

**Village of Chester
Board of Trustees
Monthly Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2021**

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Chester held its monthly meeting at the Chester Senior Center, 81 Laroe Rd, Chester, NY at 7:00 pm, on Monday, March 8, 2021.

Members present: Mayor John Thomas Bell, Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato, Trustee Alan Battiato, Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, and Trustee Brian J. Boone.

Also, present: Village Clerk Rebecca Rivera, Treasurer Angela O'Neill, Attorney Mary E. Marzolla, Chief Timothy McGuire, Village Street Superintendent Charles Bono, Water Commissioner Gary A. Green Jr and Village Code Enforcement Officer John Orr. Attorney Brian Nugent was absent.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Mayor John Thomas Bell called the meeting to order.

Mayor John Thomas Bell open the meeting at 7:01 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Notice of change of venue as advertised in the official paper, Times Herald Record as follows:

**VILLAGE OF CHESTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NOTICE OF MONTHLY MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, on March 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at the Chester Senior Center, 81 Laroe Road, located in the Town of Chester, the Mayor and the Board of Trustees of the Village of Chester, Orange County, New York will conduct their monthly meeting and discuss any other business that comes before the board.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
VILLAGE OF CHESTER, NEW YORK

Rebecca Rivera
Village Clerk
Dated: March 1, 2021

Mayor John Thomas Bell thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

AUDIT OF BILLS: Mayor John Thomas Bell noted that the audit of February 2021, Village's monthly bills for approval was complete.

A motion to pay the audited bills of February 2021, was made by Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, seconded by Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Monthly meeting minutes of February 8, 2021.

Mayor John Thomas Bell noted that the monthly meeting minutes of February 8, 2021 were completed and distributed to all Board members.

A motion to approve the monthly meeting minutes of February 8, 2021 was made by Trustee Alan Battiato, seconded by Trustee Brian J. Boone. Motion unanimously passed.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Treasurer Angela O’Neill read the Treasurer’s report as follows:

CASH BALANCES ENDING February 28, 2021

<u>FUND/BANK ACCOUNT</u>	<u>DEPOSITS</u>	<u>(DISBURSMENTS)</u>	<u>INTEREST</u>	<u>ENDING BAL</u>
<u>General Fund</u>				
Savings (Sterling National Bank)	--	--	159.53	2,609,960.09
Checking (Orange Bank & Trust)	708,733.37	319,285.79	5.22	636,148.19
Savings (Orange Bank & Trust)	--	--	374.49	1,953,068.93
<u>Water Fund</u>				
Capital Checking (Sterling Natl Bank)	--	--	5.23	134,612.32
Checking (Orange Bank & Trust)	49,453.44	41,031.18	3.58	461,188.79
<u>Sewer Fund</u>				
Checking (Orange Bank & Trust)	13,115.31	110.25	3.77	498,257.10

Cumulative Fiscal Interest Earned by Fund 6/1/2020 – 5/31/2021

General Fund	\$ 7,492.82
Water Fund	\$ 180.01
Sewer Fund	\$ 108.65

Treasurer's Discussion:

- 1. STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENDITURES:** Attached.
- 2. 2020-2021 SEWER COLLECTION:** Collection of Village Sewer continues. Sewer Installment #4 is due by 3/31/2021. Unpaid Sewer Balance notices were mailed on 3/4/2021. Unpaid sewer balances as of 3/31/2021 will be re-levied on to the Village Property Tax Bill to be issued 6/1/2021.
- 3. 2021-2022 VILLAGE BUDGET:** A preliminary budget copy will be posted on the Village’s website (villageofchesterny.org) on 3/23/2021. If you do not have access to the website, please call the Village Clerk’s Office (845-469-2388, ext. 232) to make the necessary arrangements to obtain a copy.
- 4. UTILITY ACCOUNT ADJUSTMENTS:** A schedule of sewer account adjustments is attached. Requesting Board Approval to adjust the accounts.

A motion to accept schedule of sewer account adjustments was made by Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, seconded by Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

A motion to accept Treasurer’s report as read by Treasurer Angela O’Neill was made by, Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, seconded by Deputy Christopher Battiato . Motion unanimously passed.

BUILDING REPORT: Village Code Enforcement Officer John Orr read his report as follows:

Steris – Nucifora Blvd.

1– Building construction will be starting.

Shoprite

1- New Work started.

Clark- 5 Carpenter

1- Interior work underway.

