached Ellicott Development Corporation, which owns the space that once housed Ryan’s Big M at 73 North Main. They offered to build a court and lease us the space, but the required area grew to 4,000sq feet and $342,000 for a 7-year lease. Thus, our cash purchase, from the unassigned fund balance, of a building already outfitted with office space.

Details of the move (which is expected to take place January 9-11) will be posted on our Village website. We will likely close down operations for a few days as we relocate, but we will keep you informed.

Read on for other changes—Chief Varrenti’s impending retirement, the clearing of trees and vegetation on the north side of the canal, our new court justice, plus updates from each of our departments and the Emily Knapp Museum.

Unfortunately, other anticipated changes move maddeningly slowly. Our municipal solar installation, which we had hoped to see completed by the end of December, is held up in a petition before the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) with the developer requesting an extension of the deadline for installation. Our streetlight buyback from National Grid is gridlocked in a disagreement over the buyback price which we believe is too high. If that sale can’t be resolved soon, it too may be headed for a petition with the PSC.

On a more upbeat and festive note, don’t forget Brockport’s fabulous annual Holiday of Lights Parade, December 3 at 5 pm. Enjoy the holiday season.

Margay Blackman, Mayor
The Public Nuisance Law— A Follow-up

In last spring’s newsletter, we proposed a public nuisance law to address problem properties with repeat violations of the law which undermine neighborhood quality of life and public safety. Such a law could result in a property with a certain number of repeat violations being closed down. We saw the law as a way to improve shared neighborhoods of owner-occupied homes and rentals, and we held meetings with focus groups of landlords, college student leaders and administrators, and resident homeowners to discuss the legislation. The process was an educational one for all concerned and the proposed legislation was modified a few times based on these sessions.

At the present time, however, the legislation will not be going forward to a public hearing due to two recently decided NYS Supreme Court Appellate Division court cases, one in Groton, NY (June 15, 2017) and one in Rochester (October 23, 2017). In both of these cases, the public nuisance law was found unconstitutional under NYS and federal law. The Groton case called attention to the chilling effect the public nuisance law has upon tenants’ rights to call the police as doing so can cause their homes to be identified as a public nuisance. In the Rochester case, the owner and tenants of the property closed down were neither involved in, nor had control over, the illegal activity (drug sales) that accumulated nuisance points and were thus not afforded due process.

As we noted in our letter to the Suburban News in August, this setback does not dampen our concern for quality of life issues in neighborhoods shared by college student rentals and family homeowners. We have pursued police records to locate trouble spots in student village housing regarding noise violations and disorderly house arrests. We encourage landlords to include in their leases prohibition of parties that violate the disorderly house ordinance. We urge village residents to call 911 (the only way to connect with local police) to report excessive noise and out of control parties. We welcome the opportunity to present, with the police and code enforcement departments, information sessions for college students about living off campus in neighborhoods with village homeowners. Our Codes Department has prepared a flyer for distribution to off campus students to inform them about village codes. We are continuing to study how other municipalities handle these same issues short of public nuisance laws that run into constitutional issues, and accordingly are in the process of revising and updating Chapter 35 of our codes on Peace and Good Order.

Village Court

Christopher R. Martin was appointed by Mayor Blackman to fill the seat left vacant by Village Justice Blair. After taking the required training for justices in December, he will take the bench in January. Martin is a life-long resident of the Village of Brockport and has served the community in numerous roles throughout the years — with the Brockport Fire Department and Brockport Ambulance Corps, as a Village Trustee and Deputy Mayor, and as the Public Information Officer for the Village Emergency Operations Plan. Martin says, "I am very pleased and excited to have been selected and I look forward to the challenges the position presents. I am very appreciative Mayor Blackman offered me the opportunity to serve the community in this role."
Our newest edition to the Brockport Police Department, K-9 Brock and his handler Officer Josh Sime, graduated from the police academy on August 29, 2017. Brock is now certified in narcotics detection, tracking and officer/handler protection. In order to gain maximum use of Brock and his handler we have assigned them to the afternoon shift from 2 PM to 10 PM. I’m confident Brock will continue to be a valuable asset to our community.

The annual Stetson Club Holiday Parade of Lights is scheduled for December 3, 2017 at 5 P.M. on Main Street in Brockport. This event will also include the lighting of the Sagawa Park Christmas Tree and fireworks. As a reminder, don’t hesitate to shop the local merchants of Brockport; when you do, you might just come across some Brockport Police Officers handing out FREE TURKEYS!

