



# The Village Report

Volume 21 Issue 2

Fall/Winter 2021

## Contact Information

[www.villageofvoorheesville.com](http://www.villageofvoorheesville.com)

### Village Office Hours

Monday - Friday

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Notary Services available

Phone: (518) 765-2692

Fax: (518) 765-2967

Mailing address: 29 Voorheesville Ave.

### Mayor

Richard Straut 765-2068  
mayor@villageofvoorheesville.com

### Deputy Mayor

Dick Berger 765-2674

### Trustees

Jack Stevens 765-4350

Kaitlin Wilson

Sarita Winchell 765-2133

### Village Clerk/Treasurer

Linda Pasquali  
clerk@villageofvoorheesville.com

### Deputy Clerk/Treasurers

Karen Finessey  
[deputyclerk@villageofvoorheesville.com](mailto:deputyclerk@villageofvoorheesville.com)

Suzanne Hartmann  
[deputy@villageofvoorheesville.com](mailto:deputy@villageofvoorheesville.com)

### Building Inspector

Steve Mason 765-2698  
building@villageofvoorheesville.com

### Superintendent, Public Works

Brett Hotaling 765-4512  
DPW@villageofvoorheesville.com

### Stormwater Officer

Frank Fazio 765-2692 ex 14  
stormwater@villageofvoorheesville.com

## Board Meetings

### Village Board:

4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM  
at Village Hall

### Zoning Board of Appeals:

1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM at  
Village Hall

### Planning Commission:

2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at  
Village Hall

ZBA and Planning meet only when applications have been submitted. Call the Village Office or check the Public Notices and the website calendar to confirm meetings.

Public Notices for the Village of Voorheesville can be found in The Enterprise's advertisement section and are posted at: Village Hall; US Post Office, the Library and BSNB

## From the Mayor

This past June, our Mayor of 15 years, Bob Conway, decided it was time to retire and do some traveling with the First Lady of Voorheesville, Linda Conway. Over the past few months, we've enjoyed the texts and photos from across America as they have explored our beautiful country. With Mayor Conway's retirement, I'm honored to have been selected by the Board of Trustees to serve as Mayor and fill out Mayor Conway's term. Shortly after taking office in July, I appointed Kait Wilson to fill the vacant Trustee position. Kait is proving to be a great choice, taking on projects that will have a positive impact on the Village.

The Board of Trustees continues to work hard to keep Voorheesville a wonderful place to live and raise our families. We have been working with CSX and Albany County to advance the Quiet Zone project that has long been a goal of the Village. The goal is to improve the at-grade rail crossings in a way that will allow the trains to not blow their horns when passing through the Village. We're also coming close to closing on the purchase of our streetlights from National Grid and converting them to LED fixtures, thereby saving tens of thousands of dollars each year.

Look for changes along Main Street in the coming year. This fall we will bid a construction project to build sanitary sewers to serve South Main Street and Voorheesville Avenue south of the railroad tracks. This will help improve service to residences and businesses in the area. In addition, the Planning Board has approved a plan for the Northern Barrel Brew Pub on South Main Street, just south of the railroad tracks. And plans are in the works by the Mitzen family's Business for Good Foundation to redevelop the buildings at the corner of Main Street and Voorheesville Avenue into a new restaurant and other retail. They will be hosting 2 food trucks and community survey event on October 30<sup>th</sup> from on location to ask our residents what type of restaurant they most want to have there.

These are exciting times in Voorheesville, and I am humbled to serve our Village and all of you.

Thank you, be well and please stay safe, as the pandemic continues to be a threat.

Rich Straut, Mayor



## Board of Trustees Changes

As of July 1, 2021, several changes have occurred on the Village Board.

Mayor Robert Conway retired after serving 18 years on the Board of Trustees; 15 of them as Mayor. He had also served several years on the Sewer Commission prior to joining the Board. We appreciate and thank him for his time and efforts to keep the special character and community spirit of the Village in the forefront of decisions that had both immediate and long-term effects on village life.

