

October 2011

**progress through
participation**

epoa news

**The Official Newsletter of the Eastern Property Owners' Association
Garden City, New York 11530
www.gcepoa.org**

Representing Residents of the East since 1918

Public Meeting Tuesday, October 11, 7:30 pm, Stewart School

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Aircraft Noise Over Garden City: page 5**



**President's Message
by Judy Courtney**

As September begins with a new season, new school year and other changes, I am excited to begin my term as president of the Eastern Property Owners' Association. My thanks to past president Walter McKenna for the great job he has done over the past two years and the leadership he has given to the EPOA.

As I think about the coming year, I believe there are many positive aspects to our Village that we should all be proud of. Our schools are open for another year, continuing to develop students we can all be proud of. Academic, athletic and artistic accomplishments are a cornerstone of our school system. We provide countless opportunities for involvement for our seniors, with trips, adult education and a thriving Senior Center. Our parks are vibrant and in constant use by countless families. Our local merchants continue to thrive, despite the economic challenges faced by many.

Nevertheless, the coming year will also bring many challenges to each of us in Garden City.

Development, which can be both a blessing and a curse, needs to be addressed in a thoughtful manner. The Village is currently considering a condominium complex on part of the Doubleday property on Franklin Avenue, which is part of the East. We will continue to be active in providing information and addressing our residents' concerns as these plans unfold.

The HUB development is now in another phase, with the recent no vote by Nassau County residents on County Executive Mangano's proposal. This significant development is important to the entire Village, but most important to residents of the East. Additional construction in surrounding villages will also have an impact on our quality of life. In order to pro-actively monitor these development issues, the EPOA is creating an Outside Development Committee, chaired by EPOA vice president Christine Mullaney. This committee will ensure we are all up-to-date on important developments and can have a strong influence on the outcome of these and other projects.

St. Paul's continues to be a question we struggle with. The Committee to Save St. Paul's has done a tremendous amount of work to develop a plan. A new team of Trustees is also considering

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**epoa officers
and directors
2011 –2012**

President Judy Courtney
V President Christine Mullaney
Corporate Secretary S. Benjamin Murolo
Corresponding Secretary Joseph Moody
Treasurer John Lattuca
Directors Mathilde Bellmer
Jaime Gans
Walter McKenna
Tom Nappi
Brian Noonan
Sal Norberto
Neil O'Malley
Robert Orosz
Nicole Russo
Robert Rymers
Leo Stimmler
Debra Tennyson-Feinstein
Matthew Teri
Edward Welch

**representatives
from the east**

Village Trustees
*Dennis Donnelly
Nicholas Episcopia*
Acting Village Justice
Brian T. Deveney
School Board Trustee
Tom Pinou
Library Board Trustee
"Libby" Huschle
Architectural Design Review
Barbara Ruggiero
Planning Commission
*William A. Bellmer
H. Bradford Gustavson
Robert Schoelle, Jr.*
Zoning Board of Appeals
Brian Paradine
Cultural & Recreational Affairs
Andrew deLannoy
Environmental Advisory Board
*Leo Stimmler
Elizabeth Bailey (at large)
Robert Foxen (at large)
Ryan Schnupp (at large)*

Newsletter Editor
Christine Mullaney

Storm Damage

We want to thank all the Village employees for their tremendous effort during and after the tropical storm Irene. These employees left their own families behind and reported to work where they battled the elements to secure our Village.

We lost hundreds of trees and multiple sidewalks.

The public works employees worked throughout the storm clearing roads, chopping up trees, eliminating debris and making sure our storm sewers and drains were clear and open to prevent flooding.

The fire department, both professional and volunteer, worked all night and the entire next day answering hundreds of calls.

The police department also faced a hectic evening and day of calls. They responded to many emergencies: power lines, aided calls, hospital runs, wellness checks and traffic accidents. The power failures resulted in numerous traffic lights outages, with officers required to secure intersections and direct traffic. Police officers slept overnight at Village Hall so they could return to work early the day after the storm.

The buildings department visited every home that had structural damage or tree damage to insure that building permits were issued so that immediate repairs could be started.

Employees of our water department secured all our well sights and maintained pumping throughout the storm, which guaranteed water pressure throughout the Village. Parks personnel secured the Village pool and cleared trees lost throughout Garden City parks.

Finally we would like to thank our Village administrator Bob Schoelle. Bob called all department heads to planning meetings prior to the storm to review and develop a strategy for dealing with all possible contingencies. This preparation was a key element in the smooth delivery of emergency service during and after the storm.

