



Croton-Harmon Station Parking Lot Update

After eight months of construction, following more than a year of design work, the Croton Harmon Station Parking Lot Flood Mitigation project is substantially complete. The full number of parking spaces became available again on December 14th. Since May, more than 700 parking spaces have been unavailable at the station while work has proceeded to improve the drainage and raise the grade of the work site (mainly Sections F, G and H). For a period of time the main road, Veteran's Plaza, was also closed while its grade was raised and it was re-paved, forcing traffic to take a very circuitous route to the station and the southern parking sections. Many commuters had to park in off-site areas and be bused to the station during this period. Traffic to and from the station, and directions to alternate sites were regularly changed as conditions at the station changed. Managing the traffic and parking was a team of employees, ably headed by Pete Anfiteatro, adding this responsibility to his regular job as Code Enforcement Officer and Fire Inspector.

Now all those inconveniences are finished as parkers return to the completed parking lot with fewer concerns about flooding.

The parking lot improvement design work was done by Dvirka & Bartilucci. The construction contractor was Sisca NE. A bond approved in February 2009 for \$3,060,000 funded the project.

The improvement project provided the opportunity for the Village to replace the manned ticket office and implement automated Pay-By-Space parking meters for the spaces in the daily lot. Beginning on Monday, January 4, the parking stations will "go live". Tickets will no longer be sold at the ticket office. Daily parking will be available in Section F and the

handicapped section. There are six pay



stations available for use. The machines are easy to use and provide a menu of options on their

screens. For the first week of their use staff members will be available to help ease the transition and explain how to use them. People using the daily lot need to note the number of the space in which they have parked and bring a credit card or cash (coins or bills). On weekdays, the rate is \$1/hour to a maximum of \$8 up to midnight. Weekend and multiple-day rates are additional options. No change will be given from the machines. Hours can be added to a parking space using a cell phone. There is no need to put the ticket on the dashboard as enforcement personnel can check payment for each space with their handheld devices.

Public Input Sought for Future of the Parking Lot.

The Village has engaged the firm of Tim Haahs & Associates to prepare a Parking Facility Feasibility study for its future. As part of that effort, they will be conducting the first of three public input sessions on the potential development of a parking structure there and other improvements to the parking areas. It will be held on Wednesday, January 27 from 7 - 8:30 pm at the Harmon Fire House. All station users, stakeholders and interested residents are invited to contribute their thoughts on the future of the train station parking lot.

Following a short presentation, discussion tables will further develop ideas. As the process moves forward additional input sessions will be held.

January Calendar

- 1** New Year's Day
- 4 & 19** Village Board Mtg.
- 12 & 26** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 6** Cons. Advisory Council
- 12** Rec. Advisory Comm.
- 13** Zoning Bd. of Appeals
- 18** Martin Luther King Day
- 20** Visual Environ. Bd.
- 27** Trails Committee

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EagleFest is Coming!

In 2009, over 4,000 people attended EagleFest, an 80% increase over the prior year. This year even more are expected at Teatown Reservation's 6th annual EagleFest to be held on Sat., Feb. 6 (snow date Feb. 7) from 8am to 4pm. The return of the Bald Eagle to the lower Hud-

son River Valley is the success story upon which this event is based.

The headquarters of the event is a large heated tent space at Croton Point Park where over 30 organizations will provide information, interactive games and displays for children, raptor shows, the Eagle Theater, and cider and beverages to attendees. There is free parking at the Croton train station and shuttle buses to the main site in the park.

Up and down the river, multiple outdoor eagle viewing stations will be set up to increase the opportunities for viewing the eagles. A warming tent at Croton's Echo boat launch on the Croton River, one of the viewing sites, will offer hot chocolate and bird experts will be available to help point out the birds and answer questions.

Eagle Exploration bus tours, and the Eagle Theater with hourly shows (advance \$5 tickets required) are available. The bus tours will drop off and pick up attendees at the multiple viewing sites along the river. Call 914-762-2912 ext. 110 for more info and reservations.

