

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RESIDENTS  
OF EAST GREENBUSH  
2019**

**By  
Jack Conway  
Town Supervisor**

**Town Board:  
Tina Tierney  
Hollie Kennedy  
Rick Matters  
Bridget Fritz**

**February 24, 2020**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Report is issued to the people of the Town as part of our commitment to greater transparency. This Annual Report details the activities of your Town government in 2019.

### *Town Board*

- Appointed Christina Hennessey to the Board of Assessment Review, Ellen Schwab and Frank Coppa to the Board of Ethics, Christine Horne and Donald Panton to the Planning Board, Jeffrey Pangburn to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and Ralph Viola, John Conway, Jr., Stephen Obermayer, Robert Lehmann, William Perkins, David Becker, Guy Warner, Victoria Manieri and Maira Senick to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.
- Appointed Elaine Miano-Rudzinski to the position of Chief of Police.
- Adopted a Natural Resource Inventory as a foundation to updating the Comprehensive Plan.
- Continued work on the update to our Comprehensive Plan.
- Negotiated and executed a Development Agreement with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals for the Tempel Lane Extension and replacement of wastewater pumping stations on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Barracks Road.
- Reached agreement on new three-year contracts for our Public Works and Emergency Communications union employees.
- Began live streaming of public meetings in Town Hall, including Town Board and Planning Board meetings
- Demonstrated support for important causes, raised awareness of issues such as breast cancer, domestic violence and childhood cancer, stated support for restoration of AIM funding and the September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund, and opposed National Grid's Pipeline E37 Reliability and Resiliency Project and the Dunn Landfill..
- Honored eight more veterans in our Honor a Veteran program.

### *Town Finances*

- Maintained positive fund balances in our General, Highway, Sewer and General Water Funds.
- Maintained an investment grade credit rating of Aa3.
- Maintained independent accounting for Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) fees.
- Obtained an independent audit of 2018 financial statement (conducted by Certified Public Accounting firm UHY, LLC), our fourth consecutive year of independent audits..
- 2020 budget includes 1.64% tax increase. Includes no reduction in essential services, one new position (Planner) and increased funding for paving projects
- Increased salaries for Town Supervisor and members of the Town Board..

- Had a reduction of \$389,000 in debt service for the Wastewater Treatment Plant due to bringing the final phase of the project in under budget.
- Budgeted money to research and implement a Veteran's Flag program.

#### ***Assessor's Office***

- Maintained an equalization rate of 100% in 2019.
- Increased the amount of the exemption from real property taxes for Cold War, Wartime, Combat and Disabled veterans.

#### ***Building Department***

- In 2019 the Building Department conducted 357 inspections, issued 627 permits, and collected \$626,399.40 in permit costs and \$767,411.90 in overall revenue.
- Issued 36 Certificates of Occupancy and 83 Certificates of Compliance; addressed 90 complaints from residents.

#### ***Finance Office***

- Managed the renovation of the Courtroom and Community Room in Town Hall.
- Trained all staff in Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination Prevention and Workplace Violence Prevention.
- Completed the upgrade of the Town's phone system.
- Maintained the Town's social media platforms and Nixle Alert System.
- Developed materials for and conducted hiring/recruiting efforts, including the search for a new Chief of Police.

#### ***Planning and Zoning***

- Facilitated approval of 353,800 sq. feet of new commercial space and 96 multi-family units.
- Processed 27 new land development applications
- Assisted with ten procurement and grant-related activities valued at more than \$2 million, including grants for the Tempel Lane Extension and MS4 mapping upgrades.
- Monitored and inspected the construction of Regeneron's 346,000 sq. ft. Manufacturing Facility on Tempel Lane.

#### ***Police Department***

- Reduction in overall crime rate even though the Emergency Communications Center handled almost 5,000 more calls than last year.
- Partnered with the East Greenbush Central School District to help address the District's security needs.
- Maintained a strong social media presence.

- Initiated a Get to Know Your Local Police Program with four events.

### ***Public Works***

- Resurfaced 6.67 miles of roads.
- Completed drainage projects on Spruce Run and Mill Run.
- Reached substantial completion on the installation of water meters in Hampton Manor.
- Analyzed and repaired one of the two five-million gallon water tanks on Grandview Avenue.
- Installed a new pressure reducing valve to serve the August Gate and Rysedorph developments.
- Improved our odor abatement system at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Began the process of updating our wastewater conveyance system with a focus on the major pump stations in Town.
- Completed a Feasibility Study for the replacement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Barracks Road pump stations.
- Paved the Wastewater Treatment Plant parking lot.
- Analyzed and restructured the fees for the Transfer Station.
- Installed gazebos in Hampton Manor and Woodland Parks.
- Replaced the HVAC system in Town Hall.
- Managed and inspected the renovations of the Courtroom and Community Room in Town Hall.

### ***Town Services (Parks and Recreation)***

- Another successful year of Summer Camp with increased attendance for the sixth year in a row.
- Installed and implemented RecDesk, a recreation management software that includes online registration for summer camp and facility scheduling.
- Sponsored another successful Spotlight on Youth ceremony.
- Operated seasonal afterschool programs.
- Sponsored the annual Town-wide garage sale.
- Another successful year of the expanded Music in the Park series and the End of Summer Jam.
- Hosted Holiday events, including Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Party and Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony.
- Collaborated with community organizations on the Memorial Day Parade and the First Responders Holiday Parade.

## **2019 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RESIDENTS OF EAST GREENBUSH**

Jack Conway,  
Town Supervisor  
January, 2020

The work of the Town Board is the backbone of Town government. The five members of the Town Board bear ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the financing and operation of Town Government. The Supervisor is a full-time position but the other four members are part-time and paid \$10,000 per year, an amount not commensurate with the volume and quality of the work they do, and one that will be raised in 2020 to \$12,500. The dedication and skill of Tina Tierney, Hollie Kennedy, Rick Matters and Bridget Fritz has made this another productive year and I want to acknowledge and thank them for their hard work and unyielding concern for the public interest. Thanks to Tina Tierney for drafting the section of this report dealing with the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail and for effectively serving as Deputy Supervisor.

Thanks also to my senior staff for department submissions that helped in the drafting of this report. Thank you Police Chief Elaine Rudzinski, Scott Gallerie, Dan Fiacco, Meaghan Hart, George Phillips, Adam Yagelski, Toni Murphy, Jessica Lansing, Kevin Hitchcock and Susan McCarthy. These are the people who work hard each day to make our Town government run as smoothly as it does.

### **Town Board**

The goals of the Town Board are:

- to provide essential Town services in the most cost-effective manner;
- manage an ethical, transparent and accountable government;
- adequately fund Town operations;
- responsibly manage the Town's finances;
- maintain and upgrade the Town's infrastructure;
- establish means of collaboration between Town officials and the public;
- promote smart development;
- attract and retain businesses; and
- promote a sense of community.

