SPRING 2022 VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

# The Lancaster Villager

Stay informed and become involved in your community!

## Message from the Mayor

The Village of Lancaster is proud to partner with Dr. Ernie Sternberg of the University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning. Dr. Sternberg teaches a Spring Semester Studio of UB Graduate School course comprised of planning and urban design students who work with a different municipality each spring on a planning project or initiative for the community. The collaboration lasts for the entire semester, culminating with a student presentation at the end of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, I had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Sternberg's class and tell a little bit of the Village of Lancaster's story. I was able to show them photos of our community throughout history and speak about the projects and initiatives that we have been working on. The students are eager to learn more about our community and have taken a tour of our community, led by members of our Village Board. With so many projects underway and our zoning meetings happening through the spring, it is a nice opportunity to bring in a new perspective. While the actual goals of the semester are still being determined, I am proud that the Village of Lancaster is able to collaborate with these students and I will continue to update our community on the progress of the class through social media.

-Mayor Lynne Ruda

## CPL Zoning

The Village of Lancaster has been working with the architecture, engineering and planning firm, CPL, on zoning changes within the downtown core. The decisions that will be made and adopted into our Village Code will affect development for decades into the future. It is important to take the time to thoroughly consider all of the impacts of these changes and that we get as much community engagement and input as possible throughout this entire process.

In January, the Village of Lancaster had the opportunity to host the first public meeting, which introduced the process of updating our zoning and started considering the historic characteristics and elements of Lancaster that our community values. A virtual presentation is still available online. As the process continues through the spring, there will be more opportunities to participate in hands on activities that will show the Village where our community hopes to see future development and what kind of development that should be. Stay informed by following our website and social media pages. Please be a part of the process and help us envision the future of the Village of Lancaster!

# Village of Lancaster Grants Update:

## SAM Grant Funding Received from Assemblywoman Monica Wallace - $125,000

The Village of Lancaster was awarded $125,000 in funding from the State and Municipal Facilities Program thanks to the efforts of Assemblywoman Monica Wallace. This funding will be used on a cascade system for the Lancaster Fire Department to be able to refill the air tanks in the new SCBA airpaks. The funding will also be used to renovate the existing Firemen's Park. Currently this project is in the design and engineering phase at CPL, using a rendering created through a Lancaster Fire Department committee.

## Bridge NY - $1,000,000

In the Spring of 2021, the Village of Lancaster brought in a company to check the Village culvert infrastructure due to some sinkholes appearing in the property above it. It was determined that repairs were needed within the culvert and after concluding that daylighting the creek was not a feasible option, the Village pursued a Bridge NY grant to aid in the cost of the repairs. This winter, the Village of Lancaster was awarded $1,000,000 for repair to the culvert. A full relining treatment will be employed within the steel pipe-arch segment. Concrete footings will be repaired/replaced with footings that encase the bottom portion of the steel arch section. The extent of pipe-arch relining will extend into the steel arch segment to address the misalignment concern. Within the 250ft long arch section, the concrete footings will be repaired/replaced with footings that encase the bottom portion of the steel arch section.

## Water Quality Improvement Project - $1,293,761

The Village of Lancaster received over $1,000,000 in funding as a part of the Consolidated Funding Application as work continues under the DEC Order on Consent. This funding will repair mini-systems #5 and #8 and reduce inflow and infiltration. Work will include brick manhole repair and sanitary sewer slip lining and replacement. The project will reduce sanitary sewer overflows and improve the water quality of Cayuga Creek.