Bicycle Lanes on South Riverside



Bike Lanes on S. Riverside The plan, adopted in April of 2009, identified locations for bicycle routes throughout the Village. Bicycle routes promote neighborhood connections, reduce automotive use, and provide healthful exercise. In addition to the striped lines shown in the above picture, a common symbol for bicycle lanes showing a biker will be stenciled within the lanes.

A \$1.2 million grant received for traffic improvements on Croton Point Ave. from the Dept. of Transportation will also include bicycle lanes and pedestrian improvements when implemented.

The recent repaving of the section of South Riverside between Bungalow Rd. and Oneida Ave. provided the opportunity to implement one of the recommendations of the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan.

2009 Sidewalk Program

The ninth year of the Village's Sidewalk program has ended. The program was offered to residents from 2000-2007, allowing them to share the cost of installing new sidewalks in front of their homes. Although applications are no longer accepted, work on the backlog of applications continues.

In 2009 the work was performed by Con-Tech Construction Technology, Inc. under the supervision of Ass't. Building Inspector Joe Sperber. Most work was concentrated along Radnor Ave. and its cross streets as well as along Morningside Dr. Approximately 4,600 linear feet of sidewalks and 1,090 linear feet of curbs were installed in 2009.



The Duck Pond was another area of focus where new curbing and sidewalks were installed along Bungalow Rd. Electrical conduit was also installed underground in the park to allow for additional lighting in that area in the future. New stamped concrete sidewalks were slightly relocated away from tree roots and to provide a more inviting park configuration and improve overall aesthetics.

Harmon/S. Riverside Gateway Zoning

Changes to the Gateway zoning affecting the Harmon/S. Riverside commercial area were approved by the Village Board on Nov. 16, 2009. The Gateway area was extended to include all properties along S. Riverside Ave. north of Benedict Blvd. to just north of Oneida Ave. The intent of the zoning is to encourage commercial development by facilitating market rate mixed use properties.

The main changes in the law allow for mixed use without a special permit in the overlay district. Mixed use buildings could have an increase in the Floor Area Ratio to .8 if all other requirements in the zoning are met. Parking requirements must be met on-site and are unchanged for non-residential space but also require 1 space per bedroom for any residential units. There was no change in the maximum height of buildings at 35 feet but a third story would be allowed for residential use if it is within the roofline. A minimum of 50% ground floor space must be commercial.



Reminder!

Village Offices will be closed Fri., Jan. 1 for New Year's Day and Mon., Jan. 18 for Martin Luther King Day



Spotlight on the Visual Environment Board

Croton's Advisory Board on the Visual Environment (VEB) has been active since 1979 when it was initially formed and incorporated as a standing village board in Article 230 Chapter 60 of the Village Code. The five-member board is currently chaired by Doug Wehrle. The other members are Tom Smith, Sandy Hardy, Kevin McManus and Valerie Leis. The Trustee liaison is Demetra Restuccia.

The intent of forming the VEB was to provide an oversight committee to address and advise the Village boards on matters affecting the visual environment. The general welfare of residents and property owners as well as property values and taxes are positively affected by natural and man-made features and structures of visual and historic value. Conversely, unattractive buildings, open spaces, municipal works, streets and neighbor-

hoods have a negative effect on the quality of life and property values. Professional qualifications in architecture, planning, government, landscape architecture, and real estate are called for in the code and, indeed, fit the description of the current VEB members who serve 3-year terms.

The VEB is authorized to prepare a list of natural and man-made features in the Village that should be preserved. They can recommend legislation to further the VEB's objectives and they may conduct educational programs for the community to develop public awareness of visual environment values. An annual report to the Village Board on the visual environment in the Village and recommendations is part of the VEB's charter. The Village's logo is one of the achievements of the VEB who shepherded the process to its development. The VEB meets once a month on a scheduled basis but often add meetings



to accommodate applicants who have appearances in front of the Village, Planning, or Zoning Boards. A typical applicant will get professional-level help and advice from the VEB on new building architecture, façade improvements, signage and landscaping.