## *Appointments*

The Town Board made the following appointments in 2019:

- Elaine M. Rudzinski to the position of Chief of Police;
- Michael A. Guadagnino to the position of Detective Sergeant;
- John J. Martyn to the position of Police Sergeant;
- Shelby Proper and Nicholas Liuzzi to the position of Police Officer;
- Ralph Viola, John Conway, Jr., Stephen Obermayer, Robert Lehmann, William Perkins, David Becker, Guy Warner, Victoria Manieri and Maira Senick to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee;
- Daniel Fiacco to the position of Commissioner of Public Works;
- Scott F. Gallerie, Sr. to the position of Deputy Commissioner of Public Works;
- Susan McCarthy to the position of Sole Appointed Assessor;
- Paige Moore to the position of Police Dispatcher;
- Kevin Hitchcock to the position of Building Inspector on a permanent basis;
- Christina Hennessy to the Board of Assessment Review.
- Ellen Schwab and Frank Coppa to the Board of Ethics;
- Christine Horne and Donald Panton to the Planning Board;
- Jeffrey Pangburn to the Zoning Board of Appeals;

### *Recognition of Important People and Causes*

An important function of a Town Board is to recognize and promote awareness of issues that can have a significant impact on the community. In 2019, the Town Board officially recognized and promoted awareness of a number of issues:

- Recognized February as *African American History Month*;
- Designated March to be *Women's History Month*;
- Designated April as *National Donate Life Month*;
- Recognized April as *Child Abuse Prevention Month*;
- Declared April to be *Sarcoidosis Awareness Month*;
- Honored the *life-saving efforts* of Police Officers Josh Witko and Nick Peter and Sgt. Raymond Diaz;
- Recognized the establishment of *East Greenbush Fire District Number 3*;
- Participated in the *Turn the Town Teal* effort in conjunction with the East Greenbush Central School District and declared September Turn the Town Teal Month in support of education and advocacy programs for women with ovarian cancer;
- Proclaimed *Police Week in East Greenbush* for the week of May 12 – May 18, 2019 and declared May 15, 2019 as *Peace Officer's Memorial Day*. National Police Week was designated to provide special recognition for those law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty;
- Honored the *Columbia High School Varsity Boys Indoor Track and Field Team* for winning the Section II championship.
- Recognized May, 2019 as *Mental Health Month* and *Trauma Informed Care Month*.
- Honored the members of the *Columbia High School Varsity Boys Bowling Team*;
- Proclaimed June to be *(LGBTQ) Pride Month*;
- Recognized September as '*Childhood Cancer Awareness Month*' and declared September 18, 2019 as '*East Greenbush Goes Gold Day*' in honor of Sean Jucha;
- Recognized October as '*Domestic Violence Awareness Month*' and declared October 24, 2019 as '*East Greenbush Goes Purple Day*;'
- Recognized October as '*Breast Cancer Awareness Month*' and declared October 18, 2019 as '*East Greenbush Goes Pink Day*;'
- Recognized October as *Bullying Prevention Month*;
- Recognized November as *Men's Health Awareness Month* and declared November 14, 2018 as '*East Greenbush Goes Light Blue Day*;
- Recognized November as Adoption Awareness Month and designated November 23, 2019 as *Adoption Awareness Day*.

### ***Honor a Veteran Program***

On March 16, 2016 the Town Board established the Honor a Veteran program. Conceived and administered by Town Historian Bobbie Reno, the Honor a Veteran program is designed to honor those Town residents who have served our country with distinction. Those honored this year were:

<i>Robert J. Ostrander</i>	U.S. Army
<i>David John Dedrick</i>	U.S. Army
<i>Ralph O. Helms</i>	U.S. Army
<i>Howard R. Myers, Jr.</i>	U. S. Air Force
<i>David Neal Caneen</i>	U.S. Army
<i>Arthur Harold Summers</i>	U.S. Navy
<i>Selby Edward Summers</i>	U.S. Army Air Corp
<i>James J. Connell, Jr.</i>	U.S. Marines

### **Important Initiatives of the Town Board - 2019**

In addition to recognizing and raising awareness of key issues, the Town Board took a stand on a number of issues facing the Town:

The Town Board passed a resolution urging the Governor and the Legislature to restore Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding. Each year the Town receives \$73,000 from the State under the AIM program. This year the Legislature was considering the elimination of this funding for Towns and Villages (but not for cities). The Town Board advocated for those funds to be restored. In the end, the State passed the responsibility for providing this funding to the Counties with the revenue coming from a proposed internet sales tax.

In March, the Town Board voted to approve a resolution in support of bills in the United States Senate and House of Representatives that opposed cuts in funding for the September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund. This important fund serves more than 45,000 people who had their health compromised by exposure to toxins at Ground Zero.

In April, the Town Board voted unanimously to oppose National Grid's Pipeline E37 Reliability and Resiliency Project. National Grid wants to install 7.3 miles of new 16-inch diameter natural gas transmission pipeline with a maximum allowable pressure of 300 pounds per square inch on land that runs through three municipalities, including East Greenbush. The

pipeline will not serve the people of East Greenbush except in limited emergency circumstances but the risks and environmental impact will be borne by Town residents.

In October, the Board passed a resolution urging the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to hold the Dunn Landfill Operators responsible for implementing controls to prevent dust, debris, odors, and truck noise. The Dunn Landfill is located on Partition Street Extension in the city of Rensselaer but some of the negative impacts are being experienced by residents of East Greenbush. DEC has issued a Department Initiated Modification to the Landfill's State permits. The Board's resolution was based on the member's frustration at our inability to influence something that has become a serious problem for the people we represent. We'll continue to monitor the situation and make our views known. This is a problem that needs to be solved. This is a fight that will occupy us in 2020.

### *Local Laws*

The Town Board enacted four **Local Laws** in 2019:

**Local Law #1** of 2019: Amends Chapter 33 of the Code of the Town of East Greenbush, Updating Said Regulations to Conform to Current Requirements and Terminology.

This local law updates the regulations for sewers so that they conform to current regulations in both what is required and the terminology used for tests and measures.

**Local Law #2** of 2019: Approves the 'Pinecrest Plaza' Planned Development District Amendment.

The Pinecrest Plaza development is at the corner of Columbia Turnpike and Springhurst Avenue. It consists of two commercial buildings and approximately 24,000 square feet of commercial space. It was originally proposed in 1990 and much of it was developed at that time. When the applicant returned to finish the project no one could locate the approvals (i.e. the Local Law) that were granted at that time. This Local Law ties up the loose ends after a comprehensive review was conducted by both the legal and planning and zoning departments, and allows the project to move forward.

**Local Law #3** of 2019: Increases the Town's Real Property Tax Exemption for Cold-War Veterans.

New York Real Property Tax Law (Section 458-b ) provides municipalities the discretion to establish for Cold-War Veterans and their qualified family members who own qualified residential property certain levels of exemption from real property taxes. These exemptions are

only provided for general and highway taxes. The exemption level was last raised in 2008. It was set at exemption levels of \$8,000 for non-disabled Cold War Veterans and \$40,000 for disabled Cold War Veterans. This was the amount that was exempt from general and highway taxes. Local Law #3 raises the limits to \$30,000 for non-disabled Cold War Veterans and \$150,000 for disabled Cold War Veterans. We felt that the increased limits were appropriate and allowed us to make tangible a small bit of the gratitude we feel for those who have served or are currently serving.

**Local Law #4 of 2019:** Increases the Town's Real Property Tax Exemption for Veterans.

The exemption for Cold War veterans was a belated acknowledgement of the service and sacrifices that men and women in our Armed Forces contributed to maintaining our safety. Local Law #3 addresses the exemptions available to Cold War veterans. Local Law #4 covers Wartime Veterans, Combat Veterans and Disabled Veterans. In 2008 the limits were set at \$27,000, \$45,000, and \$90,000 for Wartime Veterans, Combat Veterans and Disabled Veterans, respectively. Local Law #4 establishes new limits of \$45,000, \$75,000 and \$150,000.

