

Mayor's Message for May 2018

May Flowers are blooming, and my bike rides are reminding me of how lucky we all are to live in a place as beautiful as Rhinebeck. Up and down the village streets, trees are leafing up, and carefully tended gardens are bursting into bloom. As we welcome spring, I want to extend my kudos and thanks to all our residents who contribute to sustaining the special nature of the place we live.

On Arbor Day, the Tree Committee turned out, armed with shovels, enthusiasm, and muscle, to plant 19 new trees in the village. Led by Tree Committee Chair Meg Crawford, a tremendous and hard working group of volunteers assured that Rhinebeck will keep its recognition as a "Tree City" from the National Arbor Day Foundation. In cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and NY State Forestry agencies, the Foundation provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for programs like ours in towns and cities that more than 93 million Americans call home. We are proud to be one of the New York communities to be honored.

There is nothing better than newly paved roads. This year you will see crews hard at work on Crossmour Road, Crossmour Drive and Violet Place. These 3 roads were listed by Dutchess County as the most in need of repairs. Trustee Ric Lewitt, DPW John Fenton and Highway Supervisor Mike Wolf will oversee the repaving of approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of road surface.

The Village Board has endorsed using the county list which ranks roads from "worst to best" as we work to bring all our village roads up to good condition. The job of removal and leveling of the old roads will be done by a private contractor. The Town Highway Department will lay down the new asphalt. Last year, we saved approximately \$40,000 by hiring the Town, and we project significant savings this year too. If you have a "favorite" worst road, no worries, others on the "poor to fair" list include Platt, Chestnut, Livingston, Center, Mulberry and North Parsonage, and their turn will come under the Board's annual plan for paving.

Some of these projects will need to be coordinated with work on another piece of vital village infrastructure, the century old water mains that run under the roads. Trustee Brant Neunecker and I recently met with Assemblyman Kevin Cahill to talk about plans for replacing them. This meeting was a crucial part of our efforts to seek funding for this project. Assemblyman Cahill and his staff are helping us with our grant applications as well as possible low interest loans. One important outcome of the meeting is that the New York State Department of Health reviewed the application and offered suggestions.

Protecting our water source is another vital piece of protecting our community. The safety and health of the Hudson River was the reason why, last year, I approached Dan Shapely of Riverkeeper. From that initial meeting, we opened discussions with 6 other communities (Town of Rhinebeck, Town and City of Poughkeepsie, Town of Hyde Park, Town of LLOYD, Town of Esopus), and we formed a partnership to protect, conserve and

enhance the river. Riverkeeper came up with a scorecard so we now have a baseline of information and recommendations. This group also supported the application of Randy Alstadt to be part of the Coast Guards' Ports and Waterways Safety Assessment Process. Randy, who is the administrator of the Poughkeepsie Water Treatment Plant, is providing a vital link between our communities and regulators as we move forward on a long-term plan to protect our water supply.

Construction is now underway on Rhinebeck Village Place, located behind the M&T Bank, it is owned by Mirabeau Inn and Spa, who worked with Village planning officials and made architectural modifications to match existing village center architecture. Set on 2.88 acres, with onsite parking for 91 cars, it is slated to open in 2019. Rhinebeck is home to some top-quality Inns and spas and this new addition should provide an additional boost to our tax base and economy.

May 6 to 12 is Municipal Clerk Week, so it's appropriate to give a shout out for all the work that our public employees do for us. Pat Coon - Village Clerk, Krissy Denu - Deputy Village Clerk, Tricia Giacalone - Justice Court Clerk, Danielle Rector- Police Clerk, Ryan Dowden - Planning, Zoning and Building Clerk. You all do positive work which impacts us everyday. Thank you on behalf of all of us.

And, also congratulations to Officer Beth Imperato who is celebrating 25 years with the Village Police. Besides her work keeping us all safe, she serves as a Student Resource Officer at our schools. Engaging with students of all ages, and working with teachers is a great community service. Thank you, Beth, for all that you do for the Village of Rhinebeck.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me, I can always be reached at 845-876-7015 or MayorBassett@VillageofRhinebeckny.gov or come to see me during open hours from 1pm to 2pm daily

Gary Bassett
Mayor Village of Rhinebeck
76 East Market St.
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
(845) 876-7015