



April Calendar

- 1 & 15** Village Board Mtg.
- 8** Budget Public Hearing
- 9** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 10** Zoning Board Mtg.
- 2** Bike/Ped Comm.
- 2** Conserv. Adv. Comm.
- 9** Rec. Advisory Comm.
- 17** Visual Environ. Bd.
- 24** Trails Comm.
- 29** Budget Adoption

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License Plate Recognition & Paperless Parking Permits

Starting on June 1, parking permits on vehicles parked in all sections of the Village's train station parking lot except Section F (the daily lot), will be verified using a new License Plate Recognition (LPR) system.

Studies of the station parking lot have been performed by the firm of Tim Haas Associates.

They recently performed an updated demand study which indicated a significant increase in future demand for spaces.

In the last year the station parking lot has experienced an upsurge in demand with a waiting list for quarterly Non-resident and Preferred permits of well over 300 names. (Residents are not wait-listed.) Additionally, the demand for daily parking has been dramatic over the last 2 years. As the train station parking lot is the single biggest source of revenue next to property taxes, making its management as efficient as possible is important to its overall operation as well as to its customers.

For those with parking permits - Resident, Non-resident and Preferred, the Village will no longer issue a permit sticker to be placed in the vehicle window. Instead, each vehicle's license plate will be scanned in the parking lot and matched against a data base of valid permits. A correct match ensures that the car's permit has been paid and that it is parked in the correct section of the lot.

The new vehicle license plate recognition system is a two-part system: 1) enforcing valid permits thru scanning license plates in the parking lot and, 2) selling permits associated with license plate numbers.

Several times during the day, a parking enforcement car equipped with a LPR

camera will circulate through the parking lot scanning the license plates. Vehicles whose license plates do not match a valid permit in the computerized permit data



base, or are parked in the wrong section, will be ticketed. The LPR system will speed up the enforcement process on a daily basis and require fewer staff to perform it. Currently much of the permit checking occurs on foot by the parking officers. This portion of

the system is provided by Secure Watch LLC in partnership with Genetech. They are providing the cameras, car computer, and software necessary for the parking enforcement part of the LPR system.

The related part of the new parking system, the online parking management software and database segment, is under contract to Parcmobile USA. All users of the parking lot, who get permits, will be required to set up an online account which includes their email address, their car(s), and license plate numbers. All permits will be sold on a quarterly basis beginning with the June/July/August quarter of this year. Emails will be sent to current permit holders to remind them to purchase their next quarterly permit. Payments may be made online by credit card at that time, or customers may also set up an automatic credit card charge for the permit. Checks may also be sent or brought into the Village Office. Debiting of checking accounts is not supported.

This month, all current permit users, except those with Weekend permits, will receive a letter with details of how to sign up for the new LPR system.

Resident Weekend permits are not affected at this time.

Upper Village Streetlights

Twenty-eight refurbished streetlights have been installed in the Upper Village area. The light poles, which had become corroded at their bases, were removed over a year ago after several had broken off or fallen. An inspection showed that many of them had become unsafe. Overhead cobra-style lights were installed temporarily on utility poles to provide lighting in the interim.



In March, 2012, on the recommendation of the DPW Superintendent, the Village Board approved a contract with Pennsylvania Globe Gaslight Company to refurbish the 28 Upper Village lights and 5 more lights in Dobbs Park for \$37,286.35. Additionally, PRM Electric was authorized to perform the installation of the refurbished lights at \$38,024. The newly refurbished lights will have energy efficient light fixtures replacing the old high-pressure sodium fixtures. The new induction lighting will produce a softer glow and the light will be directed downward.

86th Blood Drive



The 86th Community Blood Drive will be held on Sunday, May 5, from 9 am to 3 pm at Croton-Harmon High School. This is an opportunity for all dedicated donors to show their appreciation for their good health, as well as for those who have never donated before to learn how quick, easy and painless it is to save lives.

Donors must be at least 16, not yet 76, and over 110 pounds. Those between 16 and 17 need a parent's permission; over 76-ers need a doctor's note. All must bring some official ID. For further information, call Carol Shanesy, 271-7645, or Annette Birnbaum, 271-3010. Appointments may also be made by emailing: communityblooddrive@gmail.com

Croton Seniors

The Croton Seniors Club currently has 134 enrolled members. On April 12, elections will be held for new officers for the upcoming year. Dorothy Arensburg is stepping down after two years as President. New officers will be installed at a luncheon in late April.

