Mayor’s Message for February 2020

On January ninth, despite the cold weather outside, a large group of dedicated people came to a Workshop being held by our Climate Smart Community Committee. During the workshop, more than 50 Village and Town residents discussed the topic “Getting the Village Ready for the Changing Climate”. Seeing our engaged, caring community in action was a wonderful thing. To learn more about the CSC, go to ClimateSmartRhinebeck.org

With this kind of community support, we are moving towards a major milestone. We have submitted the paperwork to NYSERDA, and if we are approved, Rhinebeck will become a certified “Climate Smart Community”. The certification involves a rigorous review of the actions we have taken to mitigate, and adapt, to the changing climate.

Our commitment to providing Electrical Vehicle parking stations is an important part of this initiative. Thanks to a grant from the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation, we now have new chargers installed in the municipal parking lot. At the same time, we were able to expand our ADA/Handicap parking from four to six spots.

Going forward, we will be taking part in a Community Resilience Building Workshop using planning tools which will help us with climate change preparedness. A 9 month long Dutchess County Program run by the “Climate Action Planning Institute Dutchess County” will study the effects of greenhouse gases. And, we are continuing our partnership with Marist College to automate the flood predictive model for the Landsmankill. This is an important step in learning how best to protect lives and property from big storms.

Many of you have seen crews working on our Water Infrastructure project. This project is currently 6 weeks ahead of schedule!

- The water main along all of Livingston, Chestnut and Platt water main is completed, chlorinated and tested by the County Department of Health.
- Livingston service lines will be connected on Livingston Street by the end of the first week in February. Chestnut & Platt service lines will be started soon after with a projected completion date of February 28th, 2020.
- The water main for Chestnut & Platt have been approved from DOH to start service line taps.

The Village Trustees are now in the process of reviewing the proposed draft zoning law for the “Hospital Medical District.” Trustee Paul Korczak and a team of people created the draft with input from numerous local stakeholders. The proposed law focuses on
protecting the residential character of the Village and the residential neighborhood adjacent to the hospital, while recognizing the hospital’s needs to stay on top of evolving healthcare needs of the community and the possible need for new infrastructure or expansion.

The proposed draft zoning introduces guidelines that:

- Define use of several types of screening elements along Springbrook and Montgomery as a visual buffer, with an emphasis on facilitating preservation of structures in keeping with the character of the Village;
- Provide guidelines that would focus future plans for hospital development, in particular with regard to additional parking and other elements to encourage walking and biking.
- Preserve existing greenspace and define architectural elements for new structure designs that would complement the residential character of the Village; and
- Provide a framework for future planning efforts between the Village and hospital.

Rhinebeck Village Trustees received a draft for initial review before the regular January Village Board Meeting. I will keep everyone posted on the progress of the proposal.

It is time to begin work on the budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. It’s always a challenging job, as each Village Department evaluates budget needs for the coming year. And, the Village Board reviews long-term goals, looking for ways to increase efficiency and productivity, while keeping costs in line. We will be reviewing compensation and retention for village employees, improvements to parking as well as preservation within the Village. Meetings are scheduled throughout February and March with a goal to adopt the budget by April 14th at our regular scheduled Village Board meeting.

We are happy to announce the Village has secured the resources of Tighe & Bond as our new engineering firm. Tighe & Bond is not only located in the Village, the firm has a proven track record of helping communities improvement projects, and seeking funding through grants and low interest loans to pay for it. They are focused on implementing green solutions, and have extensive experience in municipal parking, streetscape enhancements, municipal planning support, energy efficiency and water and wastewater systems. They will be enthusiastic contributors to our community.

The Village of Rhinebeck Fire Department has named officers for the coming year. Chief- Kyle Eighmy, Asst. Chief - Bryant Knapp, 1st Captain - Peter Fraileigh, 2nd Captain - Todd Leary, 1st Lt. - Sheldon Tieder, 2nd Lt. - Shane Hassett, EMS Captain - Chrissy Eighmy, 1st Lt - Jeff Cotter, 2nd Lt. - Rob Tourtelot, Fire Police Captain - Tim Day 1st Lt. - Frank Dietrich.

David Peterson, who lives on Boice Rd in Rhinebeck, has joined the department after getting his EMT certification in July. We are happy to welcome David to the team.
I also want to recognize the following employees for their many years of service to the Village of Rhinebeck. Police Officer James Kelly 30 years of service, Officer Beth Imperato 27 years of service. Congratulations to all!

As always, please reach out to me with any questions or comments. You can reach me by phone 845-876-7015 ext 2 at Village Hall or via email to 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