Noble – 4 Chester Acres Blvd

1- Issued permit for renovation to first floor of single-family home.

We received corrected information from two inspection agencies and request they be added as all information is in order.

Please add: **Commonwealth Electrical Inspection Service, Inc**
23 Tephanic Avenue
Monroe, NY 10950
Office # 717-664-2347 / Alt Office # 845-783-0551 / Fax # 845-783-0551
Inspector: James Cocks – E-Mail jfclou1@yahoo.com

Electrical Underwriters of NY
50 Hy-Vue Drive
Newburgh, NY 12550
Office # 845-569-1759 / Fax # 845-562-7371
Inspectors: Ernie Bello – E-Mail ernie@eu-ny.com
Inspectors: John Taylor – E-Mail chelsea@frontiernet.net

Tri-State Inspection Agency submitted an uncomplete application and are not recommended at this time.

A motion to accept amended electrical inspector list was made by Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato, second by Trustee Alan Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

A motion to accept Village Code Enforcement Officer John Orr report as read was made by Trustee Brian J. Boone, seconded by Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

- **Award Presentation – Awards Presented by the Chief of Police**

Presented by Chief McGuire - Officer Guarneri and Officer Maslanka were awarded the Mobile life Saving Award.

Presented by Chief McGuire - Officer Tolentino was awarded the Honorable Service Awarded.

Presented by Chief McGuire – Officer Iannuzzi was awarded with two Life Saving Awards.

Presented by Chief McGuire – Officer Acierno and Officer Tudisco were awarded the Life Saving Award.

POLICE REPORT: Chief Timothy McGuire read police report as follows:

1. Personnel:

- No Officers have tested positive for Covid in the last month and there have been no quarantine issues in the department. Twelve members of the department have been vaccinated. 9 are fully vaccinated and 3 received their first dose of the vaccine.

2. Citizen Issues:

- No Issues.

3. Public Safety Issues:

- No Issues

4. Facilities:

- No issues

5. Equipment:

- No issues

6. Vehicles:

- The Old 728 has been disposed of. Specht's came and took the vehicle, issued a check for \$300.00 for the car. As far as the old 727 goes I am waiting for a title to be issued from NYS DMV. As soon as I get that then I can put that car on Gov Deals auction site.

7. Other:

- As of February 24th, the diversion program Hope not Handcuffs is up and running. Village of Chester Police Department is now one of approximately 29 agencies throughout 5 counties in the Hudson Valley to have this program along with 500 trained "Angels". The program is aimed to assist people in finding viable treatment options for individuals who seek assistance with addiction.

8. Department Activity:

Call Type	January	2021/Year to Date
Calls for Service	154	335
Criminal Cases	22	53
Arrests	11	23
Traffic Accidents	6	15

A motion to accept Police report as read by Chief Timothy McGuire was made by, Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, seconded by Trustee Alan Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

STREET REPORT: Village Street Superintendent, Charles Bono read the Street Department report:

We were called out 6 times during the month of February to deice and clear the streets. They ranged from a freezing rain to a 6" of snow. During the month of February, we use 120 ton of salt and 74 ton of salt sand mix.

Year to date we used 247 ton of salt and 170 ton of sand salt. After each storm, the equipment was wash and serviced for the next storm.

April 1st out Green Waste Removal Program will resume. Green Waste Materials must be curbside by 6:00 am on Fridays. Branches must be no longer than 4 ft. and tied. Grass clippings and leaves must be in biodegradable bags. Bags can now be purchased at Lowe's and ShopRite.

A motion to accept Street Department as read by Street Superintendent Charles Bono was made by Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato, seconded by Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly. Motion unanimously passed.

WATER REPORT: Water Commissioner Gary A. Green Jr. read the Water Department report as follows:

- 1) Daily filter plant & well operations
- 2) Twice per week filter cleaning
- 3) Monthly samples taken to the lab.
- 4) Mark outs for dig safe NY.
- 5) The Generator at the plant was serviced
- 6) We completed some online training for our water license.
- 7) We serviced both Chevy pickups.
- 8) Joe Rosploch cleared snow from the sidewalk's village wide.
- 9) Walton lake is 12 inches above the pin level.

A motion to accept the Water Department's report as read by Water Commissioner Gary A. Green Jr., was made by Trustee Brian J. Boone, seconded by Trustee Alan Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

PARK & RECREATION REPORT: No report.