Lastly, my time has come to write a farewell letter.

Dear Village Board, Residents of Brockport, members of the Brockport Police Department, Colleagues and Friends,

It is with a heavy heart and mixed emotions that I write this letter to announce that my last day of employment, as a Brockport Police Officer and the Chief of Police of the Brockport Police Department, will be March 31, 2018.

As many of you know my career in law enforcement began 38 years ago when I was hired as an Irondequoit Police Officer. During my 23 years at Irondequoit I rose through the ranks and was blessed to work with some of the most dedicated officers, not only in Irondequoit, but throughout the county. I retired from that job in January of 2002 and was named the Brockport Police Department Chief of Police.

During my 16 years in Brockport I was again blessed with working with some of the most dedicated, professional, generous and kindest individuals I have ever met. Over the 16 years here we were able to build a team second to none and accomplish things we never would have been able to accomplish without this team. I firmly believe the future leadership of this department has been set in place for a number of years now and will take this department to the next level of professional policing.

I will never be able to put into words the gratitude, respect and appreciation I have for past and present members of this department, village board members, colleagues, friends and most importantly the Brockport community.

It has been my honor and pleasure to have served you for the past 16 years. Thank you all for everything you have done for me, the department and most importantly the Village of Brockport.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Varrenti, Chief of Police

END OF YEAR ACTIVITIES

Dec 1-2  10 AM-5 PM Candlelight Christmas Sale, Morgan Manning House (until 9 PM on Friday)
Dec 3rd Open House, Brockport Merchants Association, Downtown Historic District (through Dec. 4)  
   3:00 PM Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Welcome Center for the EV Charging Station, EV info provided  
   4:30 PM Oliver Middle School Chorus caroling at Brockport Merchants/ Main St.  
   5:00 PM HOLIDAY PARADE OF LIGHTS, Main St., lighting of Sagawa Park Christmas Tree, Fireworks
Then...and...Now

Both photos are of installing curb along Monroe Avenue, separated by roughly 100 years and many mechanical advances. (Top image courtesy of the Emily L. Knapp Museum.) Curbing took place on Monroe Ave. the beginning of November 2017, prior to street paving.

News from the Department of Public Works

Department of Public Works
(585) 637-1060
hdonahue@brockportny.org

After a very rainy spring and summer, the DPW adjusted their road and sidewalk schedule, completing numerous projects this fall, including milling and paving sections of State St., Monroe Ave., Smith St., and Liberty St. Water main replacement work took place on Clark St. and more than a half dozen streets were sealed this summer.

Leaf pick-up will continue through Dec. 8th or the first heavy snow.

With the onset of winter weather, please remember to shovel out the fire hydrants near you. Businesses are responsible for the sidewalks in front of their store fronts; the sidewalk plow will be out as time and weather allow; please remember heavy snow fall requires street plowing first and foremost. Thank you for your assistance and as always, call with any questions or concerns.

VILLAGE OF BROCKPORT BOARD & COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Zoning Board of Appeals vacancy for a term to 6/30/22 — Meets 1st Thursday 7pm at Village Hall

Emily L. Knapp Museum Board vacancy to complete a term to 6/30/20 — Meets 4th Wednesday 6:30pm at Village Hall

Parks Committee vacancy to complete a term to 6/30/19 — Meets 2nd Tuesday 7pm (April – October) at Village Hall

Code Review Committee vacancy to complete a term to 6/30/19 vacancy to complete a term to 6/30/20 vacancy (Planning Board rep.) — Meets 2nd &/or 4th Monday at 5:30pm at Village Hall

Housing Task Force 3 vacancies – no term — Meets 2nd &/or 4th Monday at 5:30pm at Village Hall

Submit a Position Interest Form via the Village website: www.brockportny.org under Forms & Applications
The Village of Brockport announced its designated as a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), recognizing its leadership in reducing energy use, cutting costs and driving clean energy locally. Brockport received the designation for completing 4 of 10 high-impact clean energy actions identified by NYSERDA as part of the Clean Energy Communities initiative. In addition, the designation gives the village an opportunity to apply for up to $50,000 toward additional clean energy projects, with no local cost share.

To earn the Clean Energy Community designation, the Village of Brockport completed the following high-impact clean energy actions:

- Unified Solar Permit – streamlining the permitting/approval process for solar panel installation;
- Benchmarking – adoption of a policy to report energy use;
- Energy Code Enforcement Training – code enforcement officer trained in energy code best practices;
- Clean Fleet - installed an electric vehicle charging station (at Village Hall, through a NYSERDA grant.)