### *Appointment of a New Chief of Police*

In June, Chief of Police Chris Lavin retired after a long and distinguished career with the East Greenbush Police Department. Chief Lavin joined the department on February 14, 1972, became Detective Sergeant two years later, and was appointed Chief in 1990. Chris has also served with the East Greenbush Fire Company for more than 50 years. There are few people, even in a community with so many people dedicated to community service, who can match Chris Lavin for the contribution he has made to protecting and serving the people of East Greenbush. We're lucky that we live in a safe community but that didn't happen by accident. As Chief for nearly three decades a large measure of credit belongs to Chris Lavin, although he would tell you that it's because of the men and women who have served under him. Great job Chief! I know I speak for all Town residents when I say thank you for your class and dedication to service!

The Town Board underwent an extensive process in the search for a replacement for Chief Lavin. We interviewed five highly qualified candidates, narrowed the list to two finalists, and did a second interview with each of them. In the end, we selected Detective Sergeant Elaine Rudzinski-Miano of our own department to be the new Chief of Police. Chief Rudzinski is a graduate of Columbia High School, Hudson Valley Community College, Siena College, and Sage Graduate School. A lifelong East Greenbush resident, she has been on the force for nearly 25 years. She has earned the historical distinction of being the first woman to be appointed Chief of Police in Rensselaer County. Experienced in all aspects of policing, Chief Rudzinski insists that the Police Department functions best when it is an integral part of the community and is seen to be such. She has sponsored community events and developed innovative ways for individual

police officers to spend time interacting with residents in relaxed settings. We are very excited about this appointment.

***Update of the Comprehensive Plan*** (Written by **Adam Yagelski, Director of Planning and Zoning**)

The comprehensive plan is an essential document which guides growth and other activities according to the Town's vision for the future. In turn the Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for other essential land use planning tools, including the zoning map and code and the Town's Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). This project will, over three phases, update the Comprehensive Plan, modify the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations accordingly, and update the Western East Greenbush Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). In 2018, a consultant team led by MJ Engineering was selected by the Town to assist with the implementation of the project.

As of December 2019, the project is well underway and has made significant progress with the primary public involvement effort nearly complete and existing conditions profile and inventory in draft form. The current estimated schedule is for a draft plan to be released in Spring 2020 and forwarded to the Town Board to consider adoption in May 2020. In general, public participation (primarily meetings and survey response) has been excellent. The following project milestones were achieved in 2019:

- Comprehensive Plan Update Visioning Workshop and Open House Public Meeting - June 17, 2019;
- Community Outreach Plan drafted in July 2019;
- Community Profile first draft in August 2019;
- Community Survey – The survey went live on June 17, 2019 and closed on November 1, 2019. The Town received 783 total respondents (roughly 5% of the Town's 2018 population of 16,403), with 85% of respondents reporting they live in Town. The full survey results will be made available once tabulated and reviewed by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC);
- East Greenbush Photo Survey went live on June 17, 2019;
- Comprehensive Plan Update Public Workshop - September 30, 2019;
- Stakeholder outreach meetings held on September 17 and 18, 2019;
- East Greenbush Central School Student Advisory Group outreach workshop held on October 3, 2019; and
- Held 5 CPSC meetings in 2019.

In addition to providing overall project management and oversight, the Department of Planning and Zoning supported this effort in 2019 by undertaking the following activities:

- Developed, launched, and maintained a project website which provides essential information about upcoming activities, documents, and ways for the public and other stakeholders to engage;
- Assisted with formation of the CPSC and provided ongoing logistical and information support to the Committee throughout the process;
- Performed outreach and solicit stakeholder input and involvement;
- Served on the Town’s Core Project Management Team to guide the project effort.

The update of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Map and GEIS document will allow us to lay a solid foundation for smart growth and ensure that developers pay their fair share but aren’t saddled with an undue burden. This process will also help us to identify issues that affect our internal processing of planning and zoning applications.

***Albany-Hudson Electric Trail*** (Written by **Councilor Tina Tierney**)

The Albany-Hudson Electric Trail (AHET Trail) will be a shared-use bicycling and pedestrian trail along the 35 mile National Grid right-of-way from Rensselaer to Hudson, and is part of the 750-mile Empire State Trail designed to connect New York City to Canada and Albany to Buffalo. Routed along the former Albany-Hudson Electric Trolley corridor, our local section will provide a key link between the Capital Region and the Mid-Hudson Valley. The historic route was an operational passenger trolley from 1899 to 1929 powered by electricity supplied by the Stuyvesant Falls hydro-electric power plant. This project was the subject of a feasibility study conducted by the Town of East Greenbush in October 2011.

The first public meeting on the proposed trail was held in August 2017, just one day after the Hudson Greenway issued a Draft Concept Plan for the project. After receiving a number of questions and comments from East Greenbush residents, the Greenway staff attended the Town Pre-Board meeting in September 2017. Mr. Andy Beers from Hudson Greenway and Mr. Chris Cornwell from GPI Engineering presented the proposed route and answered resident questions. To address specific concerns raised by residents, Mr. Beers and Mr. Cornwell met with neighbors on Berkshire Drive, Tamarack Lane, and scheduled individual meetings with residents living in proximity to the proposed route. On October 11, 2017, Mr. Beers and Mr. Cornwell presented an engineering analysis changing the proposed trail route from Berkshire Drive to Tamarack Lane. Additional presentations were held on December 13, 2017 to update the public on proposed road crossings, and more recently to update the Planning Board on December 11, 2019.

The Hudson River Greenway finalized the Concept Plan and Project Design in 2018, and began construction in 2019. Construction is progressing from south to north, and the anticipated completion date is November 2020. This exciting project will provide residents with another

option for outdoor recreational opportunities, and a safe route to bicycle, walk, or run in a setting that will minimize our interactions with motor vehicle traffic.

The Town of East Greenbush will post updated information on the project and dates for upcoming meetings on the Town website. Detailed information on the AHET Trail can be found at <http://www.ahettrail.org/> and residents are encouraged to submit any comments on the project to the Hudson River Greenway staff via the AHET website.

### ***Natural Resource Inventory***

In 2018 the Town successfully applied for assistance from the Hudson River Estuary Program to prepare the Town's first Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). The essence of the inventory is a series of 25 maps showing natural resources within the Town accompanied by a narrative. In April 2018, the Town Board created the Natural Resources Work Group (NRWG), which currently consists of 5 Town resident volunteers, to manage the effort. The NRWG has generally met monthly since its establishment.

After receiving assistance from the Hudson River Estuary Program, the Town Board adopted the NRI, prepared in a process led by the Natural Resources Work Group (NRWG), on June 19, 2019. This is a critical baseline toolset consisting of maps and an accompanying report depicting sensitive natural and cultural resources town wide. The information developed in the NRI has been integrated into the Comprehensive Plan Update process, maps, and documents. The Department of Planning and Zoning, with support from the Town Board, has been working with NRWG members to consider the establishment of a conservation advisory council (CAC). CAC establishment would be by local law. A draft of the local law has been prepared and will be considered by the Town Board in early 2020.

### ***Development Agreement with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals***

Regeneron Pharmaceuticals is one of the most innovative and fastest growing corporations in the United States. Based in Tarrytown, NY with two campuses and other locations in East Greenbush and a manufacturing center in Limerick, Ireland, Regeneron has set the standard for the pharmaceutical industry with important new drugs that have either been approved or are in the later stages of testing. In East Greenbush, their Discovery Drive campus continues to grow with additions to their main building and the parking garage. Our efforts in 2019 were focused on facilitating the development of a new campus on Tempel Lane, although there were other additions, alterations etc. At full build-out the new campus will consist of a warehouse, manufacturing facility, a Science Building (offices/labs) and a parking garage.