Spring Yard Waste

Spring cleanup is underway at many residences in Croton. The DPW will help you in the disposal of your debris by collecting yard waste during the spring, summer and fall months on alternate Wednesdays.



Yard waste must be put in bio-degradable leaf bags or open-top garbage containers. **NO waste in plastic bags will be collected.**

Yard waste will be collected on Wednesdays, not with the regular garbage and recycling collections. Collection of yard waste will begin in April and continue through October as follows:

- North of Rte. 129 (maple St.) - 1st & 3rd Weds.
- South of Rte. 129 (Maple St.) - 2nd & 4th Weds.

There will be NO pickup on the following Wednesdays: May 29, Sept. 4 or October 16.

Recycling Bins



Residents who need a new red or blue recycling bin are urged to call DPW at 271-3775 and request one. New bins will be delivered upon request. Be sure to leave your address if you get a message machine.

Bins are no longer available on a walk-in basis at the DPW garage.

Snow Contest Winners!



Valentine Snowman built by Max and Kate Weber.



Snowcat Sculpture

The Snowman and Snow Sculpture contest sponsored by the Recreation Dept. has two winners. The best Snowman submitted was a Valentine's Day snowman

built by Max and Kate Weber. The snowman had a heart-shaped scarf and a bunch of fresh tulips in hand.

Michelle and Andrew Dieckman made the best snow sculpture - a snow cat with its paw on a rat.

The winners each received gift certificates to Capriccio II.

REMINDER!

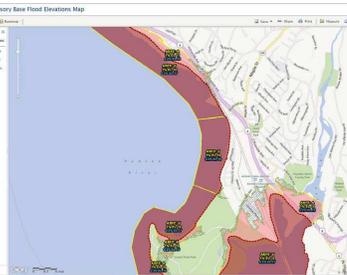
The Village Board will hold a Public Hearing on the 2013/2014 Budget on Monday, April 8 at 7:30 pm



New FEMA Maps Proposed

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has issued advisory revised flood plain maps for comment by affected municipalities. The FEMA maps are known as Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) maps. The maps project the 100-year flood based on the expected tide level during such a storm and also a new item - the expected surge level from waves called "wave run" in specific shoreline areas. Croton River flood maps were updated in 2007 and are not part of the proposed ABFE maps.

Along the Village's Hudson River waterfront, the new tide level during such a storm has increased from 7' to 12' with the surge level (wave run-up base line) projected at 19 feet. This is considerably higher than what the existing FEMA maps project. The Village Engineer initially raised some concerns about the accuracy of these levels, especially the wave run-up elevation, and the Village has asked for them to be reviewed by FEMA and possibly revised. Meetings with FEMA representatives and with Congresswoman Lowey have been held in this regard. The ABFE maps are a precursor to the FEMA regulatory process to update the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) which is expected to be completed in about 2 years.



On the Hudson River, the Half Moon Bay condominiums and the Yacht Club will be affected by the high flood elevations as would any new structure to be built along the riverfront. Metro North railroad yards and tracks are also affected. For structures already in place, flood insurance will become more expensive or be now required. New structures built in the future would have to be built to meet the final FEMA guidelines.

A new FEMA program, Community Rating System (CRS), allows municipalities that join it, to earn points for taking certain steps which are likely to reduce flood damage in the future. Residents in communities with a high number of points will benefit by getting lower insurance rates than would otherwise be the case. Croton is taking steps to join in the CRS program.

Moody's Aa2 Rating

Moody's Investors Service recently affirmed its Aa2 rating for the Village's outstanding general obligation debt - a very high rating for a municipality of Croton's size. Their summary pointed to the Village's "well-managed conservative budgeting of revenues" and strong reserve levels which have grown since a 2009 low. It identified

Tentative Budget for 2013/2014

On March 20, the proposed Village Budget for Fiscal Year 2013/2014 was filed by the Village Manager. The proposed budget for the General Fund is \$18,270,311 and requires \$11,206,327 to be raised by taxes at a tax rate of \$253.697 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. This is an increase of \$12.949/\$1000 over last year's tax rate and represents a 5.38% tax rate increase.

This is the second year the Property Tax Cap legislation has been in effect limiting growth of property taxes to 2% or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. However, since the tax levy in the 2012/2013 budget was 1.5%, or .5% below the levy limit, the NYS Comptroller's Office has calculated that the Village's tax cap limit for 2013/2014 can be \$10,881,215 or \$157,506 larger than the prior year.

