A Message From The Mayor

Dear Neighbor,

This is the last letter that I will be writing to you as the Mayor of Port Washington North. After 34 years, I have decided it is time to step aside. I do so with a slight bit of remorse, but also with a great deal of pride and joy.

My regret quickly dissipates when I realize how much our small Village has accomplished, and it turns to joy because I know that I leave the Village in very capable hands.

My good friend and colleague on the board, Gary Levi, is also stepping aside after a decade of exemplary service to Port North. Gary has earned the respect of all who have worked with him; he has also earned my appreciation and affection.

Thank you Gary.

We have passed the mantle of leadership to Bob Weitzner, Mike Schenkler and Steve Cohen, all of whom have demonstrated a level of commitment, a grasp of the process, and a vision for the Village that is comprehensive and progressive. They offer Port North a rich future and the quality of life we all deserve.

These three trustees are as talented and dedicated as any group I’ve worked with over the past three-plus decades. They have my complete confidence and they will have my continuing counsel. You can rest assured that Port North will continue to be a shining light for all who live and visit here.

Bob, Mike and Steve will recruit and train future Port North leaders, and I invite each of you to join them on an adventure of municipal governance that has been among the most rewarding experiences of my life.

It has been a wonderful, enlightening and rewarding experience for me.

To all my friends in Port North, to my supporters, to the volunteers, to the residents and businesses and even to my detractors, I have nothing but love, goodwill and fond thoughts.

From the bottom of my heart, thanks for the memories.

Neighborly yours,

Mayor Tom Pellegrino

VILLAGE OF PORT WASHINGTON NORTH
February 2005

Port North Calendar

* V * O * T * E *

Village Elections
Tuesday, March 15, 2005
Polls Open 12 noon - 9 p.m.
Village Hall
71 Old Shore Rd.
Stop & Shop Plaza - next to Petland

Public Hearing
Thomson Property:
land swap and rezoning
Monday, Feb. 28, 2005
8 p.m. at Village Hall
71 Old Shore Rd.
Stop & Shop Plaza - next to Petland

Port North Annual Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2005, 7:30 pm
Please join us
What A Long, Strange Trip It Has Been

By MICHAEL SCHENKLER

It’s been well over a year since I accepted the task – or perhaps challenge – of editing a newsletter to keep Port North residents informed. I’ve been doing it professionally in Queens for a quarter of a century, certainly providing the salient issues of our Village in a readable and not too heavy manner was something I could handle.

And so, each month after assigning, compiling, editing, writing, selecting, occasionally photographing (sometimes with the help of my daughter Allison or Bob Weitzner) and laying out the newsletter, I sit down to write my column – a take-off on my weekly political commentary, Not4Publication which appears in the Queens Tribune. Its purpose is to share with you the process of Village government and civics along with highlighting those issues that I believe deserve your attention.

Certainly read Steve Cohen’s article about the Danaher/Thomson property on the facing page. This is one of our last opportunities to acquire significant recreational land and preserve open space and that great lawn for our Village.

If the effort is successful, it will be the site of our new Village Hall and Club. Otherwise, we will begin construction on our back 8 acres. In either case, the Village Hall/Club effort will get under way momentarily, and if you’d like to volunteer on the planning, construction and operation of the Club, please email me at news@portwashingnorth.org.

At the bottom of the centerfold – no, there is no centerfold model – there is a request for your email address in order to build an effective communications network in our Village – please respond.

The rest of the centerfold is devoted to the report of the Moratorium Commission. The recommendations contained in this incredibly comprehensive report shall serve as a blueprint for future zoning changes. The seeds of the Port North of tomorrow can be found in the report. If after reading the centerfold you want more, it is not yet online, but a reference copy is available at Village Hall.

Our website site continues to grow, offering meeting agendas and minutes, the full Village Code and much more. Check it out at Portwashingtonnorth.org.

On the front page, we’ve presented a Port North calendar in brief. In addition to the dates of the Thomson Public Hearing and the important Annual Meeting, is announcement of our Port North Village Election Day. We who toil in Village government need to see your involvement. Please come out and vote on March 15th to show us that we represent a Village of concerned residents. The 10 minutes you’ll spend voting at Village Hall will mean a lot to those of us who invest time in the Village – thanx!