These are exciting additions to our Town but the development of so much commercial space in such a short period of time strains our resources and sometimes results in other

important projects not receiving the attention they need. The PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreements that Regeneron has entered into with the Rensselaer County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) were needed to offset the cost of the project for Regeneron but have reduced the amount of property tax paid on their properties. This will help create 1,500 new jobs, which is a strong rationale for the PILOTs, but it does put a strain on staff resources and necessitates careful planning on the part of the Town to address the infrastructural implications of growth of that magnitude. Regeneron has proven to be an excellent partner in the process of creating smart growth and we look forward to a productive relationship for many years to come.

In June we executed an Agreement with Regeneron that specifies our respective roles and financial and programmatic obligations in completing important infrastructural necessities, including the expansion of Tempel Lane to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Extension, and the replacement of two pump stations that need to be upgraded to handle the increased demand from the new campus. The Town agreed to undertake, at Regeneron's expense, the design and construction of the road extension and the installation of a 6 inch water line. The agreement specifies that Regeneron will deposit the cost of the road extension project, estimated to be \$9.2 million, in escrow when requested by the Town.

Another critical component of the Agreement is the delineation of responsibilities and costs for the replacement of the Third Avenue and Barracks Road Pump Stations. These key features of our conveyance system need to be replaced and Regeneron and the Town agreed as to how we'll proceed and how the costs would be shared. The Town's contribution to the road extension is a \$2 million grant we received from the Empire State Development Corporation (ESD), and we have committed up to \$800,000 in Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) fees to the study, design, bidding and replacement of the pump stations. Since these fees were required of Regeneron in the first place, the Town agrees that if its share of the costs is less than \$800,000, the difference will be refunded to Regeneron in the form of a GEIS credit.

This Agreement is critical to both parties for planning and budgeting purposes. The success in negotiating the Agreement is a reflection of the productive working relationship we have developed with the largest employer in Town. Regeneron has studied the costs of the impact their expansion will have, and although they made us justify all of our calculations, were willing to pay whatever we agreed was fair. The cooperation we received from Regeneron, coupled with the hard work of our Director of Planning, Adam Yagelski, and our outside counsel Teresa Bakner, brought the negotiations to a successful conclusion.

### *Agreement on Two New Three-Year Union Contracts*

This Town Board has made it a priority to keep union contracts current. This requires that we successfully negotiate new contracts before or immediately after the current contract expires. This year we entered into negotiations with two of our unions, Council 82, which represents our Emergency Communications Association (Local 3708, Council 82, AFSCME, AFL-CIO), and the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), which represents the employees in the Department of Public Works. We were successful in negotiating new contracts with both unions. The CSEA contract will cover the period of January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2021. The salary increases for the 3 years are 1.5%, 1.5% and 1.5%. The contract with the Emergency Communications Association covers the period of January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022. The salary increases for the 3 years are 1.5%, 1.5% and 1.5%.

### *Live Streaming of Town Hall Meetings*

In 2019 we began live streaming of meetings of the Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals on the Town website and Facebook page. The Town contracted with Town Hall Streams to provide a system that provides real time viewing as well as on demand playback of any meetings. All equipment is supplied, installed and maintained by Town Hall Streams with a full warranty for as long as we continue our service with them. We have been impressed by the early response from residents who appreciate the service. Providing easy access to information about Town operations is a critical part of running a transparent government.

### **Town Finances**

The financial position of the Town continues to improve. The Town's financial records for the years 2010-2014 could not be audited. Spending reductions in 2014 and 2015 put us further behind in paving the roads, our parks were overlooked, GEIS fees were not always productively deployed, and the infrastructure of our service delivery system continued to degrade.

The 2019 Annual Update Document (AUD) was submitted to the State Comptroller in a timely fashion. Once again the Town Board retained a qualified independent auditing firm to conduct an audit of the Town's 2018 financial statements. When UHY, LLC completed that audit, it gave us four consecutive years of audited financial statements. More importantly, the audit contained no material or significant deficiencies in our financial statements, thus rendering the result a "clean" audit opinion.

We have eliminated all inter-fund borrowing debt, a problem that has haunted the Town and contributed to our loss of a credit rating in the first place. We have positive fund balances in

our General, Highway, Sewer and General Water Funds. The 2020 Town Budget allows us to effectively provide essential Town services while maintaining an approach that is fiscally prudent and safeguards the use of taxpayer funds. Revenue projections are conservative while expenditures are carefully calculated to ensure the continued delivery of services. There is a tax increase of 1.64% in the 2020 Town Budget. The amount of taxes to be levied totals \$9,328,232.00. The 2020 budget is \$202,982.00 (or 2.13%) below the New York State Property Tax Cap.

For the fourth year in a row, GEIS fees that have been collected since December 2015 are described separately in the 2020 Budget on the Analysis of Fund Balance page.

The highlights of the 2020 Budget include:

- No reduction in essential services and a significant increase in funding for paving projects;
- One new full-time position to hire an additional Planner and one new part-time position added to hire a Purchasing Clerk;
- A Funds Balance Analysis page that accurately reflects the strong financial position of the Town and includes a detailed look at the role of GEIS funds in funding Town projects;
- Decrease in the tax levy for the General Fund and all special district funds, offset by a nearly 10% increase in the tax levy for the Highway Fund;
- Reduction of \$389,000 in debt service on the Wastewater Treatment Plant due to bringing the final phase of the project in under budget;
- Double digit increases in the contract amount for the Best-Luther and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Fire Protection districts;
- Salary increases for the Town Supervisor and Members of the Town Board.

The 2020 Budget includes funding for:

- A major Road Paving Initiative; this budget commits \$500,000 to road paving projects;
- Research and development of a Veteran's Flag Program that will consider the best ways to honor our Veterans in public spaces, whether as banners on a flag pole or in innovative ways in other public spaces;
- Improvements to the exterior and interior of Town Hall as we continue to promote the idea that we need to be part of the revitalization of Columbia Turnpike;
- The next phase of the update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Map and GEIS document;

- A landscaping program for the Columbia Turnpike of the Wastewater Treatment Plant;
- Information Technology (IT) upgrades: Windows 7 reaches the end of its life in January 2020; the transition to Windows 10 includes the upgrade and replacement of 28 computers;
- Consolidation of the four sewer districts into one Consolidated General Sewer District.

A number of factors posed a challenge in arriving at this budget, including:

- The rising cost of health insurance for retirees and current employees although our known costs for next year have increased less than in years past and there will be no increase at all in the CDPHP Medicare Advantage Plan;
- The rising cost of the Town's municipal insurance;
- The need for additional staff in several departments including Police, Department of Public Works (especially Highway and Parks), and Building Department. These needs could not be addressed in this budget but will have to be faced in the near term;
- Agreements that have been reached with the Emergency Communications union and CSEA (DPW); members of those unions will have a 1.5% salary increase in 2020;
- Increase in energy costs;
- The substantial long-term debt service obligations arising primarily from borrowings from the Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority (RCWSA) and the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) will hamper budgeting efforts in the near and long terms.

Analysis conducted during the budget process revealed two structural deficiencies in the provision of services. Both the Transfer Station and Summer Camp are operating at significant deficits. A closer look at the rate structure and an understanding of ways to tighten up our billing process are ongoing.

The raises in the 2020 Budget for the Town Supervisor and Members of the Town Board are based on an analysis of the salaries for these positions since 2005. The current salary for the Supervisor of \$70,000 was set in 2008 and hasn't been increased in eleven years. With the rapid growth of Regeneron, and the fast pace of development in Town, the job has changed significantly and the proposed salary increase for the Supervisor (from \$70,000 to \$85,500) is reasonable. In a similar vein, the salaries for Town Board members was \$14,000 in 2008 but was reduced to \$10,000 in 2010 when the Town's financial problems seemed insurmountable. The Town is now in sound fiscal shape and the workload of a Councilor has increased significantly. Thus, salaries for members of the Town Board were increased from \$10,000 to \$12,500 in annual salary.