Michelle Deshler mentioned that this year summer camp will be held at Community Park also known as Carpenter Field, all depends on how many sign-ups. The fields are currently closed hopefully will open when the weather allows, hopefully in a few weeks. I have worked on a tentative plan, assuming we are allowed to have mass gatherings by then. The Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center is currently working on a concert series. We have purchased a movie screen equipment for future movie nights. Hopefully, restrictions are lifted soon so that we may get on with what we are doing.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business to report.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mayor John Thomas Bell introduced Village of Chester new hire. Lisa Might Village's new Full time Deputy Treasurer, which started on March 3, 2021. The Village Board congratulated Lisa Might.

21-6 Resolution Directing Public Hearing on Proposed Village Budget 2021-2022

WHEREAS a budget for the Village has been prepared for the 2021/2022 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing is required to be held thereon,

NOW, THEREFORE, be it hereby.

RESOLVED, that the Village Board will hold a Public Hearing at 6:45p.m. on the 12th day of April 2021, at the Chester Senior Center, 81 Laroe Road, on the proposed Village Budget for the 2021/2022 fiscal year

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village Clerk give due notice of this public hearing in accordance with the Village Code and the Laws of the State of New York.

Introduced By: Trustee Alan Battiato

Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato

On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

21-7 Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and/or Chief of Police to enter into an inter-municipal agreement with Orange County regarding the reimbursement of overtime for patrols related to DWI offenses.

WHEREAS, Orange County (the "County") in order to promote safer roadways, created and maintains a program, the Stop-DWI/Traffic Safety Program, that, in part, reimburses local police departments for overtime spent on patrols to detect and deter intoxicated drivers and tasks related thereto; and

WHEREAS, the County from time to time, offers an Inter-Municipal Agreement (the "Agreement") to the Village of Chester Police Department to reimburse the Village for overtime and other expenses related to the department's efforts to prevent and prosecute DWI offenses; and

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police of the Village of Chester Police Department, has reviewed the Agreement and approves of same; and

WHEREAS, the Attorney for the Village has reviewed and approved the basic terms of the Agreement,

NOW THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Board of Trustees of the Village of Chester, having reviewed and proposed Inter-Municipal Agreement with the County, hereby authorize the Mayor and/or Chief of Police to enter into an agreement substantially in accordance with the terms presented tonight to the Mayor and Board of Trustees, provided the same is approved by the attorney for the Village, and to execute any further extensions thereof.

Introduced By: Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly
Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato
On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

21-8 Resolution Regarding the Adoption of the COVID-19 Pandemic Operations Plan

WHEREAS, the Governor of New York State issued Executive Order (No. 202) declaring a State of Emergency in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic; and

WHEREAS, New York State Labor Law § 27-c was enacted requiring preparation of a Pandemic Operation Plan; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employers and employees, the Village Board of the Village of Chester (“the Village”) has prepared such COVID-19 Pandemic Operations Plan (“Plan”); and

WHEREAS, the Village has presented the plan to all applicable and duly recognized representatives of the Village’s employees to review and make recommendations regarding the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Village has considered and responded to such recommendations in writing within a reasonable timeframe.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

- Section 1. The above “WHEREAS” paragraphs are incorporated herein as though set forth in full.
- Section 2. The Village hereby adopts the COVID-19 Pandemic Operations Plan in the form presented to the Village Board.
- Section 3. The Village directs the Village Clerk to maintain a copy of the COVID-19 Pandemic Operations Plan in the Clerk’s files and post the Plan on the Village website.
- Section 4. The Village Mayor and any other officer or employee as directed by the Village Mayor shall take any and all necessary actions to carry out the provisions of this Resolution.
- Section 5. This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

Introduced By: Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly
Seconded By: Trustee Alan Battiato
On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

21-9 Resolution of the Village Board for the Mayor to Execute Utility Rate Agreement with Constellation New Energy Inc., and M&R Resources Corporation

WHEREAS, the Village Board of the Village of Chester (“Village Board”) wishes to enter utility agreements Constellation New Energy, Inc., and M&R Resources Corporation to lock in electric and gas supply rates for the benefit of the Village;

WHEREAS, the final Electricity Supply Agreement for Constellation New Energy, Inc., Natural Gas Account Enrollment Form for M&R Resources Corporation have been presented to the Village and are now ready for execution; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board hereby authorizes the Mayor to execute all documents necessary to complete this transaction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that:

- Section 1. All “Whereas” clauses are hereby incorporated by reference as though set forth in full herein.
- Section 2. The Mayor is authorized to execute all documents necessary to complete the transaction relating to Constellation New Energy, Inc. and M&R Resources Corporation as presented to the Village Board.
- Section 3. The Mayor or any other officer or employee as directed by the Mayor are authorized to take any and all necessary actions to carry out the provisions of this Resolution.
- Section 4. This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

Introduced By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato
Seconded By: Trustee Brian J. Boone
On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

21-10 Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to sign Light Path Service Agreement

WHEREAS, the Village Board of the Village of Chester (“Village Board”) wishes to enter an agreement with Cablevision Light path LLC to secure Internet service and voicemail bundle rates for the benefit of the Village;

WHEREAS, the final Cablevision Light path LLC Agreement for Internet and voicemail services have been presented to the Village and are now ready for execution; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board hereby authorizes the Mayor to execute the document necessary to complete this transaction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that:

- Section 1. All “Whereas” clauses are hereby incorporated by reference as though set forth in full herein.
- Section 2. The Mayor is authorized to execute all documents necessary to complete the transaction relating to Cablevision Light path LLC as presented to the Village Board.
- Section 3. The Mayor or any other officer or employee as directed by the Mayor are authorized to take any and all necessary actions to carry out the provisions of this Resolution.
- Section 4. This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

Introduced By: Trustee Alan Battiato
Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato
On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

20-11 Resolution of the Village Board for the Mayor to Execute Documents with the New York State Office of State Comptroller to protect the Public FISC and Integrity of use of Village Funds.

WHEREAS, the Village Board of the Village of Chester in the management of Village finances, may take all measures and do all acts deemed expedient or desirable for the good government of the village, its management and business, the protection of its finances;

WHEREAS, based on information received by the Village and discussed by the Village Board in Executive Session, the Village Board, after consulting with legal counsel, desires to file certain documents with New York State Office of State Comptroller for the purposes of ensuring the protection of Village finances, the public fisc and ensuring the integrity of the use of Village funds.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

- Section 1. The above “WHEREAS” paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.
- Section 2. The Mayor is hereby authorized to execute any and all necessary documents for submission to the New York State Office of the State Comptroller, as recommended by legal counsel and as considered and discussed by the Village Board in Executive Session.
- Section 3. The Mayor, and any other Village official, employee or consultant as directed by the Mayor, is authorized to take any and all actions necessary to carry out the provisions of this Resolution.
- Section 4. This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

Introduced By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato
Seconded By: Trustee Alan Battiato
On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

21- 12 Resolution approving maintenance contract with C.R. Wolfe/Greiner Group

WHEREAS, proper operation, maintenance, and care of the mechanical systems on Village properties requires that the Village have available qualified mechanics when needed to service or repair such mechanical systems; and

WHEREAS, C. R. Wolfe/Reiner Group has successfully performed such work for the Village in the past; and

WHEREAS, C. R. Wolfe/Reiner Group has submitted a proposal which is acceptable to the Mayor and Trustees for the period from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Trustees find that the scope of work proposed to be performed by C. R. Wolfe/Reiner Group involves special technical skill, training, or expertise, as described in the Procurement Code of the Village of Chester, chapter 20 of the Village Code, so that competitive bidding is neither required nor appropriate; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Trustees find that C.R. Wolfe/Reiner Group possesses the appropriate accountability, reliability, responsibility, skill, education and training, judgment, integrity, and moral worth to perform maintenance work on and emergency coverage for the Village's mechanical systems, and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Village accept the Commercial Maintenance Agreement in the form presented to this meeting.

Introduced By: Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato

Seconded By: Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly

On a vote of 5 to 0, the resolution was adopted.

Roll Call

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain/Absent</u>
Mayor John Thomas Bell	[x]	[]	[]
Deputy Mayor Christopher Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Alan Battiato	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly	[x]	[]	[]
Trustee Brian J. Boone	[x]	[]	[]

Mayor John Thomas Bell read the following letter from the Chester Cemetery Association as follows:

Village of Chester
47 Main Street
Chester NY 10918

Re: Flag sponsorship

The Chester Cemetery Association would like to hold their annual Memorial Day weekend flag sponsorship.

Thank you for your anticipated support.

Very truly yours
Elizabeth A. Reilly
Trustee of the Chester
Cemetery Association.

(Letter is attached to Minutes)

Mayor John Thomas Bell asked Mary Marzolla, village attorney what is next with regards to the police reform.