We look forward to harnessing additional clean energy funds as we continue to move our community towards responsible resource stewardship and invite businesses, residents, and visitors to join us in our efforts to reduce cost, improve efficiency, and prepare our community for the future.

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### Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Explained

The Village of Brockport passed a local law adopting Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) on October 2, 2017, joining the Villages of Scottsville, Lima and the Town of Geneva. The City of Rochester has announced it is pursuing CCA and several other local municipalities have added it to their agendas. Essentially, CCA allows municipalities to pool the purchasing power of their residents to secure clean, alternative sources of energy that saves citizens money on their utility bills and creates a cleaner environment for future generations.

CCA shifts the control of selecting the default supplier of electricity from the state to the community, while leaving the role of the local utility unchanged. Leveraging the bulk purchasing power of the community, CCA communities benefit from reduced electricity rates, reduced price volatility, and increased local renewable energy development and clean energy jobs. Currently, more than five million customers nationwide are served by Community Choice Aggregation programs in seven states: New York, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Ohio, New Jersey, and Rhode Island.

Community Choice Aggregation was authorized in New York State by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in April, 2016. Prior to this state-wide authorization, the PSC approved a CCA pilot, Sustainable Westchester, in February 2015, which is still operating today.


Although Brockport has adopted the local law, much work must be done before we will enter the actual bidding process with vendors. More communities will need to pass the local law in order to generate enough buying power, and are slated to do so in the coming year. Once the wheels are put in motion, we will announce public meetings and a contact person designated to answer all of your questions or help in the “opt-out” process, if that is your choice. Stay tuned!
Interactive Rental Property Map

The Code Enforcement Department now offers an interactive map (powered by Google Maps) that allows residents to access important information about registered rental properties, such as:

- Property Tax ID #
  *This can be used to check property deed & mortgage records with the Monroe County Clerk’s office.*
- Certificate of Occupancy expiration date
- Property classification & number of legal bedrooms (not number of legal occupants)
- Zoning

The map was developed with the assistance of computer science students at the College at Brockport and is maintained by the Village of Brockport. The map can be accessed at: http://www.brockportny.org/departments-services/building-code

Electric Car

The Building & Code Enforcement Officers are excited to begin patrolling in their new electric vehicle – a 2017 Chevy Bolt. The car boasts an impressive EPA-estimated 238 miles of range and was named the 2017 Green Car of the Year. This eco-friendly vehicle is an important investment toward Brockport’s clean air & energy goals. The Village is currently working with NYSERDA to receive a $5,000 rebate for the Chevy Bolt.

A-Frame Sign Resolution

It has come to the attention of the Village Board that various merchants wish to utilize portable A-frame style signs, which do not comply with the current Village Code Chapter 43: Signs and Billboards. The Board is aware that the Code Review Committee is recommending a new Sign Law which allows A-frame signs, subject to certain regulations. To afford merchants the ability to utilize the signs in advance of the new law enactment, the Village Board has authorized the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant variances for portable A-frame signs. Zoning Board of Appeals applications are available on the Village website or at Village Hall. The application fee for an A-frame sign variance is $50.
In summer 2017, the village Parks Committee mailed surveys to households near Corbett and Evergreen Parks asking for feedback about existing and desired play equipment and other park uses. With about a 10% response rate, we learned that users especially value safe and attractive swings, climbers, and spinners for both younger and older children. Respondents also shared thoughtful concerns about safety, accessibility, and the availability of shade and seating. The Parks Committee is grateful for the feedback and looks forward to incorporating these priorities into future plans for continuous improvement, and will do the same for Havenwood and Barry playgrounds/parks. If you live near any of these playgrounds/parks or use them regularly, the committee would love to hear more! Please share your input through the online version of the survey at [http://www.brockportny.org/news/parks](http://www.brockportny.org/news/parks).

The Parks Committee was also fortunate to work with three students from the College at Brockport — Courtland Zinn, Ian Spera, and Matthew Febles, from Dr. Kamal’s Computer Sciences class — to create an interactive map of the village’s nine parks. This map is similar to the one developed for the Codes Department and includes a photo of each park, a list of the amenities available at each location, and a walking path between the parks with distances marked on the map. The map can be found on the Village Parks section of our webpage under the Community tab: [http://www.brockportny.org/community/village-parks](http://www.brockportny.org/community/village-parks).