Challenges remain. Despite making major strides by refinancing the Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority debt and bringing the WWTP final phase in under budget, we still have substantial debt service responsibilities. The Town borrowed more than \$25 million for upgrades to our water and sewer infrastructure in the period of 2008-2014. In the last three years we have borrowed \$2.1 million.

While we're proud to host an innovative multi-billion corporation like Regeneron, the rapid physical development required to keep pace with its expanding market share places a tremendous strain on staff resources. Their PILOT agreements with the Rensselaer County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) mean that it will remain a challenge to fund service needs created by the expansion and its ancillary effects. As a matter of corporate policy Regeneron is sensitive to its impact on our community and they have been willing to discuss major mitigation measures which are not inexpensive for them.

## **Town Operations By Department**

### ***Assessor's Office***

In 2019 East Greenbush was one of only three municipalities in Rensselaer County with a 100% equalization rate. This means that to the best of our knowledge the tax burden is currently being shared in an equitable manner in East Greenbush. The Town Board is committed to maintaining an equalization rate at or near 100% because equitable distribution of the tax burden is one of the most important pieces of the foundation for good government.

In 2019 the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance amended the Real Property Tax Law that addresses the STAR (School Tax Relief) program. One change required all Enhanced STAR recipients to submit completed Income Verification forms with their application to the program, regardless of whether the recipient is new or eligible for renewal. The Assessor's Office collected and reviewed 450 of these forms in 2019, and filed them with the Department of Taxation and Finance in a timely manner.

At the end of 2018 we consolidated the General and Hampton Manor water systems into a single Consolidated General Water District. The system for paying water rates and calculating the water tax was changed which required the creation of a new line on the tax bill. The Assessor's Office had only two weeks to implement this change. The job was completed in a timely and highly professional manner.

The Assessor's Office worked closely with Councilor Rick Matters to tabulate the data needed to decide whether or not to increase the two categories of Veterans' Exemptions. The decision to enact Local Laws #3 and 4 was based on this research. The Assessor's Office had to implement the changes included in the laws.

### ***Building Department***

The flurry of building activity in Town, and in particular the various projects associated with the expansion of Regeneron, is a challenge for the Building Department in terms of staffing and resources. The other side of this coin is that the revenue from permit costs has skyrocketed. We can't depend on this revenue in the long term but it does allow us to better equip the department.

In 2019, the Building Department conducted 357 inspections, issued 627 permits and collected \$626,399.40 in permit costs. The estimated value of the work processed through the Building Department in 2017 was \$121,796,672.00. In addition, the Building Department issued 36 Certificates of Occupancy, 83 Certificates of Compliance, and handled 90 complaints from residents.

Building Inspector Kevin Hitchcock continues to effectively manage his department despite the fact that it is understaffed. We recently added a second code enforcement official and hope to add another in 2020.

### ***Finance Office***

The Director of Finance, Meaghan Hart, is charged by law with the task of assisting the Supervisor to prepare the annual budget. This year her work on the 2020 Town Budget included coordinating meetings with Department heads to review their department budget submissions, coordinating the preparation of the Tentative Budget, and assisting the Supervisor with the Budget Workshop for the Town Board (in October), and two Public Hearings, one on the Preliminary Budget (November) and another for the Transfer Station Rates.

The Director of Finance supervises the Human Resources Office. This year, the Human Resources Manager, Lisa Borst, managed a number of personnel issues that required constant monitoring and consultation with the Town's labor attorneys. Some cases also required consultation with and support for the New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF) as they processed workers compensation-related claims.

In addition, the Human Resources Office:

- Worked with the Town Supervisor to gather data and prepare projections for use in two contract negotiations with the employees' unions;
- Developed materials for and conducted several hiring/recruiting efforts, including the search for a new Chief of Police;
- Researched health care options to ensure the most cost-effective selection of plan options for Town employees;
- Disputed the 2017-2018 Workers Compensation Audit: the basis of our dispute is that Workers Compensation has incorrectly assigned codes to the work activity of our staff in the Department of Public Works to the fiscal detriment of the Town;
- Conducted required training for employees on Workplace Violence and How to Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination;
- Implemented a new Flex Spending Account program with PrimePay that includes a complex system for managing payroll deductions and transferring them to the designated Flex Bank Account;
- Successfully transitioned to the New York State Retirement System online system.

The Finance Office manages much of the Purchasing done by the Town. In 2020 we'll fill a full-time Purchasing Agent Position due to the volume and nature of the projects we have undertaken. This year the Finance Office:

- Managed the renovation of the Court Room and Community Room in Town Hall;
- Collaborated on a number of RFQ/RFPs including the Feasibility Study for Third Avenue and Barracks Road Pump Stations; selection of Town designated engineers; WQIP/MS4 mapping; and Tempel Lane Extension;
- Completed the upgrade of the Town Hall phone system, including staff training;
- Managed Office of General Services (OGS) vehicle marketplace bids.

Another function of the Finance Office is to manage the Information Technology needs of the Town's workforce. The Director of Finance serves as the point person for all IT needs, from ensuring that equipment needs are met to arranging for our IT contractors to service problems that arise in Town Hall. Important accomplishments in 2019 included:

- Researched and implemented live streaming of Town meetings on our website and Facebook page, including the ability to archive meetings for five years;
- Maintained the Nixle Alert Notification System by providing numerous updates throughout the year;
- Managed the Town website, [www.eastgreenbush.org](http://www.eastgreenbush.org), and Facebook page.

## *Planning and Zoning*

The Planning and Zoning Department (PZD) led by Director of Planning and Zoning Adam Yagelski, is available to residents and businesses to offer them assistance or direct them to the proper resources they need regarding any residential or commercial planning or zoning related issues. In 2019, PZD saw increased investment in land development projects, a trend that has held for the last three years. The Department continued to contribute to a number of Town initiatives and projects, and refined the land use planning process. In 2019 the Department:

:

- facilitated approvals of roughly 353,800 square feet of new commercial space, and 96 multi-family units in 2019 – no new building lots were created in 2019;
- processed 27 new land development applications and provided effective and informative customer service, including leading 11 Project Review Team (PRT) meetings;
- continued to implement and strengthen the MS4 program;
- advanced projects critical to the future of the Town, including the Comprehensive Plan update, facilitated adoption of a Complete Streets policy and the Natural Resources Inventory;
- selected a roster of Town Designated Engineers after comprehensive review of submissions pursuant to a Request for Proposals (RFP);
- assisted with 10 procurement and grant-related activities expected to be worth over \$2 million, including the Tempel Lane Extension, pump station replacements, and MS4 Mapping Upgrade (GIS);
- contributed to critical elements of effective Town governance, such as the GEIS Policy Committee and consultant management; and
- increased staff capacity by hiring a part-time Planning Intern and advertised for full-time Planner who will be added to the staff in 2020.

