

South Setauket Park

HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2008 NEWSLETTER

WWW.SOUTHSETAUKETPARK.COM

The Entranceway Project

Great News! The entranceway project is nearing the end. The project has past the design and permit phase and the bidding process has been completed. It was a long four years, but the Town of Brookhaven, including Councilman Steve Fiore Rosenfeld and Marie Berkoski, stepped up their efforts and brought the project across the finish line. The Advisory Board couldn't be happier with the results.

If you recall, the original plan was to skip the landscaping and irrigation and only build the walls. We were short on money at the time and couldn't afford to include any extras. Another two years went by and we saved more money in our fund balance account. This brought us closer but not quite where we needed to be. We had the money but were not able to access all of it due to a rule which requires park districts to leave a certain percentage of the fund balance in the account. Our Councilman and Marie Berkoski were able to get an exception to this rule which freed up the necessary funds to pay for the project.

The Town Planning department reviewed our original designs and found they were lacking in necessary detail. They completed their review and produced more complete design specifications. During the process it was determined the original designs were out of proportion to the size of the entranceways at either end of our community. They needed to be bigger. The alterations were made to the design and the specifications were finalized.

Easement agreements were needed in order to begin work on the entranceways. Each of the walls sits partially on homeowner property and the original walls were erected without easements. This added nearly \$4,000 to the cost of the project. Steve Amato and I hand delivered original copies of the specifications to three of the four homeowners in December and the fourth was mailed subsequently. We made each homeowner aware of the easement agreements and to the best of our knowledge this part of the project is either completed or near completion.

So how much is this going to cost us? The winning bidder came in at \$92,000. Other bids were received and one was as high as \$176,000. Still another bid came in at \$47,000. This bid was deemed irresponsible by the Town of Brookhaven Purchasing department as it was lacking critical component(s) necessary to the bidding process. The winning bidder is J Anthony and he was lowest responsible bidder.

Why so high? The original design was estimated to cost approximately \$48,000 and did not include landscaping or irrigation. We now have both irrigation and landscaping. The original design was approximately 6' x 10'. The amended design is 7' x 17'. Another contributing factor is the increase in material costs since 2005 when the original project was estimated.

The Advisory Board had much to consider in evaluating the design change and the bidding process. We met and discussed our options. We felt it was better to complete the whole project rather than in pieces. Deferring the landscaping and irrigation components for a later date was considered but was determined to be unacceptable. After all, each of the walls sits on private property and the contractor would be removing mature trees and bushes to complete the project. Taking this approach would leave an eyesore for not only the community, but the homeowners that have been so cooperative with the easement agreements. The increase in cost was tough medicine to swallow. We pushed as hard as we could to arrive at the winning bid price. This was the best we could do. There will be no debt associated with this project and you can be assured of a high quality product when the contractor is finished.

How soon will the project be completed? We are waiting hear from the Town as to when shovel will hit the dirt. We can tell you the construction will take no longer than two to four weeks to complete. The signs may take four to six weeks to be completed, as they will be special ordered.

Landscape Maintenance Contract

The 2008 landscape maintenance contract was awarded to Favorito Enterprises and the cost will be \$19,500, approximately \$600 over last years price. Favorito Enterprises is a larger company and is better equipped to handle a contract our size. We can expect to see faster more efficient service than last year and more importantly we'll receive our bills in a timely fashion. Prompt invoices are imperative for verifying what service was performed and when it was completed. The Special Districts department was instrumental in getting this contract completed in time for the April start date. Last years contract didn't start until Memorial Day. We are two months ahead of the game this year.

Crime

There has been a crime spree in our community and we need your help in solving it. We have come to you in the past with other such problems and the results have been great. We're hoping you can help us again.

Cars in our neighborhood have been sitting ducks. We mentioned in an earlier newsletter how one or two individuals have been breaking into unlocked cars. The unlucky owners wake up to find their vehicles usually undamaged, but a lot lighter in content. The thieves seem to be looking for money but will also take things like laptops, GPS equipment, and MP3 players. My own vehicles were hit last year.

The next type of crime is more brazen and may be related to the

first. Neighbors have been contacting the civic association and reporting thefts from their back yards. The thieves are breaking into sheds, stealing fire pits, tools, and anything metal. One homeowner nearly caught them. The thieves target homes located against the greenbelts. They use the greenbelts to temporarily store stolen items and come back to haul them away. One neighbor spotted a white Jeep Cherokee driving on the dirt bike trails in Levitt Park and chased them away. A pile of stolen items were found in the sump on Hawkins Road which is also up against the homes on Segatogue. Just so you know, being the civic association president is no guarantee against thievery. My house was hit and I lost every extension cord I owned, as well, as a copper bird bath. They are scrapping every piece of metal they can get their hands on. I caught a kid casing my backyard. He couldn't have been sixteen. He had shoulder length brown hair and was wearing a grey sweatshirt at the time. Hooded sweatshirts seem to be a trademark. My neighbors chased two guys through three backyards at 11:30PM one night and they were wearing hooded sweatshirts with the hoods up.

So what are we doing about this? I called the sixth precinct and left two messages. I called an officer to my home and discussed the problem. I contacted our County Legislator Vivian Fisher and now I am contacting you. Let's catch these knuckleheads and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. You helped us catch two arsonists three years ago, you can do it again.

Please call the COPE unit located in the Sixth Precinct and request for night time stop sign checks. We can also request additional patrols. The Town Parks and Public Safety Departments should also be contacted. There is no reason why vehicles should have access to the trails located adjacent to the little league baseball fields. You can also call, as some of you have been doing, the Executive Board of the Civic Association.