## Harold Place Sanitary Sewer Replacement - $212,157

The existing sanitary sewers on Harold Place, between Beach Avenue and West Drullard Avenue, were deteriorated and in disrepair, subject to excessive inflow and infiltration. The Village of Lancaster (Village), with the assistance of a secured Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds and the American Recovery Plan Act, wants to replace the existing 6-inch clay tile sewer with 8-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sewer pipe. House laterals and manholes were replaced, and the surface pavement restored. This grant covered the cost of engineering, construction, and construction inspection services for the Village. Construction began on November 8, 2021 and was completed on November 24, 2021. The work completed for this contract included: replacing 3 sanitary sewer manholes on Harold Place; installation of 500 feet of 8" sanitary sewer pipe in place of 6" sewer pipe on Harold Place; replaced approximately 20 feet of 12" sanitary sewer pipe on W. Drullard Ave; reinstating 18 house lateral connections. The contractor milled and installed a new asphalt pavement section of binder and top course for all of Harold Place from W. Drullard Ave to Beach Ave.

# Do you live near a Zombie Property or a Vacant Home?

The term Zombie properties has been used a lot referring to vacant homes. Not all vacant properties are Zombies, but all Zombie properties are vacant.
In order for a property to be considered a Zombie property under NYS Law, it must meet the following criteria:

- Be vacant (not seasonally occupied, damaged due to natural disaster, or under construction)
- Have a mortgage
- Mortgage must be in default

A Zombie property may be easy or more difficult to spot depending on the condition of the property and the maintenance being performed at the property. Below is a list of a few things that are commonly found with vacant properties:

- Overgrown Grass
- Accumulating Mail
- Deteriorating Structures
- Peeling Paint
- Mold
- Rodents, etc.

Who is responsible for a Zombie property? Within 30 days of a homeowner defaulting in NYS, the bank or servicer is required to visit the home several times to determine if it's vacant and continue these inspections throughout the default. Once a property is determined to be vacant, the servicer has to make a few more verifications and then is responsible for specific maintenance obligations under the law.
Please let code enforcement know of any vacant properties or properties in neglect. In coordination with NYS Department of Financial Services; we have successfully made the "Bank" fix tarped roofs, broken fences, neglected pools, and even re-paint homes. This generally, makes the property be less of a draw on the neighborhood.
You can also file a complaint to:
**NYS Department of Financial Services (DFS)**; Website: https://www.dfs.ny.gov/complaint Call: 1-800-342-3736
**Erie County Clerks Zombie Initiative:** Call 716-828-8438; Email: zombiecomplaints@wnylc.com;
Web: www.eriecountyclerkzombies.com
If you are facing Foreclosure, please make sure you know your rights! Information and potential assistance is available at: Stay In Your Home (stayinyourhomewny.com) or Western New York Law Center (wnylc@wnylc.com)

## A Message: Department of Public Works

Spring will be arriving soon, and our responsibilities will change from salting and plowing to repairing damage caused during the harsh winter months. Potholes caused from salt will be hot patched for a longer lasting road repair, the street sweeper will be out daily and landscaping the village parks and a general cleanup village wide.
If your lawn was damaged by our sidewalk snowplow please call us at 683-1028 between the hours of 8:ooam and 4:00pm to arrange for topsoil and seeding to repair the damage.

## A Reminder from Lancaster Fire

Spring is a great time to check and change the batteries in the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors throughout your home!

## Village of Lancaster Website Update

The Village of Lancaster is currently working with Clevermethod to create a new website for the Village of Lancaster. The Village of Lancaster is looking forward to unrolling the new and enhanced website this summer.

clevermethod

## Follow us on Social Media!

Stay connected with the latest events and updates by following us on social media!

**Facebook-** VillageofLancasterNY

**Instagram-** LancasterVillageNY

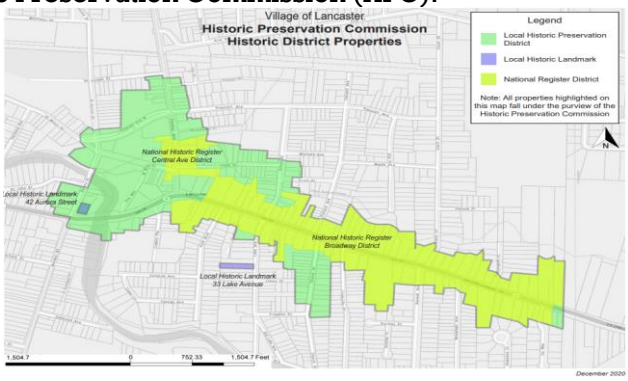
**Twitter-** @LancasterVill

# From the Historic Preservation Commission

Is your property located within the Village of Lancaster's Local Historic District? You can visit our website, villageoflancasterhpc.com to view the map or listing of properties within the district if you are unsure. Are you planning on making any exterior alterations to your property? If so, you may be required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) through the Village of Lancaster Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

