



## Historic Town of Hyde Park

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**Aileen Rohr, Town Supervisor**

*"Working with you for a better Hyde Park"*

Spring Greetings Hyde Parkers!

Finally, after such a long and difficult year, we are approaching spring with some positive developments, including substantial increases in the vaccinations being delivered to Dutchess County. Within this brochure you can find detailed information on vaccination registrations.

Covid got us down, but as always Hyde Parkers proved to be resilient and dedicated to our community. Like all residents, the Town worked quickly to adapt to the changes required by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Town Board, Planning and ZBA meetings quickly shifted to Zoom and were livestreamed on our website and Channel 22, allowing operations to continue as much as possible and keep the public informed. Please make sure to visit [www.hydeparkny.us](http://www.hydeparkny.us) for all agendas and minutes, to view past meetings, sign-up for notifications and for directions on how to provide public comments on any matter of town business. Town Hall remains closed, but fully staffed, and residents are encouraged to call or email for appointments [229-5111]. Doorbells and drop boxes have been installed for easing document exchange. For transactions that require in-person meetings, CDC protocols are in place.

We applaud all the front-line workers throughout our town and offer a special thank you to our police and highway departments for their commitment during this time of need. It has been a difficult year for everyone, and we send our heartfelt condolences to all who suffered.

The work of the Town Board is always to manage your tax dollars responsibly, assuring for delivery of essential services for the least cost. This is done through development of responsible budgets and, especially, by making sure we live within them. Like all prior years since 2012, we have done well on both accounts by staying within the tax cap (this year 1.69%) and adding monies to our fund balance for future needs. Our finances are audited yearly by an independent accounting firm with an additional audit performed by NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli in 2019. All audits have verified our excellent performance as stewards of taxpayer dollars.

To meet the needs of businesses during the pandemic, we quickly passed a resolution to allow use of parking lots for outdoor dining to accommodate COVID restrictions on indoor dining. 10 local restaurants received such permits, which are being extended through this year to allow for flexibility of businesses to operate. Another business supporting resolution expanded Indoor/Outdoor Recreation, which allowed for greater recreation uses in our neighborhood business districts. The Town Board additionally addressed the Town Core and Corridor Business Zoning Districts, expanding the density allowed between Harvey Street and Rogers Place and adopting design standards to encourage redevelopment.

In response to the Governor's order for all municipalities with police departments to adopt police reform, Deputy Supervisor Neil Krupnick and Supervisor Rohr worked closely with Police Chief Benson to create a plan for modernizing our police department. The plan was adopted on March 31, 2021. Chief Benson's presentation on the plan, as well as the plan itself can be found here: <https://www.hydeparkny.us/649/Hyde-Park-Police-Reform>

In March of 2020, after several years of preparation, including developing a Map, Plan and Report and obtaining commitments for \$5.25 million in funding, the Town was on schedule with the process to conduct a referendum for the \$21,000,000 project to create a sewer district between the FDR site and the Vanderbilt site on Route 9. As required by State Law, only those who would be part of the district (those who benefit), are allowed to pay for

the district. All documents related to the district, can be found here: <https://www.hydeparkny.us/480/Downtown-Initiative>

The pandemic put this process on hold; with businesses closed and everyone struggling to pay their bills it would have been irresponsible to go forward. The project was shelved after a survey of property owners demonstrated, by a 2 to 1 margin, that they preferred for the referendum to be postponed until additional funding could be obtained to reduce the costs.

With the passage of the Rescue Act of 2021, Hyde Park is well positioned to resume the public process. More details to follow as information is provided by the US Treasury on the requirements for distribution of funds on the monies awarded to municipalities.

Additional improvements including pedestrian upgrades on Route 9 from Park Plaza to the Firehouse on Route 9 and a separate DOT project to improve the Pinewoods intersection, will each be addressed with funding provided through the Department of Transportation.

To improve camper experience at our Adventure Camp and fully utilize our existing assets, the town has taken on the renovation of the Program Building at Hackett Hill. The New Deal Creative Arts Center is donating and installing a new stage for the camp which will also be available for rental to town residents and groups, bringing the arts and more residents into our primary town park.

While COVID-19 paused the plans for Bellefield and Asahi Shuzo, which are now preparing to resume this summer, the Town has continued to grow our tax base and fill empty buildings. In 2021 alone, five empty spaces were renovated to house businesses despite the pandemic, and the Town added more than \$10,000,000 in assessed values to our tax base. Additionally, we have seen a beautiful renovation of Park Plaza this year, which will dovetail nicely with our pedestrian improvements. We thank all those who have invested their hard-earned dollars in our town, and we look forward to supporting these new businesses throughout the year:

- Emy D's – former dentist office renovated for vegan café by CIA graduate on Route 9.
- Dance Works Too – former vacant Stimpson Pool building converted to dance studio on Route 9G.
- Loopy Mango – former motorcycles sales building converted to an internationally known business in Route 9G.
- River & Post – former Portofino replaced by a renovated, attractive new restaurant bringing additional dining options to Staatsburg
- Butchy's Barbecue and Grill- former Firehouse Grill replaced by casual fare restaurant on 9G

On a final note, the Town is looking forward to the return of many of our favorite events which were put on hold last year due to COVID-19 as well as the celebration of our Bicentennial. All events are dependent on compliance with state regulations. Please make sure to check the town website for all current listings and updates.

Wishing everyone a wonderful, healthy and safe year ahead!

*Aileen Rohr*

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