A core function of the Department is to manage the land development process. Applications for site plan approval, special use permits, and subdivision approval are handled by the Planning Board with administrative, technical, and logistical support from the Planning and Zoning office. In 2019, the Department accepted 27 land development applications and the Planning Board approved 21 applications and is currently managing 5 applications still under review. Among the significant land development projects approved were:

<b>Project Name &amp; Sponsor</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>
Pinecrest Commercial Park – Nytext Development	Major Site Plan	1 Springhurst Drive	24,000 sf of commercial and restaurant space
Tempel Lane Campus Phase 3 (Buildings 27/47) – Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Major Site Plan	403 Tempel Ln	240,000 square feet of office/lab space and a 391,950 square feet (~1,020 spaces), six-level parking garage structure
Heritage Hills Senior Housing – Amedore Homes	Major Site Plan	Newkirk and Michael Rd	96 units of senior (62+) multifamily apartment units
Proposed Storage Warehouse and Retail Buildings – Mabey’s Realty	Major Site Plan	486 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave Ext.	48,000 sf climate controlled storage 16,000 sf storage 20,460 sf of retail/commercial

In 2019, no new residential building lots were approved. Construction on housing developments approved in 2018 commenced in 2019, including Witbeck Cluster Subdivision (“Wyatt’s Circle”) and Rysedorph Cluster Subdivision (“Olcott Estates”). Current applications under review represent a potential new addition of a total of roughly 150 buildable residential lots pending approval. The most significant residential project approved in 2019 was the Amedore Homes Heritage hills project. As in 2019, significant additional commercial space was approved. Approximately 353,800 square feet of new commercial space (roughly 240,000 square feet on Regeneron’s Tempel Lane Campus alone) were also approved.

In 2019, the Town received 17 applications for relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), an increase of 30% from 2018. Of these 17, 12 were area variances (mainly relief from setback requirements), 3 were interpretations, and 1 was a use variance. In most cases, decisions were rendered by the ZBA within 2 months. PZD staff support for the ZBA includes: counseling applicants, application intake, coordination with the Building and Codes, managing required referrals to Planning Board and Rensselaer County, legal notice, meeting support (e.g., notetaking, document preparation, coordination), and board member payment.

***Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program***

The Town operates a small municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) program which is regulated under State and Federal law. The infrastructure of the storm sewer system consists of ditches, storm drains, catch basins, pipes, and other stormwater management practices such as ponds and swales. This infrastructure differs from the sanitary sewer system. Stormwater is water that flows down driveways, streets and outside areas and into a storm sewer or ditch. Water falling on forests, meadows, and other undeveloped areas runs over land surface. Much of

the water soaks into or infiltrates the ground but the water that doesn't infiltrate runs off these surfaces and into waterways as stormwater runoff. Rain, snowmelt and other water washing over land surfaces runs into catch basins, storm sewers, and ditches and eventually finds its way directly into streams and rivers.

Since the flow is not treated, polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Toxic substances from motor vehicles, careless application of pesticides and fertilizers, eroded soil, and bacteria from animal waste threaten water quality, endanger aquatic species, and can make waterways unsafe for wading, swimming or fishing.

The Town has developed a stormwater management program (SWMP) plan to address stormwater pollution. This plan is required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Phase II Stormwater Requirements and our State Department of Environmental Protection (DEC) MS4 permit. The SWMP is available on the Town website. Every year the Town must submit a report to DEC addressing its progress in implementing its SWMP plan and other stormwater issues. In March, the Department coordinated the preparation and timely submission of the 2018-2019 MS4 Annual Report.

The Director of Planning and Zoning, Adam Yagelski, also serves as the MS4 Coordinator and stormwater contact person. The Planning and Zoning Department manages the MS4 program compliance activities, working closely with DPW, Building and Codes, and the Supervisor's Office. More information about the MS4 program, such as the environmental issues relative to stormwater management, is available on the Town's Stormwater Homepage which PZD launched in 2019. This website is a resource for residents, developers, and others looking for stormwater information. Information available includes: the Town's Stormwater Management Program Plan (SWMP), construction permit information, education and outreach materials, annual reports, and mapping. PZD also posts upcoming training events to assist the land development community with compliance.

An important element of our MS4 program is the review and approval of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPP), which are required of builders and developers of private property to ensure that post-construction stormwater management facilities are properly installed. In 2019 the Department oversaw the technical review of 14 SWPPs, and also worked with the Town Attorney to facilitate adoption of a template stormwater maintenance agreement to standardize the process. At the close of 2019 there were 21 active construction sites with land disturbances of one acre or more that required a SWPP. In August, 2019 the Department led compliance inspections of all active construction sites.

In 2019, the Town received NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) funding to implement the first phase of a new GIS-based mapping platform. The Town was awarded a \$57,000 Water Quality Improvement Program

(WQIP) grant to implement a \$76,000 project to complete required mapping of stormwater items. The MS4 Mapping Upgrade Project will increase MS4 permit compliance and implement a contemporary GIS mapping solution. Beginning with MS4 and stormwater requirements, PZD will be leading the development of a cloud-based (ESRI ArcGIS Online) GIS platform which will be a repository and definitive source of a variety of planning and operational spatial datasets, such as stormwater outfalls and ponds, catch basins, water and sewer utilities, Town roadways, Town facilities, and planning and zoning layers. The platform will also make a variety of spatial data available to the public.

### ***GEIS Implementation and Support***

In 2019, the Planning and Zoning office issued 10 GEIS mitigation fee letters totaling \$1,598,785.99. The Town collected a total of \$3,728,250.34 in GEIS land development mitigation fees paid by developers. Of the amount collected, \$2,921,008.94 was paid by Regeneron Pharmaceuticals for Tempel Lane Campus Building 17 for water and sewer mitigation. The Director of Planning and Zoning chairs the GEIS Policy Committee, which meets monthly and is responsible for mitigation fee assessment oversight, fiscal oversight, issuing recommendations regarding requests to spend mitigation fees, and GEIS policy.

The Director of Planning and Zoning manages, coordinates, and keeps records for the monthly Project Review Team (PRT) meetings. PRT is a pre-application interdepartmental meeting which provides applicants an understanding of Town practice and process with respect to land development and zoning applications. PRT is a critical forum to reduce uncertainty, risk, and cost for potential applicants and elucidate issues. In 2018, 12 PRT meetings were held to provide service to 36 separate proposals and 30 unique applicants.

The Department works with DPW and Building and Codes to ensure approved land development applications are constructed according to the approved plan, Town standards, and engineering and construction best practice. In 2018, we managed construction inspection services provided by Town Designated Engineers worth nearly \$295,000 on the following projects: Regeneron Tempel Lane Campus, FedEx parking lot expansion, Tech Valley Drive extension, Witbeck Cluster Subdivision, and Rysedorph Subdivision.

### ***Police Department***

The East Greenbush Police Department had another successful year of continuing to provide public access and around-the-clock public safety services and community based policing. In regional perspective, the Town enjoys a low crime rate because of the standards set by the East Greenbush Police Department, and also some of the shortest response times thanks to the effectiveness of our Emergency Communications Center, which provides real-time data and logistics for police, fire and rescue dispatch. In 2019, EGPD saw a reduction in the overall crime rate despite fielding over 5,000 more calls for service than the previous year. Thanks to the work

of our excellent Emergency Communications Center, our average response time to calls continues to be less than four minutes. Once again, we participated in the Rensselaer County STOP-DWI Enforcement Crackdown special patrols program.

Staffing concerns are still a primary concern for the department. The unpredictable nature of retirements and resignations and lost time from on-the-job injuries have made it difficult to maintain minimum staffing levels. Low staffing levels are a contributing factor to high overtime costs. Officers Shelby Proper and Nicholas Liuzzi were recruited from the Civil Service list, have successfully passed the training course at the Zone 5 Police Academy and are getting ready to begin our Field Training program. During field training, the new officers are paired with certified Field Training Officers. Officer Proper becomes only the third female police officer in the department.

Another ongoing concern is the inadequacy of the physical space that houses our Police Department. Efforts have begun to look for options to solve the physical space crisis in our Police Department.