Does the type of work you are proposing include:

- exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition
- exterior new construction
- material change in the appearance of a property
- light fixtures
- signs (permanent OR temporary)
- sidewalks or paving
- fences
- steps
- other exterior elements visible from a public street or alley?




If so, or if you aren't sure, you'll want to reach out to the Historic Preservation Commission. If you aren't sure if your project will require HPC approval, e-mail the HPC describing the project for more information at eeckert@lancastervillage.org.

**Step 1 - Fill out a COA Application**

The COA Application and supporting material checklist can be found on the HPC's website. The HPC meets on the second Wednesday of every month. The deadline for submitting a complete application is 2 weeks before the HPC meeting. COA applications are submitted to the Clerk-Treasurer's Office. There is a $25 fee. https://www.villageoflancasterhpc.com/coa-application

**Step 2 - Present your project at a monthly HPC meeting.**

You will be notified when your project has been added to the agenda. Attendance is required in order for the HPC to understand the project and ask questions. If your project requires Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals approval as well, those approvals must be obtained prior to appearing before the HPC.

**Step 3**

The HPC will vote on a proposed determination at the meeting. If approved, or approved with Conditions, you or your contractor will be able to visit the Building Department and get your Building Permit, if required.

**The building season will be upon us before you know it – make sure you get the required approvals before you get started!**

# What's Happening in the Village of Lancaster???

## Cayuga Creek Park Project – Contractor Awarded

The Village of Lancaster has recently awarded the construction contract to 4th Generation Construction, Inc. to begin spring construction on Cayuga Creek Park. The park will feature a walking path and overlook along the creek, as well as an open green space and multiple landscaped areas. It will also include a state-of-the-art terrace connection from W. Main Street to the park. We look forward to providing project updates on the Village of Lancaster website and via social media

## Roundabout and Pleasant Ave. West Project - Project out to Bid

The Village has completed the Right of Way agreements with all property owners and has placed the project out to bid. The contract will be awarded and construction is slated to begin this Spring. Important information regarding any changes to traffic patterns or updates will be found on the Village of Lancaster website on social media accounts.

## In Other News

The Village of Lancaster is pleased to announce that we have been named a Tree City USA community for the third year in a row. In addition to the efforts of our Forest Advisory Board, our Climate Smart Task Force is preparing to submit for Bronze Certification Status as a Climate Smart Community. Stay tuned for additional information on Earth Day events and "Save the Date" for our Spring Clean Up event on Saturday, May 21st. If you are interested in volunteering, please email lancasterbeautification@gmail.com.

TREE CITY USA
An Arbor Day Foundation Program

## Remembering a "Dirt Pile"

When I was a young boy growing up in a small suburban neighborhood, fortunately with many children my age, one of our favorite things to do was to play in a dirt pile. Each spring we all looked forward to seeing who would get that first load of topsoil delivered and placed on the "hell strip" (that area between the street and sidewalk). We would converge on that mound of soil, bringing every dump truck, spoon, excavator, tractor and anything else that could be used to make dirt roads, adding houses, trees, stores, etc.

We played in that dirt pile for hours each day, for days on end. We had fun! Not so clean fun, but wholesome fun.

Years later, having bought my first house, I once again reconnected with my very own "dirt pile". This time I was making garden beds and creating my very own "Shade and Saki" garden.

Now years later, I have spent the last 35 years creating the garden of my dreams; A garden that tells a story. I believe every garden has a story. If you have a garden and would like to share its story, become a participant in the Lancaster Garden Walk (LGW) 2022.