Labor Contracts

Police Department: After extensive intense negotiations failed to reach a contract agreement, we had no choice but to go to binding arbitration. The arbitrator awarded a salary increase of 2.6 percent for two years, retroactive, and 3.5 percent per annum for the next three years, with the inflation rate now running at 3.5 percent. This arbitration award falls exactly at the mid-point of all police contracts in Nassau County, whether the contracts were negotiated or arbitrated.

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Trustees' Update



by Nicholas Episcopia and Dennis Donnelly

*continued from page 2**Trustees' Update*

CSEA: The CSEA settled for a 1.5 percent per annum increase for three years. The great majority of all these workers contribute 10 percent to their health care insurance.

CSEA Supervisors Union: We are currently in serious negotiation with the CSEA Supervisors Union and have not yet reached a settlement.

Career Firefighters Union: For quite some time, we have been engaged in extremely difficult labor negotiations with the career Firefighters Union in an effort to reach a settlement that is in the best interests of the Village. However, the matter may have to be remanded to binding arbitration.

Fire Department

As you know, the GCFD is comprised of 120 volunteers who staff the Engine, Truck, Chemical and Fire Rescue Companies, as well as career firefighters who staff the Headquarters Company which is stationed at Village Hall. The positions of Fire Chief and three Assistant Chiefs are filled by volunteers.

Fire Chief Charles Cavarra, along with 1st Assistant Chief William Castoro, 2nd Assistant Chief Joseph Nadolny, and 3rd Assistant Chief Brian Gallo, developed a new staffing plan which has saved the Village approximately \$90,000 in overtime pay since it was implemented in February of this year.

Thanks to the foresight of Chief Cavarra and the Assistant Chiefs and the cooperation of the Village Department of Public Works, a hurricane disaster plan was developed and already in place long before we were threatened by Irene. The plan, which coordinates Fire Department and Public Works operations during a hurricane, enhanced the much needed emergency response throughout the storm.

As Hurricane Irene approached on Saturday, more than 30 of our Volunteer firefighters left their homes to report for duty and stayed throughout the night into Sunday, answering over 100 calls for aid.

We encourage residents to support the Garden City Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Fund-raising Drive currently underway. The money is used for such things as supplemental training in fire-fighting and emergency response techniques and the Scholarship Program.

New York State 2 Percent Tax Cap Law

The newly enacted New York State Tax Cap Law requires a 2 percent cap on increases to the total tax levy, based on the total tax levy from the prior year. The only exemption is for mandated pension contributions.

Working with the Citizens Budget Review Committee and with the cooperation of Village staff, last year we were able to 'hold the line' so that taxes increased by only 1.75 percent, even before the 2 percent tax cap became effective.

In accordance with the 2 percent cap, based on our current total tax levy, our Village taxes can be increased approximately \$1,100,000. With rising costs pitted against current interest rates and decreased income from mortgage recording taxes, as well as decreases in real property assessed valuations, we will again have to make extremely difficult and painful choices while trying to maintain the Village's infrastructure and preserve the level of services our residents expect.

As we approach the upcoming "budget planning season," we are acutely aware that we must continue to be extremely careful of all our expenses and again fund only those capital projects that are absolutely necessary to maintain our streets and curbs, water mains and wells, water tower, sewer system, municipal buildings, parks and playgrounds, parking lots, and emergency communication systems while meeting our day to day operating expenses and contractual obligations.

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President's Message

alternate uses of the building, including the possibility of a recreation center. Although many of us are frustrated with the pace, I welcome any ideas that are being considered. While the CSSP has a well-thought out proposal, I would hate to see us accept this idea because it is the only one we have to consider.

Budgets, two percent property tax caps, contract negotiations and other things will continue to challenge us through this year. The only way any of us can be sure that the best decisions are made is to become involved in what is going on. Our POA system is a unique one, that affords all residents the opportunity to become involved, either by becoming a member, volunteering for a committee or attending POA meetings.

We are fortunate to have a great group of EPOA directors this year, including six new directors: Tom Nappi, Brian Noonan, Sal Norberto, Nicole Russo, Debra Tennyson-Feinstein and Matthew Teri. Each of the 19 EPOA directors (listed on page 2) volunteers his or her time to help make this Village a better place. I encourage you to reach out to them, share your perspectives and become educated about our unique system of government. As Thomas Jefferson said, "The government is the strongest of which every man feels himself a part."