In an eight-page newsletter, obviously space is at a premium, and all we offer here, we believe is important to all reside in our Village.

But all things are not equal, and I must take a moment to personally reflect upon my Port North trustee experience and the man who has given me the opportunity – or should I say headache – to serve.

With appropriate deference to the Grateful Dead: “What a long strange trip it’s been.” After living in Port North for almost 30 years, I became involved with the Bay Walk Steering Committee. I quickly moved to Village Newsletter Editor to Village Club Commission Chair and on to Trustee. With each passing month, I’ve become more and more involved in our Village, its government and the concept of community that, thanks to Tom Pellegrino, I’ve recently come to know in Port North.

Tom Pellegrino, our retiring Mayor, is the man who has, in his own quiet manner, brought together the diverse people who guide our Village. Tom has been doing it forever – and doing it damn well.

As Tom steps aside after a lifetime of service to our Village, there will be a number of opportunities to thank him. I just had to take this one, to say on behalf of myself, the Board of Trustees and a grateful Village, Tom you’ve been an inspiration.

Port North is the wonderful Village it is today, because you cared.

High Marxx For New Eatery!

Louis and Marxx, an all American Steakhouse and Wine Bar, offers another exciting dining option to Port residents. On Mill Pond and Shore Rd. at the site of the former Tease, a culinary surprise awaits you. Enjoy!

You’re Going To Hollywood!

Port North’s newest addition is Hollywood Video, located just south of the supermarket in Stop & Shop Plaza. Hollywood Video joins Radio Shack and the fine longtime stores that have been part of the Plaza’s northside -- previously known as Delco Plaza. Our Village Hall is located there just next to Petland.
The Thomson Property: Considering The Options

By STEVE COHEN

You may have read it elsewhere, but we wanted to give you a firsthand update on the Village Board of Trustees’ negotiations with Danaher Corporation, owner of Thomson Industries. The future of the 11-acre property at 2 Channel Drive, including the “Great Lawn” on Shore Rd., has been of great concern to the Board and residents alike. Our vision, consistent with the principles of smart growth, is focused on preserving open/recreational space for the village and the peninsula. We have particular interest in this property as it represents the last large piece of land near the waterfront in Port North.

One recommendation of the recently completed Moratorium Commission was that the Village should be very aggressive in seeking to expand our open/recreational space. This smart growth policy – which is consistent with the Town of North Hempstead’s “Visioning” initiative – has guided our conversations.

Recently, the Village received a proposal from Danaher offering to exchange its 11-acre property for a parcel of less than 8 acres owned by the Village, which is located behind Mill Pond Acres, the new senior development. As part of this proposal, the Village would re-zone the parcel to allow for residential development of either 30 single-family homes or 40-45 luxury townhouses. While any potential development is always a trade-off, the Board’s initial reaction is that this could be a win/win for all parties concerned.

Specifically:
• The village and the peninsula preserve an additional 3-plus acres of open/recreational space
• The village obtains an 11-acre parcel – across from the waterfront in the center of Port North – in a much more desirable location than the 8-acre parcel
• The 11-acre parcel – across from the soon-to-be revitalized waterfront “Baywalk Park” – would be ideal for a community Village Green, our Village Hall/Club and other public open/recreational space
• The Village’s ownership of this land will prevent any “big-box” store from coming into our community – now or in the future
• The reduced density of proposed development is consistent with smart growth.

The proposal is subject to environmental review and community feedback. As such, the Board has set a public hearing on the potential re-zoning of the 8-acre parcel for February 28th at Village Hall, where we are asking for your input and feedback on this proposed transaction.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Steve Cohen at cohen@portwashingtonnorth.org.

The great lawn of the Thomson property off Shore Rd., in the center of Port North, would make an inviting Village Green.

Snow: The Cold, Hard Facts Of Being Neighborly

It doesn’t get much better than living in Port North. Our quiet little village is the ideal place to raise a family, watch them grow and then spend your later years reaping the rewards your new-found freedom has to offer.

Port North is wonderful for all to live in harmony.