### ***Police Community Services***

*Partnering with the East Greenbush Central School District (EGCSD):* In addition to the excellent work done on a daily basis by Officers Jay Martyn and Marie Abraham as the School Resource Officers at Columbia High School, the department has taken a proactive approach to the growing threat of violence in schools. The department has assessed the District's security needs, participated with other agencies in lockdown drills, and had officers trained on the District's camera system in case a crisis situation develops. Officer Abraham has been teaching safety programs such as How to Deal with Aggressive Drivers, Halloween Safety and Tips for Dealing with Social Media at schools throughout the District.

*Social Media:* The police department maintains an active presence on social media with more than 4,000 followers on Facebook and more than 1,000 on Instagram. Officer Josh Witko is the department's Social Media Administrator, and he shares information on a daily basis to inform residents of the latest scams, potentially hazardous conditions in Town and other timely news. In addition to its other uses, Officer Ed Ashley keeps a focus on missing children with #MissingPersonMonday, and the department uses social media to occasionally ask the public for help in identifying possible perpetrators.

*EGPBA Golf Tournament:* In 2019 this annual event was held at Burden Lake Country Club where 135 golfers competed to raise more than \$8,000 for charity.

*Car Seat Safety:* In 2019 Officers Nick Peter and Mike Herrington trained and became certified to provide the service of checking car safety seats to ensure that their installations are safe and lawful. Car accidents are the leading cause of death for children between the ages of 1 and 13; many of these deaths could have been prevented with properly installed car seats. These officers are available to the public by appointment.

*Get to Know Your Local Police:* Chief Rudzinski initiated a series of events that allowed people in the community to meet their police officers in an informal, friendly setting. In August we had “Cone with a Cop” where EGPD set up an ice cream stand during Music in the Park and handed out free ice cream cones. In September we held “Coffee with a Cop” at Stewart’s Shops on Columbia Turnpike. On Halloween EGPD set up shop at the Red Barn and sponsored “Candy with a Cop” during the Town’s Halloween party. In December, the event was called “Cookies with a Cop” and was held at Town Hall. Our theory is that when people get to know their police officers as human beings in non-confrontational friendly interactions they are more likely to trust the police and assist them with information that can help enhance public safety.

*Other Charitable Endeavors:* Any department that employs Sergeant Ernie Tubbs will always have a great record in staging and participating in charitable endeavors. In December, the police collected winter coats in cooperation with “Morning of Kindness.” They also participated in the Red Nose Day fundraiser, which seeks to end child poverty by funding programs that keep children safe, healthy and informed. Other charitable activities included: donating bicycle helmets, serving food at the Ronald McDonald House, riding in the Tour de Cure to benefit the American Diabetes Association, donating turkeys and pies to Concerns U at Thanksgiving, serving Christmas lunch to seniors at Town Hall, collecting toys at Christmas for a needy family and participating in the Sean Strong kickball tournament. Sergeant Tubbs has led charitable efforts in the Department for many years. In addition to being one of our most effective police officers, he deserves recognition for the many contributions he has made to enhancing the lives of people from all walks of life.

## ***Public Works***

### *Personnel*

George Forgea, Working Foreman in the Highway Department retired in May 2019 after 27 years of service with the Town of East Greenbush. Heavy Equipment Operator Jeffrey Nestler was selected to fill George’s position. Tom Kennedy, General Foreman in the Water Department Retired in July 2019 after 34 years of service in the Town of East Greenbush. Heavy Equipment Operator Nick Marino was selected to fill Tom’s position. As a result of these two retirements and the resulting vacancies, we experienced a significant re-structuring of personnel with Jim Walsh transferring from the Water Department to the Sewer Department and Scott Comstock transferring from the Highway Department to the Sewer Department. Brian Binck

transferred from the Sewer Department to the Water Department, and Eric Albert transferred from the Highway Department to the Water Department. Scott Roy transferred from the Transfer Station to the Highway Department. Within the Highway Department, Matt DeFrias and Corey Pinneo were promoted to Heavy Equipment Operators, and two new employees were hired, Trevor Moffit and Marc Tobio, both experienced truck drivers.

Finally, in October, Commissioner Scott Gallerie retired from full time service with the Town and Deputy Commissioner Dan Fiacco was appointed as Commissioner with Scott reverting to a supporting role as part-time Deputy Commissioner. It would be hard to overestimate the impact that Scott Gallerie had as our Commissioner of Public Works. His knowledge and experience revolutionized the Department and helped us move forward in a truly progressive way. Thanks Scott!!!

### **Capital Projects**

#### ***Highway Projects***

#### ***Drainage Projects:***

Spruce Run: We lined 600 feet of storm drain which had deteriorated to the point of collapse using a cured-in-place process. This was the first preemptive project which we undertook based on a camera inspection of the pipe condition and experience with collapses in that neighborhood several years prior.

Mill Run: New storm drains were installed on a section of the road that had not been properly drained when constructed which resulted in pavement failure in that area.

#### ***Paving Projects:***

In 2019 the following roads were paved:

American Oil Road	1.4 miles	Mill Run	.27 miles
Carville Lane	.38 miles	New Road	.81 miles
Elliott Avenue	.14 miles	Patroon Lane	.13 miles
Fieldcrest Drive	.1 miles	Pineview Lane	.25 miles
Hartfield Court	.15 miles	Tamarack Lane	.39 miles
Johnny Circle	.06 miles	Town Park Road	.74 miles
Madison Avenue East	.14 miles	Washington Avenue E.	.11 miles
Marble Road	.17 miles		

**Total = 5.24 miles**

In addition, the Town performed the following surface treatments utilizing a cape seal to prevent further deterioration to roads that were in reasonably good condition:

Delehunt Drive	.22 miles	Huntswood Drive	.68 miles
Foxwood Circle	.1 miles	Jodon Drive	.07 miles
Glaz Street	.06 miles	Kristen Court	.09 miles
Hemlock Lane	.12 miles	Tyler Drive	.09 miles

**Total = 1.43 miles**

The total mileage of roads resurfaced in 2019 was **6.67 miles**.

*Water Department Projects:*

The installation of Water Meters in Hampton Manor is continuing. As of this date, 546 meters have been installed, with 4 appointments upcoming. Of these 546, 32 are meter pit vaults. Most of the remaining installs will be meter pits.

One of the two five-million gallon tanks on Grandview Avenue has been cleaned of sediment on the bottom of the tank for the first time since they were placed in service approximately 10 years ago. We have contracted out the repairs of a leak in one of the tanks. This is an ongoing project in that the contractor has not pinpointed the source of the leak as of this time. The contractor is expected to use a dye-test to determine if the cracking on the concrete base of the tank is the source of the leak.

In 2019 the Water Department extended the water main on Ridge Road to provide service to several properties that became part of the new consolidated water district in 2018. Our own employees performed the work.

Working with the site work contractor for the Rysedorph Development on Olcott Lane, the Water Department installed a pressure reducing valve (PRV) on the water main at Robert Lane which allows the Town to feed the August Gate and Rysedorph Developments from the water main on Route 4 instead of uphill from Third Avenue Extension. This has resulted in better water pressure in the area. This also allows water to be distributed to Third Ave from Route 4 in case of a break on the Third Avenue water main. This valve was paid for by the developer of the Rysedorph Development.

The DPW is in the process of soliciting sealed bids for the removal of the old water tanks in Hampton Manor as well as the long-abandoned water tank on the old Rensselaer Water

Company District (Grandview Terrace) which has been deteriorating for a number of years. We expect to solicit bids in January 2020 and schedule the work for Spring of 2020.