This year the LGW is July 15, 16 and 17. The 15th is a Friday evening showing. A select group of gardens will be open from 8:45pm to 11:00pm. Come experience the "beauty of the night". The 16th and 17th are day showings and start at 10:00am and go until 4:30pm.

Entry forms can be obtained online at lancastervillage.org. Go to the Special Events page. Go to the Garden Walk tab. Scroll through and find "Entry Form". Print it out, fill out the form and return it before June 1, 2022.

If anyone has trouble getting the form or would like additional information, contact me Richard Groblewski at 716-686-9476 or by email at rggardenguy@aol.com.

This is a small part of my garden story. If there is a little child in an adult body that is still playing in a "dirt pile", come join us this year and tell your garden story. I invite all Lancaster residents (town and village) to visit my garden at 14 Lombardy Street and you will leave with an idea of the effects a little digging in the dirt can have. Whether you participate as one of the gardens showing and sharing your garden story, or just wish to view all the spectacular gardens in Lancaster, reserve these dates July 15-17, 2022.

Rich Groblewski – Founder and Event Chair Lancaster Garden Walk 2022

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## Richmond Avenue Spray Pool – DPW

As this cold, snowy and sometimes rainy winter season comes to an end, Village of Lancaster residents can look forward to spring and the groundbreaking of the new village splash pad, with construction expected to begin next month. The splash pad will be completed in mid-May with a ribbon cutting scheduled for Memorial Day weekend. "Thank you to Assemblywoman Monica Wallace for her support, this will be a great addition to Hadsall Park, which is becoming a destination for many recreational events," said Mayor Lynne Ruda. "This splash pad will replace the 60-year-old asphalt spray pool which served thousands of village children for many summers." The Village of Lancaster splash pad will not only increase access to improved, safer water play, but will also feature elements that will provide cooling relief from hot summer days and increased physical activity. Mayor Ruda commented, "I would like to also thank Jeanine Babcock, who will provide additional funding for water toys in memory of her son Brian."

The Village is excited to partner with Assemblywoman Wallace and Ms. Babcock to provide this much needed improvement to Hadsall Park a splash pad that families will continue to enjoy for many years to come.

# Events For 2022

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| | The Spring Fair | May 21st (Rain Date: May 22nd) |
| | Independence Day Celebrations | TBA (Keep an eye out on our website and social media pages for more information) |
| | Lancaster Garden Walk | July 15-17th |
| | Fall Fest | September 24th |
| | New Year's Eve Ball Drop | December 31st |

## Village Board Meeting Dates

The Village Board meets on the 2nd & 4th Monday of the month at 7pm on the 2nd Floor of the Municipal Building at 5423 Broadway or on zoom. Info always posted on website.

Monday, March 28th
Monday, April 11th
Monday, April 25th
Monday, May 9th
Monday, May 23rd
Monday, June 13th
Monday, June 27th
Monday, July 11th

**Clerk – Treasurer Office & Main Village Contact**
Michael E. Stegmeier
5423 Broadway
Lancaster, NY 14086
(716) 683-2105
mstegmeier@lancastervillage.org

## Important Contact Information

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|---|---|
| Mayor Lynne T. Ruda | lruda@lancastervillage.org |
| Trustee Cynthia A. Maciejewski | cmaciejewski@lancastervillage.org |
| Trustee Joseph E Quinn | jquinn@lancastervillage.org |
| Trustee Paul H. Rudz | prudz@lancastervillage.org |
| Trustee Tyler D. Sojka | tsojka@lancastervillage.org |
| DPW Superintendent William Cansdale | wcansdale@lancastervillage.org |
| Code Enforcement – Shawn Marshall | smarshall@lancastervillage.org |
| Fire Inspector and OEM – Scott Kuhlmey | skuhlmey@lancastervillage.org |
| Fire Chief - Mark Stonebraker | mstonebraker@lancasterfd.org |
| Events Coordinator- Tammie Malone Schaefer | events@lancastervillage.org |
| Village of Lancaster Justice Court | 716-683-6780 |