Other new information available online (at the above web address) for the parks is a fact sheet, updating amenities for 2017, and a downloadable brochure, developed by volunteer Norm Frisch. Discover where handicapped accessible play equipment is located, where to find a grill for your picnic, or locate the pickle ball court!

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**Welcome Center / Harvester Park Adds Amenity: EV Station**

Brockport’s newest charging station is one of several stations to be installed throughout the Genesee-Finger Lakes region through the implementation of the Genesee Region Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan, prepared by the Greater Rochester Clean Cities coalition in 2016 with the support of the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA). Other communities include the Village of Victor the City of Canandaigua and Batavia Downs.

Five key locations were identified in the report as integral to building a corridor of charging stations available to those traveling across New York State, and Brockport was one of them. This Charge Point station was paid in full by NYSERDA; both the village and the state will monitor the station’s usage and hope to encourage residents and tourists alike to utilize this clean energy option.

Only EV cars can utilize the two green marked spaces in front of the charging station. A time limit for those charging will be discussed by the Village Board and noted with new signage to ensure no one parks in the spaces for an excessive amount of time, or is in the way of snow plowing during the overnight hours.
The canal closed on October 11 and so did our Welcome Center. We had a successful 13th season, though traffic was down about 10 percent, partly because the canal was open for a shorter season. We had 285 boat/nights, compared to 325 last year. We had 748 passenger/nights. Tourism experts estimate that tourists spend an average of about $150 a day while traveling. Using that figure, the canal generated about $112,000 for Brockport businesses.

Boaters tell us that we have the best hospitality facility on the canal. One reason is that we have the only bicycle lending program. Generous donations by two Brockporters have enabled us to further enhance that program.

The bicycle-lending program began when the late Jack Mazzarella fixed up some bikes and donated them to the Girl Scouts. The next year, he wanted to donate some more, but had none on hand. He put a short note in the Suburban News asking for donations and received 217 bikes. He thought the college might want them to lend to students, having heard of such a program at a Midwestern college. We proposed this to a college vice president and to the Director of the Brockport Auxiliary Service Corp. They were not interested, citing liability concerns. Several years later, they thought better of it and the college now has such a program.

So we set up such a program at the Welcome Center. Jack built a bicycle rack and donated bicycles. For several years until his arthritis stopped him, he maintained the bikes. The program has been very successful. We lend 450 to 500 bicycles a season, many of them to local people.

Recently, Steve Buckley, a retired librarian and a Greeter at the Welcome Center donated funds to the Village for eight new bikes so that our bikes are now uniform in appearance and condition. He also gifted money for signs to hang on the bikes, identifying them with the Welcome Center and Brockport. The bikes will be put into service next season.

Also, Brad Alexander, who owns Express Mart and Northside Service Center, has donated funds for a bicycle work station to be installed near the Welcome Center. It will have a hoist for bikes and bicycle tools attached to the station by cables.

Finally, Susan Edmunds, a retired Brockport College faculty member and Greeter at the Welcome Center, purchased new furniture for the Welcome Center lounge, providing a more pleasant venue for boaters, bikers, and others to relax while visiting Brockport. Sue also gifted funds to be set aside for future purchases and capital improvements for the Welcome Center, parks, and trees and donated towards the repairs for the village clock.

We are very grateful for the generosity of Jack Mazzarella, Steve Buckley, Brad Alexander, and Sue Edmunds.
In addition to the donations made for the various projects at the Welcome Center, a large amount of money has been raised to cover the cost of repairs to the Village clock. The Village obtained an $11,000 grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation. Also, the Brockport Lions Club, under the leadership of David Moore, has raised, as of this writing, $15,100 in donations from many individuals and groups in the community. The surplus over the $21,500 cost of the repairs will be placed in a reserve fund with the Village to pay for future maintenance of the clock.

The clock, in the tower of the Brockport United Methodist Church is a Seth Thomas Tower Clock, the only such clock in Monroe County, by the leading clock maker in the world. It was donated to the Village by the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1914 as a memorial to the Revolutionary War veterans buried in the Brockport area and to the early settlers. It ran without fault for 90 years until it required minor repairs in 2004. It stopped again two years ago, this time needing major work. The repairs are being done by Essence of Time in Lockport.

The Village Board is very grateful for the generous support provided for these projects by so many members of this community, making these improvements to the infrastructure of the Village possible at no cost to our taxpayers.