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Trustees' Update

St. Paul's

In light of our budget constraints, we are of the opinion that expenditures for St. Paul's must continue to be kept to a minimum in order to meet the cost of running the Village without causing an unacceptably high tax increase.

While we certainly are more than willing to consider new proposals for the building, the bottom line for any Village Board of Trustees over the past 18 years has been the cost. For nearly two decades, a variety of proposals to retrofit only the first and part of the second floors for public use have been seriously studied. Sadly, none have had an estimated cost of less than \$15 million to \$20 million or more to execute the project and mothball the rest of the building.

Nonetheless, we certainly are reviewing The Committee to Save St. Paul's newest proposal to create 10,000 square feet of public space. A number of other residents have expressed an interest in exploring the creation of a recreation center on the site and are gathering information for review and further study. However, the feasibility of either of these concepts will be determined by the cost to the taxpayers, which has yet to be confirmed.

Stop Signs only work when drivers actually stop. Rolling stops and not stopping at all put both drivers and pedestrians at risk and cause thousands of injuries and deaths each year nationally. Brain trauma, whiplash and back, knee, ankle, wrist and hand damage are common injuries to passengers in vehicles broadsided by motorists running stop signs. Children walking or on bikes and the elderly are particularly at risk. All this misery to save a few seconds.



The Village receives numerous requests for stop signs. Whatever the merits at any particular location, the signs are useless when drivers ignore them, which is a growing problem on our local streets.

Aircraft Noise Over Garden City: An Update

by Elizabeth Bailey
at large liaison to Garden City's
Environmental Advisory Board



Many residents of Garden City are aware of the increase in noise from air traffic that has occurred over Garden City during the past few years. Several residents have been studying this issue, including Village Trustee Laurence Quinn, EPOA Director Leo Stimmler, Peter Damiano and Gina Formasar. Garden City joined the Town-Village Aircraft Safety and Noise Abatement Committee (TVASNAC), a Town of Hempstead committee which has members from Atlantic Beach, Cedarhurst, East Williston, Floral Park, Hewlett Harbor, Lawrence, Long Beach, New Hyde Park, Stewart Manor, Valley Stream and Woodsburgh, in addition to Garden City. Trustee Quinn is our official representative on this committee. Ray Gaudio, the TVASNAC representative from East Williston, has also supplied much useful data related to the noise issue.

Several issues contribute to the increase in aircraft noise over Garden City, including the following:

- Level of air traffic. Air traffic at JFK has increased significantly during the last few years. Legislation to remove slot restrictions at JFK was passed by Congress in 2000. Runway utilization data provided by the Port Authority indicate that between 2004 and 2009, JFK operations increased by 25 percent, but arrivals on the runway that impacts Garden City, 22L, increased by 134 percent. Thus the impact on Garden City has been out of proportion to the total increase in traffic. The FAA believes that using runway 22L for arrivals and runways 22R and 31L for departures is “one of the most safe and efficient runway configurations at JFK” (letter, FAA to Senator Schumer written in response to a letter sent by Mayor Rothschild to the FAA and the Port Authority).
- High usage of runway 22L for arrivals by VOR/DME* and resulting traffic of aircraft at low altitudes. Planes arriving on JFK runway 22L which pass over Garden City are using the VOR approach. (Planes arriving on runway 22 by ILS pass over Floral Park.) When ILS is used, an airplane is on a precise approach path with a precisely defined glide slope. When VOR is used, the aircraft's altitude is not so precisely controlled. Statistics have demonstrated that many aircraft on the VOR approach to runway 22L are flying below the waypoint crossing altitudes. For example, Ray Gaudio documented that during January and February of 2011, 87 percent of flights passing over East Williston were at lower altitudes than the 2500 foot prescribed altitude for its waypoint, CAPIT. Two of these flights were at altitudes lower than 1500 feet. In the letter to Senator Schumer, the FAA Regional Administrator stated that air traffic controllers are required to take action if aircraft drop below the prescribed altitudes. However, when the VOR approach is used, this is not the case once aircraft are released from tower control for a visual approach to landing. Once they are released by the tower, pilots can descend to altitudes with which they are comfortable. Local residents attending the TVASNAC meetings have expressed concern that low-flying aircraft constitute a safety issue, as well as a noise issue.
- Nighttime air traffic. During nighttime hours (11 pm to 7 am), runway 22L is supposed to be the runway of last resort, to be used only when “traffic, delays, weather or construction prevent the use of any other runway” (NY TRACON/Kennedy Tower Letter of Agreement as quoted in letter to Senator Schumer). Obviously this item is not being enforced as frequently as Garden City residents would like it to be!