However, along with living harmoniously come some neighborly responsibilities. When old man winter blankets our village, each resident has both an ethical courtesy and a legal obligation to make Port North livable for all:

SIDEWALKS MUST BE CLEARED:
(By law within 24 hours). It is essential that people be able to walk on the sidewalks and stay out of dangerous, slippery streets. School children need access to bus stops and the handicapped need corner accessible curb cuts – if you’re a corner home, please take the extra time. Enterprising workers, shovels in hand, are often available should you need to hire someone to clear your sidewalk. Might we suggest that if you are unable to shovel yourself, make arrangements in advance with a neighbor or worker.

KEEP CARS OFF THE STREETS:
Snow plows are the most thorough and much quicker when they can plow the street running straight along the curb line. Cars on the street force them to spend extra time, costing the village additional funds and causing snow piles that are inaccessible due to vehicles parked in the street. Although it is normally unsafe to park on the curb apron, during plowing, it is important for you to do whatever is necessary to expedite a thorough plowing.

DO NOT SHELVE SNOW INTO A PLOWED STREET: After plowing, please do not clear your own property to the detriment of everyone else. Tossing snow onto a plowed street is a danger and inconvenience for all.

BE NEIGHBORLY: Snow, although beautiful, is a burden for many. Some of your neighbors may need assistance with their property. Offer to pitch in.

Enjoy the winter!
Moratorium Commission’s Land Use Report

By BOB WEITZNER

The Moratorium Commission’s Land Use Report originally synthesized itself from actions taken by the Port Washington North Board of Trustees in September 2003. The Commission was born through a resolution adopted by the Board that, with the existing development taking place in the form of Mill Pond Estates and Stop & Shop, the Village needed a break to take stock. So, Bill 9B of 2003 was voted into law, creating a Moratorium against any subdivision in Port North, as well as restricting the size of additions of residential homes. With that law, the Moratorium Commission was born. Co-Chairing the Commission were Deputy Mayor Bob Weitzner and Trustee Steve Cohen, with members Bob Keane, Steven Kaplan, and Stanley Ronell.

The scope of the Commission changed since its formation, however it expanded its scope, not diverted from it. The Mission Statement found in the report makes it clear that, while evaluating how our property is zoned and developed is paramount, many other issues surfaced as a result of the Commission’s due diligence that needed to be addressed. Issues such as how public and private partnership can help bring positive change in a community, how a delicate balance exists between looking at the preservation of open space, smart growth of businesses and residences and the local needs of our Village, and weighing that against regional efficiency. Thus, this Commission report is called the Moratorium Commission’s “Land Use” Report, encompassing a far greater analysis than was originally perceived to be needed.

We believe this report should be used more as a tool than a reference to invoke thought and change for the betterment of Port Washington. The Moratorium expired December 31, 2004, and in now the task of the Mayor and Board of Trustees, by using this report, to determine which recommendations of the Commission should be adopted.

Those wishing to review the report can stop by Village Hall. We are working on an online version to be posted on our website.

Port North Zoning Map

The Port North Village Email Database

We’re convinced that our efforts will pay off. We’re convinced that Village communications by email will be quicker, more efficient, economical and the preferred method of tomorrow’s world.

So please take a moment and quickly email us the information requested. We promise not to send unnecessary email, but will do our best to keep you up-to-date on the important events in Port North. Thanx for your prompt attention. Send email to: news@portwashingtonnorth.org

- name
- email address
- address
- phone numbers
- names of other residents

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The Future Waterfront: Bay Walk Park Update

Bay Walk Park is the vision of a waterfront park along Shore Road that resulted from a joint community effort led by Port Washington North with the participation of neighboring municipalities, organizations and elected officials.

Port Washington North is currently working with the Town of North Hempstead to put the finishing touches on the detailed plan for Phase I of the Bay Walk Park Project. This phase includes an 8-foot-wide paved walkway with attractive lighting, benches and landscaping with irrigation that extends from Gulfway Marina to Dayton Park – just north of Baxter Estates Beach. The rehabilitation of the northern pier across from Stop & Shop is part of the current phase plan. The financing of the engineering plans for Phase I has been provided by the $165,000 grant the Village was awarded in 2000. Deputy Mayor Bob Weitzner has been spearheading the effort.