On the Revenue side of the budget, non-tax revenues are projected to increase by \$292,622 to an all-time high of \$6,413,983, greatly reducing the amount to be collected through taxes. On the Expenditure side of the budget, the largest expense is the New York State Retirement System and Police Retirement System with an estimated Village contribution for 2013/2014 of \$259,298 more than last year. Premiums for health insurance have increased as well by \$102,477 over last year. These pension and health costs account for \$3,417,167 of the budget.

Dept. heads began work on the prospective budgets in the fall of 2012. All were reviewed, often several times, by the Manager and Treasurer, resulting in changes and modifications. For the most part, department budgets remained flat or have minimal increases in part due to salary increases. For the majority of employees, these increases are based on the Croton Police Association contract and that of the Teamsters Local 456 which remains under negotiation for the second year in a row.

Water Fund and Sewer Fund rates are projected to increase due to the scheduled work to be done on the water distribution system during 2013 and 2014. The proposed rate is \$5.89/100 cubic feet of consumption, up from \$5.025. High usage customers would experience a corresponding rate increase. The Sewer rate would rise to \$0.5640/100 cubic feet of consumption from \$0.4759.

Budget work sessions are open to the public and dates and times are posted on the Village website.

the Village's moderately-sized tax base with strong socio-economic factors as another positive strength with median family income at 177.0% of state levels. Moody's expects the Village's direct debt level of 1.9% of full value to remain manageable. The Village's 2,000-space parking lot which accounts for 17% of budgeted revenues, and only 4% of expenditures, was identified as a significant contributor to its stable General Fund operations.

Published for the Residents of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson

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Earth Day Events

Under the auspices of the Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC), Earth Day events this year will take place at Vassallo Park on Sat., April 27 from 9am to 2pm.

The day will be full of activities and presentations by a number of participating organizations and committees.



Special activities include a walk organized by the Trails Committee. Special presentations include Chris Letts with “funny” fish from the Hudson River, Joe Mullins doing the Japanese art of fish printing,

music from Strange Pools and Rose Coen, native plant information from the Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners, identifying invasive plants, and tree care.

There will also be arts and crafts using recycled materials, and a sporting goods swap where you can exchange your gently used equipment for something you can use.

Drug Take Back Day

In conjunction with the national program organized by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Croton Police will be holding Drug Take Back Day on Sat., April 27 in the parking lot at Croton Commons. Detective Sergeant Nikitopoulos and Detective Gabrielsen will be present there from 10 am to 2 pm to receive any unwanted drugs and medications, prescription and non-prescription. No liquids, syringes or needles will be accepted.

Croton Police also have a secure box in the lobby of the Dept. at the Municipal Building for unused medications.

In addition to those mentioned already, local participants in this fun and informative day include the Village’s Sustainability Committee, the Bicycle Pedestrian Committee, Teatown Lake Reservation, Saw Mill River Audubon Society and the Nature Center at Croton Point Park. Free t-shirts will be available for participants. Come prepared to have a fun filled day and to learn a lot!

Got a Question?



In Fall 2012, Village Manager Zambrano and department heads held a series of community meetings to hear directly from residents about their concerns and suggestions. What was the result of these meetings?

Meetings were held on October 24, November 14 and 29 to solicit input from residents on their suggestions and concerns.

Issues related to traffic, speed and parking in various areas of the Village were raised. The lack of visibility of some dog walkers at night was also identified as a concern as well as jaywalkers. Since then, the Police Chief and DPW Superintendent have undertaken to add additional signage along Elliott Way, refresh the stop line on Brook Street and remove some extraneous signs. However, suggestions that Terrace Place become a one-way street and for a NO LEFT TURN sign from Terrace Place onto Old Post Rd. North were not recommended by them.

Concerns were raised about code violations at certain properties. Code Enforcement indicated that some of these issues have already been addressed or will be followed up on.



Idling of trains, blowing of horns and whistles, and garbage on the tracks at Metro North were also discussed as well as how to get responsiveness from Metro North. The Fire Dept.’s Assistant Chief explained the whistle blowing and horns but it was agreed that communication is an ongoing issue with Metro North.

The Fire Dept. Assistant Chief also addressed the issue of the volume, frequency and durations of horns sounded during Fire Emergencies.

Leaf collection, hydrant flushing, garbage collection and snow plowing questions were raised at the meeting. For the most part, these questions dealt less with the service provided than clarifying Village policy.

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Distribution of the monthly Village Newsletter was also a concern raised. Since many do not get it electronically, or have not signed up for it, the question of whether additional paper copies should be made available was raised. At a subsequent work session, it was agreed that paper copies would be made available at some additional locations.