Mary Marzolla, village attorney, mentioned that the Police Reform Plan is excellent. The Village's Chief of Police and Board of Trustees spent a lot of time putting it together and it seems to incorporate all of the elements that were required.

The next step is to get it out to the public by publishing it on your webpage like were discussing. Also, if the Village has a Facebook page, it can be promoted there and those are the first steps you can take.

We should open it up for comments two weeks from the date of the publication. If you are going to publicize it, say by Wednesday March 10, 2021, and close the public comments two weeks from then. That will give until March 24, 2021 to hear back from everybody and then when you hear from everyone, you will have a few days to incorporate those comments to the extent that the Chief of Police and the Village deem it appropriate as part of the plan. We would recommend that you follow that schedule to set a meeting for the last week of March for the adoption of the final plan once its revised.

Mayor John Thomas Bell stated, once the plan is approved by the Village, we would authorize a resolution provided the Mayor, Village Board of Trustee and the Chief of Police and documents that are necessary to submit to the state and they may be submitted by the first of May.

Mayor John Thomas Bell stated that the Village Board of Trustees will conduct a Special Meeting to address the Police Reform Plan and/or any comments, March 29, 2021 at 6:45 pm at the Chester Senior Center, 81 Laroe Road.

- Discussion Complaint regarding certain noise/pollution complaints in or about the area of Sanford Ave, involving the delivery/storage of certain perishables.

The Village Board agreed to discuss the matter of the complaint regarding certain noise/pollution complaints in or about the area of Sanford Ave, involving the delivery/storage of certain perishables will be discussed in executive session, per the advice/recommendation of Mary Marzolla, attorney for the Village of Chester.

- Discussion regarding a letter submitted by Leslie Smith regarding Advance Auto and properties 93, 95 and 97 Brookside Ave.

Mayor John Thomas Bell read a letter submitted by Leslie Smith regarding Advance Auto and properties 93, 95 and 97 Brookside Ave as follows:

February 28, 2021

Mayor Tom Bell
Village of Chester Trustees
47 Main Street
Chester NY 10918

Dear Mayor Bell and Trustees,

Again, I am prevailing on this board for help. The issue is the same one we faced back in 2017.

Advanced Auto is back before the Village Planning Board with their proposal for the same property at 93, 95 and 97 Brookside Avenue.

This Board received a June 6, 2017 letter from me which was read at the June 12, 2017 Village Board meeting. In that letter, I requested a moratorium on all projects not yet approved until a comprehensive plan was adopted; which request was rejected; Mayor Bell explaining the sole reason was the involvement of the village in litigation at that time. My letter also contained a statement expressing the need for a comprehensive plan due to the proposal before the planning board for an Advanced Auto project which would demolish two structures; the small former Conservo R.E. office at 93 Brookside Ave. (107-2-9.2) Built Before 1859, it is located on part of lands once owned by W. A. Lawrence. Circa 1900 James Henry Conklin and his wife Mary, lived there following his return from the Civil War (related to Lawrence through W. A. 's second wife, Mary A. Murray) Current owner: Catskill Hudson Bank. It is adjacent to the Orange Trust Bank. The other proposed demolition being the 1976 raised ranch now Greenwald Law (it would be non-contributing in a historic district).

Mayor Bell, in the discussion which followed, stated he did not want to see the small house razed and he suggested that a comprehensive plan committee be formed. A roughly half hour discussion ensued resulting in a motion by Betty Ann Reilly, seconded by Chris Battiato to form a comprehensive plan committee consisting of three Village Board members, the code enforcement officer/building inspector and two members of the community at large. The motion passed on a voice vote with none in opposition. (This motion does not appear in the minutes of June 12, 2017)

In the intervening three and a half years, progress has been made. A comprehensive plan with provisions for three, possibly four, historic overlay districts recommended therein by the comprehensive plan committee has been drafted and is waiting for adoption by this Village Board.

A West Chester Historic overlay district is one of those recommended in the draft comprehensive plan. Within its boundaries lie twelve parcels, three of which are named in the current Advanced Auto proposal before the Planning Board. Advanced Auto is again proposing to demolish the small pre 1859 house and the 1976 raised ranch.