Coming up in the near future, the VEB will be reviewing proposed design guidelines for the recently rezoned Harmon/S. Riverside Gateway Overlay district. These guidelines are being promulgated by the Croton Economic Development committee for consideration and adoption by the Village Board.

Energy Action Coalition

During 2009, the Northern Westchester Energy Action Coalition (NWEAC) was formed by 14 municipalities of which Croton is one. The municipalities created NWEAC, a consortium, to address issues of common interest and to explore opportunities for mutual benefit. NWEAC created a leadership team of representatives from each municipality. Croton is represented by Susan Lunden who is also chair of the Village's Sustainability Committee. Mayor Wiegman is Croton's elected official representative. There are approximately 230,000 citizens and 70,000 homes encompassed by NWEAC.

The primary focus areas of NWEAC are: energy efficiency and conservation programs, renewable energy use, regional solutions to waste management, transportation efficiency, sustainable food programs and Smart Grid.

The group originated as federal stimulus money was offered through the US Dept. of Energy to municipalities which met the minimum 35,000 population criteria. The coalition municipalities created a large enough population entity to be eligible for funding. Currently NWEAC is applying for \$5 million in funding to enable homeowners to perform weatherization projects on their homes and make them more energy efficient.

World Trade Memorial

At the suggestion of resident Janet Mainiero, the Village is considering creating a 9/11 memorial in Croton using pieces of steel from the World Trade Center. Spurred by a news article indicating that the Port Authority is interested in giving pieces of the steel from the World Trade Center to interested municipalities, the Village Board supported the formation of a committee to seek the pieces of steel and to create a plan for the design, location, and funding of such a memorial. A description of volunteer qualifications for the committee is being prepared with help from the VEB and volunteers will soon be sought. The Village officially requested steel pieces from the Port Authority but has not yet heard back.

Snow Removal

When snow accumulates to 2 inches, the DPW starts plowing the streets. Plowing will continue during the remaining snowfall and until all the streets are cleared. All cars must be removed from the streets at this time unless a Seasonal Permit has been issued.

The clearing of snow from sidewalks is required by law and it is the responsibility of the property owners of the bordering properties. You can help the DPW and further safety in the Village by clearing around fire hydrants.

January, 2010

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Got a Question?



What programs are being offered by the Recreation Dept. during the Winter months for children?

Indoor and outdoor activities are available through the winter months. The Build-A-Snowman Contest is back again. Build your own snowman and send a 4" x 6" photo of it and its builder to the Dept. by Fri., March 19 to be entered. Two categories will be awarded prizes: a) "Typical" snowman and b) "Snow Sculpture" (animal, etc.). Include your name and address on the non-returnable photo.



Ice Skating .Weather permitting the Duck Pond will be open for skating. County regulations require at least 6 inches of ice for safety reasons. Watch for a GREEN flag to indicate skating is permitted. A RED flag means it is not permitted. All skating is unsupervised. The Village is also trying to make skating available on an ice surface at the site of the Farmer's Market. Creating a barrier around the perimeter of the site and flooding it under below freezing temperatures will be attempted if weather conditions are suitable.

Getting in shape and exercising opportunities are also

available for adults. A Gut-Buster class begins on Tues. Jan 12 (signup by Jan. 7), \$65 res./\$78 non-res. This 35-minute class by a certified personal trainer will help flatten and tone the abdominal wall. Back exercises and stretches will be included to maintain a healthy back. Or try some Yoga. Four Yoga classes taught by Croton's Andrea Naitove will start in early January: Gentle Beginner Yoga, Gentle Yoga, Yoga:Strengthen, Relax Renew, and Gentle Yoga II. Chair Yoga for Seniors is also being offered. Sign ups are all in the first week of January so call 271-3006 for more information and be sure not to miss out. Prices vary with the class taken.



Holiday Tree Disposal

The DPW will pick up discarded Christmas trees in the first two weeks of January. Trees should not have any trimmings, tinsel or wire and should not be in bags.

Water Bill Reminder!

Water bills are due by Jan. 15th. Penalties are added each month thereafter for bills in arrears.