### *Sewer Department Projects*

The various elements of an odor abatement program have been undertaken this year including the updating of equipment used to treat the raw sewage, adjustment of operating parameters for existing equipment, and the addition of new aspects of the existing Wastewater Treatment process. We are beginning to see a change in the odor at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The drive system on primary clarifier tank #1 at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) failed in the Spring of 2019. We replaced the failed drive system and the old skimmer arm with a new heavy gauge stainless steel unit to improve efficiency and increase the longevity of the unit. The employees were trained by the Factory Representative on the maintenance and operation of the new unit.

The final phase of the major work at the Waste Water Treatment Plant was completed this fall with the reconstruction and repaving of the parking lot. This project corrected several drainage issues that existed and provided a dedicated concrete pad for the spare dumpster to be staged on site while the contractor switches out the full dumpster with the empty dumpster in the press building. The final phase will be the landscaping and improvements to the fence on Columbia Turnpike scheduled for Spring of 2020.

A Feasibility Study for Third Avenue and Barracks Road Pump Stations has been completed and is currently out to bid for replacement of both existing stations. The new stations will include bar screens to remove items such as rags that currently clog the pumps at the stations on a regular basis. The new pump stations will be designed to be able to handle flow rates from future development with the responsibility to upgrade the sewer mains resting with future developers.

The furnace at the Corliss Pump Station, which had failed during late winter, was found to be uneconomically repairable and replaced with a new high efficiency unit.

### *Transfer Station*

A detailed analysis of operating costs is underway, and a consideration of rate adjustments for 2020 have proposed to the Town Board for decision. Operating costs for the Transfer Station are rapidly increasing, primarily due to an increase in solid waste and an astronomical increase in recycling disposal charges. In the second half of 2018, recycling costs

went from no cost to over \$100 per ton with minimal notice. This was caused by the refusal of China to take American recycling because of high contamination rates of non-recyclable materials. We will look for alternate markets for recycling in the future.

### *Parks and Recreation*

We installed new Gazebos at Lakeshore (Hampton Manor) and Woodland Parks. The Hampton Manor Gazebo was destroyed by a mini tornado along with 4 trees that were cut up and taken away. Our insurance company paid for the damage minus our \$5,000 deductible. New gutters were installed at the Red Barn building along with paving and striping of Town Park Road and the parking lot. The existing playground was removed and a new playground was installed. The Town Park looks beautiful and we will continue to make upgrades in 2020.

### *Buildings*

The HVAC replacement project at Town Hall has been completed with the repair and insulation of the ductwork. The new units are far more efficient than the old systems and are able to provide adequate heat and cooling during temperature extremes. Masonry projects at the Town Hall included pointing up the bricks and installation of concrete pads under HVAC units to prevent brush and weeds from growing around the units. This has the added benefit of improving the appearance of the rear of Town Hall. The masonry foundation wall was painted in-house by employees of the DPW.

The south wall of the Salt Shed at the DPW garage was failing due to the corrosion of the salt on the steel reinforcements in the concrete. We had a contractor pour a new concrete wall with fasteners imbedded in the old wall inside of the salt shed and had it sealed to prevent deterioration of the new steel reinforcements.

The Town had received a grant for safety and aesthetic improvements to the Court Room more than ten years ago. The Comptroller's office was successful in obtaining permission from the Office of Court Administration for the Town to proceed with the work, although the grant had expired. Court room renovations completed reconstruction of the dais to make it safer and more streamlined, new LED lighting, new ceilings, paint, carpet, installation of new, heavy doors for security, expansion into an adjacent office for the judges to have a private conference room available, and replacement of the seating with lockable chairs to prevent a defendant from using them as a weapon. Overall the courtroom is now much brighter and easier to secure.

The chimney at Town Hall was repaired. The top ten courses of brick were removed, cleaned, and reinstalled along with a poured concrete cap. Commissioner Dan Fiocco first contacted Sprint in 2014 about this because of their heavy equipment being on the chimney. It

took them five years to perform this work but Commissioner Fiacco didn't give up. The project cost was over \$10,000 and Sprint hired a contractor and paid for the repair.

### ***Town Historian***

Our Town Historian, Roberta (Bobbie) Reno, continues to expand and refine our understanding of the history of East Greenbush. In 2019 she presented the following programs:

- “Col. Henry Knox and the Cannon Caravan (American Revolution)” presented to 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Genet Elementary School.
- “Illegal Trial and Execution of Pvt. Samuel Helms (War of 1812)” presented at the East Greenbush Community Library.
- “History of Hampton Manor” presented at the East Greenbush Community Library.
- “Edmonia Lewis” presented to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Rensselaer City Elementary School.
- “Betsy Doyle” presented at the Glenwyck in Scotia.

In addition, Ms. Reno continued her research on the buildings, businesses and people of East Greenbush. Her tireless efforts to clear the name of Pvt. Samuel Helms, a soldier illegally executed during the War of 1812 continued as she worked with Congressman Paul Tonko's office to introduce a Bill in Congress that would allow local historians and others to file for changes in historical records that are older than 175 years. Her research into Greenbush native sculptor Edmonia Lewis is now focused on a “lost” sculpture that had been presented to a church in St. Louis at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other research efforts have focused on the location of a slave cemetery along Columbia Turnpike and the naming of Columbia High School.

In 2019 Bobbie Reno located a lost deed from Citizen Edmond Genet granting land to the Town of Greenbush for the building of public schools. The deed dates from 1807 and we were proud to rededicate the deed in a ceremony at Goff Middle School.

### ***Town Services (Parks and Recreation)***

The Red Barn in the Park saw its first full year of rentals. People love the building and we expect to continue to learn how to maximize use of the building. The new playground at the Town Park was installed and it has been busy ever since. The lower pavilion area has been cleaned up and the old concrete grills were removed. Woodland Park was cleaned up and the fence removed, a parking area was created, and a gazebo installed. We hope to make more improvements here in 2020. Hampton Manor Park took a hit with a severe storm. The gazebo was recently replaced that had been destroyed and the Beach House has been painted and the floors re-done. The ceiling and roof that were caving in were also repaired. We are currently seeking bid proposals to replace the bathrooms near the dog park at the Town Park.

In addition, specific program accomplishments for the department include:

- Summer Camp: Another successful year of Summer Camp with increased attendance for the 6th straight year (204 campers);
- Senior Activities: Continued senior social events such as Paint and Punch, afternoon games (Mah Jong, Dominoes, Cards) and Holiday Luncheons; Continued the popular Chair Yoga class for seniors;
- Installed and implemented RecDesk, a recreation management software designed for local government and not-for-profit organizations that includes online registration for summer camp and facility scheduling;
- Medical Equipment Loan Program: Continued our successful medical equipment loan program;
- Music in the Park: Added two weeks and concluded another successful series of concerts in Onderdonk Park;
- End of Summer Jam: Changed the format for the annual Town Festival into an End of Summer Jam featuring The Refrigerators;
- Spotlight on Youth Ceremony: Sponsored another successful Spotlight on Youth ceremony to highlight and honor some outstanding young people who have made exceptional contributions to our community;
- Holidays: Celebrated holidays with an Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Party and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, each of which was extremely well-attended;
- Parades: Collaborated with Melvin Roads American Legion Post and VFW Post #7338 on the hugely successful Memorial Day Parade and with the Bruen Rescue Squad for the Emergency Responders Holiday Parade;
- Afterschool Programs: Operated seasonal afterschool program with Bowling in the Spring;
- Movie Nights: Sponsored two successful Movie Nights at the Town Park;
- Garage Sale: Sponsored the annual Town-wide garage sale.