In researching the twelve properties for this historic district, I discovered that this is not the first time an historic house in this section has been threatened:

14 West Ave. (107-1-1) Built 1783 it was part of the Durland (dairy) farm. The farm extended from Rte. 94 to Goshen and was operated in later years by the Bushhoven family. The house remains but the farmland has been developed and is now the location of Knollcrest Apartments (1969), Pine Hollow Commons (1987), Whispering Hills (1984-1987) and the office building occupied by "the Chronicle" as well as the office bldg. across Rte. 94. In 1951 , the house was imperiled when it was slated to be demolished for a Rt 17 planned overpass. William P. Durland, the owner, and Hudson B. Green owner of the neighboring farm appeared before the Village Board to protest the destruction of the Durland home, a tenant home, and a tenant dwelling on the Green farm. The Village Board promptly went on record against the throughway and was joined by the Chester Town Board, the Fire Dept., and Board of Education.

Village officials obtained a hearing on the issue and a state highway engineer was to meet with the board and other parties at the fire hall. The house at that time, (1951) had been in the Durland family since 1785. 168 years. It is now the home of Joseph & Nancy Sellers. It appears on the 1859 map.

15 West Ave. (110-1-2) The VanRy house, built in 1904 and also included in the West Chester proposed historic overlay was moved to its present location when the RT 17 overpass was constructed in 1952.

If the Advance Auto business is built as proposed, any future consideration of an historic overlay would be esthetically absurd. I understand that these parcels are still unprotected. However, we now have a draft comprehensive plan. There is but one reason that Advanced Auto, knowing that they will be demolishing/destroying something we care about, would build a structure that would be so excessively dissimilar in relation to its neighbors: The Orange Trust Bank or the 1830 W. A. Lawrence residence now Cohen, LaBarbera & Landrigan Law offices. The reason being that we will allow them to do so.

The Chester Historical Society has obtained an historic marker to be placed on Brookside Avenue at the former W. A. Lawrence residence and is now in the process of applying to the Preservation League of New York for a Cultural Resource Survey as a first step in documenting the West Chester Historic (overlay) District in a manner which might also qualify it to be placed on the State and National Registers.

The recommendations in the draft comprehensive plan demonstrate what we as a Village value, respect and wish to protect regarding our past. Isn't this one of the reasons for creating the comprehensive plan?

I ask that you, Mayor Bell, and Board of Trustees, not delay in adopting the now completed draft comprehensive plan.

I ask the Village for a letter of support to submit with the Chester Historical Society grant application for a cultural resource survey of the proposed West Chester Historic District.

I also ask this board for support by preventing the demolition of the small pre 1859 house. The Brookside Avenue structures (with the exception of the 1976 raised ranch) including the bank building; all being at one time owned by William A. Lawrence, first President of the Village, and contributing to the still historic streetscape where the W. A. Lawrence and Son Neufchatel and Cream Cheese Factory once stood.

Sincerely,
Leslie L. Smith
117 Brookside Avenue
Chester, NY 10918
cc: Planning Board Chairman Richard Ramsdell
(Letter is attached to minutes)

Calendar:

- **E-Bill service** is available. If you would like to sign-up go to Village website under forms.
- “www.eyeonwater.com/signin” service to monitor water usage/consumption.
- Village of Chester will be **closed** on Friday, April 2, 2021 due to Holiday.
- **Chester Kiwanis Hambletonian 5K Walk/Run 2021-** 5K Race on Saturday, May 29, 2021 from 8:45 am to 12:00

See our calendar for upcoming meetings and events

<https://www.villageofchesterny.org>

PUBLIC COMMENT :

Mayor John Thomas Bell opened the meeting to the public for comments.

- **Gordon Shehab** of high street asked if the Village Board has a date to adopt the proposed Comprehensive Plan.
Mayor John Thomas Bell responded; the Village does not have a date as of yet.

- **Michelle Deshler** made mention of the following events:
- Village Wide Garage Sale – If guidelines allow it is scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 2021 from 9 am to 2 pm.
- Holiday Lights Parade – If guidelines allow it is to be scheduled for the Saturday after Thanksgiving.
- Michelle Deshler made the following comment, “It’s nice to see Village Police Officers enforcing the speed limit in the village.

As there were no public comments Mayor John Thomas Bell asked for a motion to go into executive session with no further business to be conducted.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to close the monthly meeting at 8:03 pm and go into executive session with no further business was made by Trustee Elizabeth A. Reilly, seconded by Trustee Alan Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

A motion to come out of executive session at 9 pm and close meeting was made by Trustee Brian J. Boone, seconded by Trustee Alan Battiato. Motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Rivera
Village Clerk