

State of the Town Address 2019

The Town of Mamaroneck looks forward to a strong 2019 with continuing high level services for residents, abundant recreational programming, excellent staffing under the leadership of Town Administrator Steve Altieri, advances in sustainability and resilience, planning for the future and the top financial rating possible. I want to thank the Town Board members for their dedication, care for and commitment to the Town and its residents. It's been wonderful to have Sabrina Fiddelman and Jeff King join Jaine Elkind Eney and Abby Katz in our effort to run a good government and a great town.

Let's take a look back at 2018. There were many notable events during the year that challenged the resources of the staff and Town Board. The four March Nor'easter storms that caused catastrophic damage to the electric grid in the Town and County certainly tested us. By March 7th, half the residents of the Town did not have power. We went into emergency response mode as we tried to get Con Ed to reinstate electric service. We continued to work with Con Ed and others throughout the year to help Con Ed improve communications and response. Deputy Supervisor Jaine Elkind Eney participated on the United Westchester Committee which created a "Storm Response Report" including 14 immediate actions for Con Ed.

There were two significant fires in the Town in 2018, one in January at 1, 3 Dillon Road where 40 residential apartments were evacuated. Several people had minor injuries, and thankfully everyone recovered. The second one was just two weeks ago when Excelsior Cleaners burned down in the Fernwood Shopping Center. Luckily, no one was hurt in that fire, but all of the stores in the shopping center had to close and most remain closed today. The TMFD did a great job at both fires reminding us of how lucky we are to have such a professionally trained and dedicated fire department.

In March, MHS students rallied in Harbor Island Park to call for safer gun laws and protections at school in response to horrible national gun tragedies. The students inspired us with their poise and courage. The Town Board passed legislation banning guns from all Town-owned buildings later in the year.

After Governor Cuomo passed legislation intended to help NY residents deduct taxes in response to new federal tax legislation that eliminated this valuable deduction known as SALT, the Town began investigating if and how it could help residents take advantage of the Governor's efforts. There were many meetings and discussions and much research accomplished to determine how to proceed. After four months of work, the Town decided not to enact legislation as the school district, which represents the largest portion of our resident's taxes, decided not to participate. Subsequently, the IRS ruled that deductions would not be allowed.

The Larchmont/Mamaroneck Joint Garbage Commission created a new website, www.lmsanitation.org, in April to help residents easily find all the sanitation and recycling information they need on their phones or computers. The website includes a program called Recollect that allows a user to find out how to recycle or reuse any item as well as determine their individual garbage/recycling schedule. I hope everyone is finding it helpful.

The Town held two environmental cleanup events, one in the spring and one in the fall. A total of 100 people removed litter from the Hommocks Conservation Area, a state designated area of environmental significance. Two of the largest special events organized and run by the Recreation Department were the Annual Bunny Hop Run with 285 runners and the Food Truck Festival with 16 food trucks and thousands of participants. The Town Fire Department was also an important partner for these events.

This past spring, we welcomed LMCTV to its new headquarters on the third floor of the Town Center. They renovated the space and have made a wonderful base there.

We welcomed a new State Senator to our area, Senator Shelly Mayer who was elected in a special election in April.

I was proud to be elected president of the Westchester Municipal Officials Association this past May and the Town hosted the September WMOA meeting at Winged Foot Golf Club.

We recognized certain employees for their length of service to the Town in our annual ceremony and this year, Town Administrator Steve Altieri, was recognized for 35 years of service to the Town.

The Town was awarded 5 NYS grants from DEC for a total of \$66,000 to implement 4 electric vehicle charging stations each with two ports. We also received a rebate toward the cost of one of our electric vehicles.

The Town was honored with a 2018 Westchester Eco Award for launching the food waste composting program in 2017. There are over 600 households participating and together we removed approximately 70 tons of waste from the solid waste stream turning it into nutrient rich compost for gardens.

The Town's Sustainability Collaborative worked to make all the outdoor concerts and movies zero-waste events by providing recycling or biodegradable waste alternatives.

We worked with the Mamaroneck School District to display MHS student artwork in the Town Center. We replaced the 30 year old signs at the Town Center with new, attractive, clearer signs.

We worked with sister municipalities to stop a proposed tunnel connecting Westchester and Long Island through Long Island Sound. We demanded the Army Corps of Engineers slow their proposed storm barriers project for New York Harbor in order to study the effects on surrounding areas such as the Westchester and Long Island coastlines. And they have altered their timeline and review.

We've been preparing to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan including threading together the various updated documents that focus on hazard mitigation and environmental review as well as looking at land use, recreation, affordable housing, parking, transportation and municipal services. The Town is looking forward to awarding a consulting agreement soon to begin the Comprehensive Plan update.

Another issue that has arisen in recent months is commuter parking on residential streets. The Town hired a consultant in December to assist in evaluating the issue and developing solutions.

We have tried to help residents deal with their concerns about the prevalence of coyotes in our area. We reached out to the NYS DEC and other communities for guidance. In response to resident concerns, the Town hosted an information session on the topic of coyotes in November. Kevin Clarke, a Wildlife Biologist with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation was the guest speaker. Kevin made it clear that coyotes do not prey on humans, but they could be interested in cats and small dogs. He suggested walking dogs on a leash at all times and perhaps carrying a stick. Coyotes are in every County in the State. He said the species is here to stay.

A joint project between the Town of Mamaroneck and City of New Rochelle will give new life to a beloved local bridge. The Pryer Manor Road Bridge (aka Red Bridge) is part of Pryer Manor Road, a roadway over the tidal waters of Premium River at its junction with Premium Mill Pond. These waterways form the boundary between the Village of Larchmont to the east and the City of New Rochelle to the west.

Due to tidal action, the bridge's arched openings have deteriorated over the years. The concrete work at the Pryor Manor Bridge is substantially complete and we must allow a 28 day curing period which kicked off last week. So with the odds and ends needed to finish the construction, the planned re-opening is during the

first two weeks of February. If the winter weather worsens, it could be slightly longer to re-open. Sadly, Red Bridge will be closed during construction.

The Town will be replacing the Waverly Avenue Bridge in the Village of Mamaroneck. For this project the Town was awarded a \$1.75 million grant to defray a large portion of the expense. Also, the Town, working with the Village of Mamaroneck and Town of Rye will replace the Hillside Avenue Bridge.

The Town is working jointly with the Village of Larchmont, City of New Rochelle and Village of Pelham Manor on repairs and renovations to the sanitary sewer lines in the New Rochelle Sewer District this year. The Town plans to make improvements to the Mamaroneck Valley Sewer lines next year. The consortium of communities was awarded a \$5.7 million grant from NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation towards the sewer repairs.

WJWW will continue to make improvements to the drinking water system moving more water flow to the lower part of the district and adding UV treatment to the upper part of the system. Additional flow in the lower part of the system was needed to cover demand and fire fighting needs. The lower part of the system already has UV treated water coming from NYC DEP's Shaft 22 in Yonkers, but the upper part of the system is not yet treated with UV. It is required by the NYS DOH.

We will repair and pave streets and finish the repairs to the iconic, but old Weaver Street Fire House.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Town Board and great staff to maintain our high level of resident services, prepare the Town for future needs, respond to resident requests and work to make the Town of Mamaroneck the safest, healthiest, community we can.