Annual Saturday of Service with the College at Brockport

On August 26th 983 freshmen from the College at Brockport spent the day in community service visiting sites from Brockport to Rochester. Perhaps you saw them in the Village painting the supports of the Utica Street Railroad Bridge, weeding and picking up trash along the north side of the canal between the lift bridges, or spreading wood chips in Monika’s Park and Corbett Park. In all, they participated in 25 community service activities in Brockport.

NOTICE TO ALL CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Submit your events to be published on the Village Events Calendar to Clerk Leslie Morelli by filling out the online form under Forms and Applications: http://www.brockportny.org/files/Events_Information_Form.pdf

Submissions must be made by March 1st, 2018. The annual events calendar is published online and is available in hard copy at Village Hall and will be included in the Spring/Summer Newsletter. Free publicity for events held within the Village!
The Emily L. Knapp Museum & Library of Local History (ELK) sponsored the October event, “Brockport’s History Through Music,” at the Concordia Lutheran Church. Musicians Darla Bair, the Amadeus Chorale Youth Singers, Julie Izzo, and Bill Hullfish represented the many eras of Brockport life in concert form. From the early canal days to the Civil War era to the College at Brockport’s boom after WWII, Brockport’s history was brought to life. Over 135 people made this a successful and well-attended event.

The ELK is currently working on the construction of a “Street of Shops” in the garret on the third floor. The museum board continues to consider opportunities to enhance the quality of displays for objects in the Emily Knapp Museum. With the exception of the 3rd floor Garret and Reaper Room, display cabinets are in place to facilitate observation of historical items. This project is designed to improve visibility and increase space for display of buttons, shoes, and business equipment which was made or used in the early 1900’s in the Village of Brockport. The project is under the supervision of Doug Bull who is assisted by Jim Bolthouse. Labor and matching funds have been donated; thank you to our many volunteers, we are grateful for your continued dedication and hard work.

Current exhibits include period suffragette dress and related information, celebrating the 100th anniversary of New York State’s Suffrage Amendment. The museum is closed for the season; it will reopen in May. Research assistance or a visit by appointment is available. Call Village Hall for more information at 637-5300. Please note, the Emily L. Knapp Museum’s location will remain at 49 State St.

SAVE THE DATE for the BISCO sponsored 24th Brockport Arts Festival and Duck Derby on August 11-12, 2018.

The Brockport Arts Festival is the only fundraiser for BISCO which provides funds for community children’s projects such as playground equipment for Corbett and Barry Street parks, disc golf course equipment for Camp Abilities and more.

The 2018 co-chairs for the festival are Art Appleby and Kathy Kristansen. Our committee is presently in the process of recruiting artisans to our 2018 festival as well as getting the advertising, entertainment, etc. locked in. The 2018 committee consists of representatives from the 3 service clubs (Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis), and business members, interns and volunteers from the college and community.

We welcome volunteers who would like to participate on the festival planning committee with BISCO in sponsoring the 2018 Brockport Arts Festival. BISCO (Brockport Integrated Service Clubs Organization) board meetings are the first Tuesday of the month and festival planning committee meetings are the third Tuesday of the month. All meetings are at 5:30PM at the Brockport Fire Exempts building on West Ave. in Brockport.

For more information, contact either co-chair at brockportartsfest@gmail.com. The Arts Festival website is www.brockportartsfestival.com.
Allied Frozen Storage on State Street has been a Brockport fixture since 1983 when it was founded by Matteo and Charles Pecorella and John and Carl Petronio. In 1989-90 they constructed additional cold storage warehousing in Cheektowaga, and in 2002 they acquired the Owens Illinois complex on Owens Road which they renamed the Sweden Industrial Center (known today as the “Brockport Industrial Center”). In 2006 the entire complex was purchased by Drew Blum of Buffalo, who is the current CEO. Under Blum, Allied’s warehousing expanded to West Seneca and Mt. Morris. (Allied builders at 250 State Street was once part of the Allied complex of properties, but is no longer.)

Allied Frozen Storage sits on 72 acres at the eastern edge of the Village of Brockport; its four buildings contain nearly 1 million square feet of cold and dry storage. A cogeneration plant on the property generates the electricity and refrigeration for the warehouses from natural gas. Most of the warehouse space is cold storage, but Allied also leases to Sunnking and will soon be leasing both manufacturing and cold storage space to SatisPie, a company that makes private label pies.

Although occupying an impressive spread of acreage, Allied has fewer than a fifth of the employees of Bonduelle, the frozen food packaging plant next door. Forty to 45 employees work at Allied on a year-round basis and they hire some employees seasonally.