Trustee Richard Straut, nominated by Deputy Mayor Berger, accepted the Board's vote to become the newest Mayor of the Village. Mayor Straut joined the Board of Trustees in March of 2016. As an engineer by trade, he has overseen infrastructure projects for the Village and was a major contributor to the development of the Comprehensive Plan and updated Zoning Codes.

Our newest Village Trustee is Kaitlin Wilson, who was appointed at the July 27<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting of the Board. Trustee Wilson grew up in the Village, graduating from Clayton A. Bouton High School in 2004 and Le Moyne College in Syracuse, NY in 2008.

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## Annual Property Clean-Up Reminders

This newsletter is an opportunity to remind our residents of fall and winter DPW issues.

**LEAVES:** Curbside leaf pick-up will continue as the weather allows. Please rake your leaves **to the curb, not into the roadway or onto sidewalks**. Keep rocks out of your leaf piles; they cause excessive wear & tear on the leaf vacuum resulting in additional repairs. Help keep storm water flowing by raking leaves and debris away from storm drains near your home.

**BRUSH/STICKS:** Brush pick-up has ended for this year (unless a storm emergency occurs). Please do not put larger limbs and brush at the curb at this time. Bundles of sticks, no longer than 3 ft. in length, tied together, will be picked up.

**LAWN BAGS:** If you choose to bag your lawn debris and smaller sticks, we will continue to collect these bags as weather permits.

**SNOW REMOVAL:** Please DO NOT shovel or snow blow snow back into the street. This practice is dangerous for drivers who must drive through the snow. NOTE: Article 1219 of New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law prohibits plowing, shoveling, or blowing snow into a street or highway.

**PORTABLE BASKETBALL HOOPS:** Portable basketball hoops are to be removed from the street or shoulder areas, especially in cul de sacs. DPW will not be held liable for any damage done to these hoops while doing our jobs.

**VILLAGE RIGHT-OF-WAY:** Mailboxes, as well as trees, shrubs, or other plantings, located within the Village's ROW that are damaged by snow and ice removal are not the responsibility of the Village. In most cases damage is caused by the force of the snow being pushed up off the road and is beyond the control of the driver.

As always, if you have any questions about what we do at the DPW please do not hesitate to call us at 765-4512. Our normal business hours are Monday – Friday 7:00 am until 3:30 PM. If you have an emergency, we may be reached by pager at 342-2772 or by calling 911.



## Congratulations to Our Clerk/Treasurer



The Village of Voorheesville has been blessed to have Linda Pasquali as our Clerk/Treasurer for many years and her receiving the **Distinguished Finance Officer's Award** is well deserved. We offer our thanks to the NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers for recognizing Linda in this way and congratulate Linda for receiving the award from her peers.

Seventeen years ago, Linda was hired as the Deputy Clerk Treasurer of the village. After a short period of time (and an audit by the Comptroller's Office), it became apparent that the Clerk's office was in disarray and lacking in proper controls and procedures. Linda was promoted to Clerk/Treasurer and quickly took the lead role, learned what needed to be done to address the issues, and did the work to get us back on track. A 2nd State audit in 2014 (Fiscal Operations) resulted in a pronouncement of "no issues of concern" and a 3rd Audit in 2019 (water and sewer collections) resulting in a short and sweet final report of "no recommendations"!

Linda has been a steadfast advocate for the Village and an exceptional steward of our finances for these many years. Her commitment to learning and improving the way we conduct Village of Voorheesville business is the embodiment of the NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers' goals and exemplifies a true public servant.

Thank you, Linda, for your professionalism, dedication, and your friendship, and congratulations on becoming the 2021 recipient of the Distinguished Finance Officer's Award!

## Winter Parking Restrictions

There is  
**NO PARKING**  
on any Village Street  
12 Midnight to 6:00AM  
NOVEMBER 15 - APRIL 15.

This is for snow plowing purposes. This law is enforced regardless of a snow prediction. Please plan accordingly for the winter months and be sure to tell your guests!



## Help Us Help You!

Village Hall staff is collecting phone numbers and emails to help us to serve you more efficiently. Having your current contact information gives us the ability to alert you to issues regarding billing or payments, or other specific water & sewer related notifications. Please call or email us (*see front page*) with any contact information you are comfortable sharing.

