

State of the Town 2022

American Rescue Plan Act

The Town of Greenwich was awarded \$336,101.55. We received half of this amount (\$168,050.77) in 2021. The prior Board only expended \$26,312.50 to reimburse the town for the waterline study, comprehensive plan grant application creation, cloud software, updated computers, and the Hudson River Park Study Expenses. This leaves us with \$141,738.27. The Town will receive a check for \$168,050.78 in the Summer of 2022. This money must be spent by 2026. There are recently released guidelines for how this money can be spent. Your current Town Board will seek public input before making decisions on the areas where these remaining dollars will be spent.

Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Study

While the name usually brings bad connotations, this is truly a great opportunity for us. This study encompasses the Village and the commercial Route 29 corridor of the Town. The study was largely completed in 2021. Public information sessions were held in January 2022. Village and Town Board approval is expected this month. After that, we will be able to apply for BOA designation and the expanded funding/grant opportunities that opens. We will use this study to update the Town Comprehensive Plan and our future(?) 5-year Town Strategic Plan.

Update of 2004 Town Comprehensive Plan

A grant request to fund an update in 2021 was rejected. We will apply again in 2022.

Commercial Corridor Waterline Study

[Status] Going forward, we intend to continue strengthening our relationship with the Village of Greenwich by having a joint meeting with Barton & Loguidice which is the firm that conducted the study.

Hudson River Park

Bids received in 2021 for doing renovation work on the main building in the park came in above the grant money we had to spend. The prior Board decided to wait until 2022 with the hope that costs will come down. This issue will be revisited soon by the current Board.

Battenkill Riverside Park

New playground equipment was installed in 2020. The bathroom building was painted using the Washington County Alternative Sentencing Program. Plans have been discussed to update the

basketball and volleyball areas. Since there are issues blocking a resumption of swimming, the idea of installing Gannon Park -like splash pad has been proposed.

Summer Youth Program

There were over 100 campers last year. This year, the program will be held over 5 weeks instead of 6. We plan to add swimming days and continue Friday trips in this condensed format. More counselors will be hired to accommodate an anticipated increase of kids.

COVID

Your clerk and her staff have helped distribute a good number of rapid test kits provided by the County to our Greenwich households. In order for you to keep informed, virtual attendance at public meetings continues to be an option.

Library Funding

Library funding by the Town increased several years ago when the library was in fiscal stress. We will work with the library to gradually decrease the Town's contribution. This will be accomplished by the Library shifting funding to the Library Tax. This is tax neutral and taxpayers incur no additional burden.

Seniors

Funding for the seniors was increased in 2021. The seniors group now meets at the Bottskill Baptist Church.

Highway

Five miles of road were paved in 2021. A culvert replacement grant was fully funded by the State. The Ferguson Road culvert will be replaced this year and the Christie Road culvert will be replaced by the end of July 2023. A Purchase Order was approved in 2021 for a 2022 International Dump Truck with a stainless-steel box. The truck should be delivered by 2023. The Town mourns the passing of Highway employee Bob McKernon.

Assessments

Housing prices and values increased by double digits over the last two years. As per past practice, every year the Town's assessments will be reviewed to ensure assessments are at 100% of value. This DOES NOT IMPLY taxes will go up. Since assessment questions were brought up in 2021, I have asked our Town Assessor, Colleen Adamec, to organize a presentation on the assessment process for our March Town Board meeting.

Cannabis

As most people know, New York State has legalized the possession and use of cannabis. This must be emphasized – growing, possessing and using cannabis will be legal. With respect to smoking and vaping, cannabis will be treated the same as tobacco.

On December 14, 2021, the Town opted out of dispensaries and smoking lounges. The Village of Greenwich and ALL surrounding towns and villages opted in. The Town has 3 new Board members that were sworn in January 3, 2022. In addition, citizens of Greenwich have mounted a petition drive to force a permissive referendum to have a vote on this “opt out”. Over 100 people have signed the petition. Additionally, some of our Town’s business people have approached one or more Town Board members about pursuing the opportunity to host dispensaries. It is for these reasons that tonight’s agenda includes cannabis as an agenda item.

Plans for 2022

1. Pursue BOA certification and then prioritize items for funding/grant opportunities
2. Hold a public hearing on how citizens would like to see ARPA monies spent
3. Reapply for a grant to update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan
4. Finish commercial corridor waterline study and determine next steps
5. Revisit developing a Master Plan for Hudson Riverside Park
6. Refurbish basketball and volleyball areas at Battenkill Riverside Park. Consider other amenities such as a splash pad
7. Working with the Highway Superintendent, develop an Equipment Replacement Plan
8. Develop a five-year Strategic Plan