On October 18th Trustee John LaPierre and I toured the facility with Mr. Blum and Executive Vice President Terry Collier. We donned company supplied puffy coats to tour the Zero-degree cold storage warehouses. Employees, similarly outfitted for a shift in the subfreezing cold, darted about on forklifts, moving pallets of frozen foods.

Every box and tote of frozen foodstuffs bears a bar code allowing it to be individually electronically inventoried and later located. 100,000 totes come and go during the course of a year. Allied warehouses food for Wegmans (overflow), Sysco, and Walmart, among others. Their biggest customer is Bonduelle, which provides 90% of their business. Huge totes of fresh frozen vegetables grown on area farms and processed at Bonduelle’s Bergen plant come to Allied to be stored. The totes’ contents are then delivered next door to be packaged at Brockport’s Bonduelle plant, following which they return to Allied for storage and shipping to their final destinations.

Smaller sections of the multi-building warehouse offer cold—but not freezing—storage and dry storage. We toured one huge cold room holding NYS cheeses, and in another we saw large metal barrels of cherries, barrels of tomato paste destined to be turned into catsup for a major fast food chain, and pallets of dried milk. All the warehouses were spotlessly clean and free of any debris.

In mid-October at the height of the season, Allied will see 60-100 trucks a day delivering and picking up frozen food. A rail spur runs into the warehouse, and the twice weekly train from Medina delivers frozen produce from other areas to be warehoused here. The train runs all year, but truck traffic declines during the winter and early spring months.
On November 8th, the Village hosted a meeting with New York State Canal Corp representatives and some 20 invited residents from properties that will be impacted by the Canal Corp’s “Vegetation Management” project that is taking place from Albion to Pittsford. Work in Brockport is slated to begin in early December.

The Canal Corp hosted an open house for the public, rolling out this project at the college on October 4th, but that meeting was not sufficiently advertised and many residents whose properties would be impacted were unaware of the project. Although the Canal Corp would not agree to a second public meeting, they did agree to a smaller meeting by invitation. That meeting was attended by Canal Corp officials Deputy Director John Callaghan, Director of Construction Management Dave Mellen, Project Engineer Mike Wozniak, and New York Power Authority Senior Vice President for Public and Regulatory Affairs, Kim Harriman. Ahead of the meeting the Village sent the Canal Corp a list of questions; residents asked many additional questions, and Deputy Clerk Treasurer Erica Linden took extensive notes on the meeting which are posted for the public on the Village website.

The project focuses on the north side of the canal and involves clearing trees and undergrowth from the canal embankment, followed by stump removals, regrading and reseeding. The canal embankment on the north side is basically an earthen dam that had to be built up to contain the canal waters. A 2016 risk study completed by Paul C. Rizzo Associates civil engineering firm identified 155 acres between Albion and Pittsford with significant risk for potential flooding and loss of life from breaches of the bank. “Think the Genesee and Lake Ontario pouring into your living room,” expresses the direst possibility. The riskiest 3.5 miles of this stretch are between Redman and Sweden Walker Roads where there are 70 Village properties that border the canal on the north side.

Tree roots compromise the canal bank and provide cover for burrowing animals which do further damage. Overgrown underbrush hampers inspection of the canal embankment. We’ve had one documented leak in Brockport from the roots of a downed tree at Evergreen Park several years ago. The Canal Corp admits that this project is long overdue, but notes that they utilized one of the best engineering companies in the country to do the risk assessment. They add that tree removal and restoration of the bank will follow the best engineering practices with the least environmental impact.

You may have seen the stakes like those shown in the accompanying photos placed at the bottom of the canal embankment. The stakes do not necessarily denote the cutting area, but tell the field workers not to go past that stake.

Tree cutting is being done by Mohawk Valley Materials out of Utica. Phase 2, stump removal, will take place in 2018 when the cutting is complete. The Canal Corp has promised a public meeting in Brockport before phase two begins.

Resources

See the Orleans Hub for the article and photos of the tree cutting that has already taken place along the towpath in Albion: https://orleanshub.com/?s=vegetation+management. The machine, a Sennebogen, operates from the towpath.


For detailed notes from the November 8th meeting, see our webpage, under News, http://www.brockportny.org/news/news-announcements/385-canal-corp-meeting-minutes

Questions about your individual property? Contact either of the following Canal Corp personnel:

Dave Mellen David.Mellen@canals.ny.gov
Mike Wozniak Michael.Wozniak@canals.ny.gov