Just a reminder: opting in for NOTIFY ME enables you to receive text and/or email notifications on Village news and emergencies. NOTIFY ME can be found on the Village website, [www.villageofvoorheesville.com](http://www.villageofvoorheesville.com) Click on the NOTIFY ME tab and follow the instructions.



Check out our Facebook page (**The Village of Voorheesville**) where we post information of interest to our residents. Be sure to "like" us!!

For those not connected to the internet, an old-fashioned phone call to Village Hall or the Department of Public Works will help you get the information you need.

## Fire House BBQ

Brooks BBQ will be cooking up the chicken and ribs for the Fire Department's annual November BBQ on Tuesday, November 9th beginning at 3:30 until 6:30, or sold-out.

On the menu will be a chicken dinner for \$12 or a rib dinner for \$15.



### Fire Department's Annual HUNGRY MAN'S BREAKFAST with SANTA

He missed everyone last year, so he is looking forward to being back in The Ville!



**Sunday, Dec. 5, 2021**

**from 7 - 11 AM**

At the firehouse  
12 Altamont Road

Menu: eggs and toast,  
Pancakes and sausage,  
French toast  
Coffee, Tea and Juice

12 and older = \$9

6-11 = \$5

5 and under = FREE



## Family Bicycle Day

The annual Voorheesville Bicycle Day, held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> was a great success despite some inclement weather. There were a variety of activities for all and nearly 100 children's T-shirts were given out.

Our food vendors – Gracie's Kitchen and the Albany County Sheriff's Explorers – were on hand to keep everyone fed! Many thanks to the planning committee, our loyal donors, supporters, and participants! We are looking forward to next year. Keep an eye out for more information.

## Speeding in Village Needs Cruising Control

Drivers speeding on Village Streets, even within the neighborhoods, is an ongoing complaint being brought to the Village Board of Trustees. Residents on School Road, Maple Avenue, the Scotch Pine neighborhood, and Salem Hills have recently come to the Board with complaints of drivers using excessive speed and creating dangerous situations for pedestrians, children at play and private property.

Currently, as per NYS Law, the lowest speed limit a village can set for locally owned roadways is 30 MPH. A posted speed limit is the MAXIMUM speed at which a person is allowed to drive; however, driving *slower* than the posted speed limit is permissible.

Most drivers travelling within a neighborhood typically live in that neighborhood. The speed you choose to drive at should depend upon the conditions around you, which are most often weather related, but also include children at play, pedestrians in utilizing crosswalks, or walking along the side of the road, or people tending to their property along a road's edge. Please consider this – and your neighbors – as you drive within the Village or anywhere.



## Stormwater Corner

By Frank Fazio

### ALL THAT RAIN

This summer saw more rainfall than usual in our area. This has resulted in the groundwater table being higher than normal and increased runoff causing wet basements and flooding in some areas. Typically, as we enter fall, the groundwater level goes down. But as it has been particularly high this year, it may remain at increased levels a while longer so, be sure your sump pump is in working order.

### STORMWATER MAPPING

With the assistance of the Stormwater Coalition of Albany County, the Village is in the process of updating and improving the stormwater mapping. Storm sewer pipes, catch basins and outfalls are being reviewed and incorporated into a GIS mapping system that is maintained by the Coalition. This will improve how we monitor and maintain our stormwater system and provide quick access to information. We thank the Coalition for their help.



## Safety Reminders from the Building Department

**Replace the Batteries** in your smoke/CO2 detectors and be sure one is on each floor of your home

**Be sure your house number** is easily visible and readable from the street

**Burning wood?** Be sure to have your chimney cleaned on a regular basis

**Keep a fire extinguisher** in a handy location in your home

**Clear the snow** from the fire hydrant closest to your home – it will save precious time in an emergency

**Keep all fresh Christmas Trees** thoroughly watered

**Remember...** to call the Building Dept (765-2698) to find out if a Building Permit is required for any of your planned projects



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She returned to Village residency several years ago and is married with two young children. Her family enjoys walking around the village, taking hikes, and playing soccer together. She is a member of the local Albany Running Exchange (ARE), a Yankee and NYCFC fan, and loves spending time with her family and friends.