The Village has now applied to the New York Department of State and the New York State Parks Department for roughly $1,400,000 to fund the construction of the initial phase of the Bay Walk project. The Town will be contributing as well. State Senator Michael Balboni and Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli, both of whom have been very supportive of the project are working with us to secure additional funds.

Congressman Gary Ackerman has made himself and his office available to guide us through fund seeking and grant writing processes.

While we wait for the park to be built, the Village will continue to enhance the existing waterfront. The waterfront along the northern part of the park, where Lewis Oil was once located, has been acquired by Port North, stabilized and the waterfront section landscaped. The construction fence surrounding the property has been removed, and shrubs will be planted to improve the overall appearance of the area.

According to Deputy Mayor Bob Weitzner, “Our goal is to create a magnificent, active waterfront park for the entire Port Washington community. We are well on our way towards achieving that goal.”

The community will be invited to provide input before the plan is finalized.

Manhasset Bay Protection Committee

Port Washington North is one of 14 member municipalities (12 villages, the Town, and the County) that have entered into an inter-municipal agreement to protect water quality in Manhasset Bay. The 1999 Manhasset Bay Water Quality Improvement Plan identified bacteria-pathogens, sediment, nutrients, and litter/debris as the major non-point source pollutants affecting Manhasset Bay, and storm-water run-off as the major conduit. All of these pollutants affect the quality of the Bay. Implementation of the Plan began in 1999 with funding through the Environmental Protection Fund and various grants.

Each member municipality has a representative sit on the Manhasset Bay Protection Committee (MBPC). Bob Keane is our Village representative. His job is to represent the needs of our village, advise and present ideas for MBPC activities, and most importantly, bring tools and information back to Port North so that we can become an effective part of the effort to restore and protect Manhasset Bay and its watershed.

The MBPC is seeking or recently obtained the following grants:

- $29,000 to study Stannards Brook.
- $3,000 to maintain the Sound Garden (showing native plants) near the band shell.
- $86,000 to comply with the NYSDEC Storm Water Permit, which affects all villages on Long Island and includes updating the web site, purchasing an educational traveling exhibit, storm drain markings, hosting educational workshops, preparing and mailing educational flyers and organizing beach clean-ups.

Visit their web site for more information at manhassetbayprotectioncommittee.org.

Visit their web site for more information at manhassetbayprotectioncommittee.org.

To ask a question or volunteer, email Bob Keane at RSKMKK@Netscape.net.
“This is a beautiful waterfront community,” said Michael Schenkler, a trustee of the village and publisher of the Queens Tribune. Port Washington North intends to stay that way, he said. The introduction of retail behemoths such as Home Depot could pose a threat to the region’s way of life, resulting in traffic congestion and a strain on municipal facilities, according to village officials.”

- L.I. Business News 12/31/04

“I don’t think the big-box stores are to the benefit of the community for generations ahead,” said Trustee Gary Levi. “Forever now, for generations to come we’ll have that waterfront for the community to use.”

- Daily News 1/9/05

“The Village Board of Trustees’ efforts to ban big-box stores, their vision to acquire the Thomson 11-acres parcel, and the Moratorium Commission’s comprehensive land use planning has captured the interest of print media across Long Island. The three articles presented here may be viewed in their entirety at our website: www.portwashingtonnorth.org

“An even more sweeping overhaul of the Port Washington North’s zoning law is in the works, changing the classification of larger commercial parcels from ‘industrial’ to ‘economic development.’ That means office buildings but no smokestacks and no ‘big box’ stores, said Robert Weitzner the village’s deputy mayor.”

-- New York Times 1/30/05

*complete copies of these articles are available on the Port North web site at: www.portwashingtonnorth.org*
Port North Bulletin Board

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www.portwashingtonnorth.org
Commissioner of Internet Services, our neighbor Darin Langone, continues to build our Port North website.
The site includes meeting agendas and minutes, the new fee schedule, a link to the complete Village Code and much more.
You can reach Darin at: webmaster@portwashingtonnorth.org