If you are victimized you must report it to the police. One of the board members spoke with Inspector Stallone in the Sixth Precinct about the trouble we are having. The Inspector looked up statistics in our neighborhood and reported that there were few incidents reported. Please don't shrug off any incidents. Reporting crime is the most important communication we have with the Police.

Irrigation Contractor

Once again, Expert Irrigation is our contractor this year. The cost of the contract held steady at \$2,400. The Town wanted us to switch contractors and use a company that is being used for other Town properties. On behalf of the Advisory Board, I

wrote a letter to Marie Berkoski explaining that Expert Irrigation designed and installed our system and we preferred not to reinvent the wheel and have someone new come in. Much of our system is battery operated and is quite large to manage. We felt it was better to stick with the designer than to have someone new who didn't understand the system. The Town agreed and we kept the folks at Expert Irrigation on board.

Mending the Fences

Our fences are getting old and are rapidly falling into disrepair. The Advisory Board has ordered 65 rails and 7 posts and we are looking for volunteers to install them. Please sign up on our email list and we'll send you the date and time we're making the repairs.

New Ideas

The Civic Association would like to try something new this year. Do we have any Square Dancers in the neighborhood? We have the name and number of a couple that hosts Square Dancing Events. They said they will give us a good rate should we try it. Does anyone want to help us sponsor it?



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Membership Drive

Your membership dues go a long way. We collected approximately \$1,500 in dues money last year and we delivered four newsletters, with an average cost of \$225, and held three events which cost approximately \$2,000. How did we do it? The civic association contacts local business leaders and seeks contributions or donations of goods and services. Some of the contributors include Michael Ardolino of Coldwell Bankers, Favorito Enterprises (our new landscaper), Fratelli Brothers, Donna Memoli of Coldwell Bankers, and Awesome Bouncers. The slow down in the economy may produce less in the way of donations this year. Your membership dues will become more important if this should happen.

Roughly 1 in 10 park district homeowners are members of the Civic Association. We can do better. If you aren't a member, please consider the benefits of participating in this worthwhile association. We can do more for the community with a larger membership.

The minimum suggested dues are \$20 per household. You can choose to give more, many do. Please complete the membership form located in this newsletter and send it in.

We strongly suggest you include an email address with the form. The executive board uses the email list to update you on crime, events, and we provide it to the park district advisory board as an affordable means of communicating to the community. The civic association also provides space in the newsletter to the advisory board, but the newsletters are published infrequently due cost.

Thank you for your consideration.



SOUTH SETAUKET PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DRIVE



NAME: _____



EMAIL: _____



ST. ADDRESS: _____



DUES (minimum suggested is \$20): _____



Please send to PO Box 224, Selden NY 11784



Levitt Park Development

The ball fields located near the New Village Recreation center are getting bigger and bigger. We are beginning to hear complaints about light and noise pollution. The Advisory Board requested to be informed about any and all development of the park from the Town of Brookhaven as far back as last August. The Town has not provided any detailed information and now the park is growing again. This time it may be encroaching on the Three Village School district property and the use is rumored to be for the Selden/Centereach Little League, not the Three Village Little League. We heard another rumor that the Little League inquired about using our large greenbelt and was rebuffed. The School District and the Town of Brookhaven need to go on the record with the real story. Please call or write to the Three Village School Board, our Councilman, or the Department of Parks at the Town of Brookhaven. Email addresses and phone numbers can be found at the Three Village School District and Town of Brookhaven Websites. We'll keep pushing on your behalf, but it won't hurt our cause to have your voices heard.

Odds and Ends

- Our streets and roads are wearing thin. The advisory board has put in a request to resurface our streets. Please contribute to the cause and send your requests to Steve Fiore Rosenfeld (451-6963) or the Highway Superintendent. More contact information is listed below.

Contact information:

Ted Nienburg—President: tnienburg@southsetauketpark.com 917-685-4452
Steve Amato—Vice President: samato@southsetauketpark.com 631-428-8299
Gerard Cereola—Webmaster: gcereola@southsetauketpark.com

South Setauket Park Advisory Board

Email addresses are supplied by the civic association as a courtesy. The advisory board acts independently of the civic association, and a majority of its members are not on the executive board of the civic association. However, this newsletter acts as a vehicle to communicate information pertaining to the Park District and Civic Association .

Ted Nienburg tnienburg@southsetauketpark.com
Steve Amato samato@southsetauketpark.com
Gerard Cereola gcereola@southsetauketpark.com
Eddie Forrester eforrester@southsetauketpark.com
Ron Agostino
Patti Keane pkeane@southsetauketpark.com
Bob Blaney

Helpful Tips:

- Do you have a broken street light? If so, you can contact The division of Street Lighting at 631-281-0433.
- Or maybe you need a pot hole repaired, a street sweeper, or a tree trimming. The Office of the Superintendent of Highways can be reached at 631-451-9200 or via email at highway@brookhaven.org.
- Missing or damaged street signs can be replaced/repared by calling Traffic Safety at 631-281-0433
- Does your street have a dangerous Traffic Safety problem? If so, you can request a Traffic Safety Study by calling 631-451-6480.
- Visit the Brookhaven Town website at www.brookhaven.org for more services and contact information.
- C.O.P.E. 854-8600 (located in the sixth precinct)

Send us your South Setauket Park District questions via Email and we will try to find you a solution.

Michael "SOLD"
Ardolino
...a house-sold name.
Lic Broker
Assoc.

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