Kaitlin and her husband decided to raise their children in Voorheesville because of the generosity and kindness of this community. She considers Voorheesville to be unique and is looking forward to bringing a younger perspective to the board.

## **Vote to Amend LOSAP Plan Firefighters' Length of Service Award Pension Plan**

Laws recently passed by NYS Legislature and signed by then Governor Cuomo allow changes to the Village Fire Department's Length of Service Award program. The Board of Trustees has voted to move forward with these changes and are putting them out for the required public vote. The following changes are being proposed:

- To allow participants to earn service award contributions for 50 years (currently 40 years).
- To allow a maximum annual award of \$1200 (currently \$700). The Board would like to increase the award to \$950 in the calendar year 2022 and increase to \$1200 in the calendar year 2023.

The vote will be held on **Tuesday, October 26, 2021**, beginning at **12:00 noon until 9:00 PM** at the Voorheesville Fire House, located at 12 Altamont Road.

To be eligible to vote, you must be registered with the Albany County Board of Elections as of October 15, 2021 and lived in the Village for at least 30 days.

The Voorheesville Volunteer Fire Department has 43 active members and 1 junior member, and we are grateful for their service.

Village of Voorheesville  
29 Voorheesville Avenue  
Voorheesville, NY 12186

## **Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony**

All are invited to the annual Holiday Tree Lighting, sponsored by the Helderview Garden Club, to be held in Hotaling Park on Sunday, November 28th at 4:00 p.m. Mayor Rich Straut and the Village Trustees will be there to welcome everyone and to turn on the holiday lights. Final details are not yet in place due to COVID restrictions.



## **Holiday Office Hours**

Village Hall will be closed for a variety of upcoming holidays:

Tuesday, Nov 2   **Election Day**  
Thursday, Nov 11 **Veterans Day**  
Thursday, Nov 25 and  
Friday, Nov 26   **Thanksgiving**  
Friday, Dec 25   **Christmas**  
Friday, Dec 31   **New Year's**

The CPSC reports that house fires led to an average of over 2,300 deaths, over 10,000 injuries, and \$7B in property damage from 2016-2018. Home fires are common, but also preventable. Carbon monoxide associated with generators and home heating systems accounted for the largest percentage of reported fatalities; there were 808 deaths from 2004 through 2013 due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

We urge you to take preventative measures to reduce the risk and protect yourselves, your families, and your community:

### **Fire and Carbon Monoxide Safety Tips**

- **Make sure your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarms are functioning by testing them once per month.** Both alarms should be battery-operated or have a battery back-up, and batteries should be changed once per year. You should have a *separate* alarm for each to prevent these separate emergencies.
- **Have a smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm on every floor, outside sleeping areas and inside bedrooms.** You can check for interconnecting alarms so that one sounds, they all sound.
- **Your smoke alarm doesn't just sound when there is a fire.** Learn the difference between the sounds: **three loud beeps (continuous)** means there is smoke or a fire, and **one "chirp" every 30-60 seconds** means it is time to change the battery.
- **Your smoke alarm must be changed every 10 years.** Make sure you find out how old the smoke alarm is when you move into a new residence. If your smoke alarm continues to "chirp" even after you have replaced the battery, it's time to replace your smoke alarm.
- **Most home fires start in the kitchen.** Make sure you always keep watch over your cooking and that there is a fire extinguisher nearby.
- **Have a fire escape plan and review it with your family.** Make sure plans meet the needs of those with disabilities, children, and those with mobility issues in the household.
- **Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion.** If you suspect CO poisoning, get outside to fresh air immediately, and then call 911.
- **On average, one of every 13 hotel or motel reports a structure fire each year.** Make sure you are staying at a hotel or motel equipped with smoke alarms and sprinklers, locate the fire exits when you arrive, and review the escape plan with your traveling companions.
- **Have your home heating systems (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually by a trained service technician.**
- **Never use portable generators inside homes or garages, even if doors and windows are open.** Use generators outside only, at least 20 feet away from your home.

You can find more sources of information for fire prevention and carbon monoxide safety at the Consumer Product Safety Commission (<https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Materials>).