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Aircraft Noise

- Low fine for exceeding noise levels. The fine for exceeding mandated noise levels is only \$250 and cannot be changed by local officials.

Representatives from the FAA, Port Authority, TRACON and Kennedy Control Tower were present at the June TVASNAC meeting, as well as several of our elected officials or representatives from their offices. At this meeting, a representative from each organization gave an overview of its responsibilities; then TVASNAC members and other attendees had a chance to ask questions. A follow-up executive TVASNAC meeting was held in August. It was hoped that by having all the responsible organizations present at these meetings, some solutions to the noise problem could be found, and that any tendency to “pass the buck” to other organizations would be eliminated. It was also hoped that the elected officials who attended, or their representatives, would also see that the noise issue is considered serious by many people and not something that can be ignored.

Some progress may be occurring on getting these issues addressed. At their executive meeting, the TVASNAC members agreed to put together a letter to Carmine Gallo, Regional Administrator of the FAA, and Susan Baer, Director of Aviation for the Port Authority, asking them to specifically respond to several issues. Trustee Laurence Quinn hopes to include several requests in this letter, the most important being:

- Asking that pilots remain at or above the waypoint crossing altitudes until they are closer to the airport.
- Asking that the rule making runway 22L the “runway of last resort” be given more of a regulatory status.
- Asking that methods be developed for distributing air traffic more equitably so that no community gets more than its fair share of air traffic.
- Provision for a simple way for people to make complaints about noise, including the development of a system in which the public can note whether complaints have been addressed.
- Clarification for what the minimum safe altitude would be for each community on Long Island that is impacted.

In addition, TVASNAC representatives have been told that the FAA and Port Authority are working jointly on a plan to address noise issues.

Three members of Garden City’s Environmental Advisory Board (Trustee Quinn, Leo Stimmler and Elizabeth Bailey), as well as several other Garden City residents, usually attend the TVASNAC meetings, so you can be assured that Garden City is well represented. TVASNAC meetings are held on the last Monday of the month at 7:30 pm at Lawrence Village Hall. Meetings of Garden City’s Environmental Advisory Board are held on the last Wednesday of the month at the Garden City Village Hall, beginning at 8 pm.

**ILS stands for Instrument Landing System. It offers both horizontal and vertical guidance information and is therefore considered a precision approach. VOR/DME are non-precision approaches.*

Elizabeth Bailey, a graduate of GCHS, holds a graduate degree in chemistry. During her 32 year career with the Tennessee Valley Authority, she worked in various aspects of air quality. She is a member of several scientific organizations, including the American Chemical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Important Village Phone Numbers

Police Emergency: 911

GC Police (non-emergency): 465-4100
GC Fire Department (non-emergency): 746-1301



GC Fire Emergency: 746-2800

GC Sanitation: 465-4032
Special Pickups: 465-4031
Recycling: 465-4030



GC Municipal Service Yard Hours

Weekdays: 9am-11:45am and 12:30pm-3:30pm
Saturday: 8am-3:30pm
Sunday: Closed

GC Post Office

747-2201



GC Public Library

742-8405



Local Elected Officials

Senator Kemp Hannon: 739-1700
Assemblyman Tom McKeivitt: 739-5119



GC Mayor Donald T. Brudie: 465-4000
or email: mayor@gardencityny.net

GC School District

Administration Office: 478-1000
High School: 478-2000
Middle School: 478-3000
Hemlock School: 478-1600
Homestead School: 478-1700
Locust School: 478-1800
Stewart School: 478-1400
Stratford School: 478-1500
Continuing Education: 478-1070



Save the Date

Tuesday, October 11, 7:30 pm

EPOA Public Meeting

Stewart School Auditorium

**Hear Issues Updates and Ask Questions of
Village Trustees Dennis Donnelly and Nick Episcopia
and School Trustee Tom Pinou**

**Please check our website—www.gcepoa.org—and the
local papers for additional topics and speakers.**

Participate with your neighbors.

EPOA: Representing Residents of the East since 1918

epoa news

Eastern Property Owners' Assoc., Inc.

P. O. Box 7525

Garden City, New York 11530

DATED MATERIAL

Or Current Resident