

Pittsford Neighbors – “From the Supervisor” column – June, 2019 issue
Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

Project Updates and Summer Activities

The warmer weather inspires us all to become more active. For the Town Administration, it enables us to proceed with significant projects and activities.

We've resumed the **East Avenue Sidewalk project**. Work will continue through the summer. Last year we completed Phase 1, installing sidewalk from the Village line to Kilbourn Road. This year we'll complete Phase 2, taking the sidewalk from Kilbourn to the Brighton town line. By the time you read this, we'll have begun the landscaping and tree removal necessary to pour concrete. In keeping with Pittsford's environmentally-conscious policies, for every tree taken down we'll be planting at least one more to replace it somewhere in the Town. Pittsford's crews are coordinating the sidewalk project with the State Department of Transportation's work in repaving East Avenue, to minimize disruption and inconvenience for residents and motorists along that section of East Avenue.

My 2019 Town Budget funded hiring for our new **Fast Action Support Team (FAST)**. Its purpose is to attend even more promptly than previously to resident requests for service such as back yard flooding, sink holes, concerns with yard debris collection and the like. Careful financial planning last year enabled us to add this team in the same 2019 budget that delivered the cut in Town property taxes. Faster response and a tax cut – both deriving from the Town Administration's commitment to **stronger neighborhoods**.

Soon we'll open the Town's newest playground, at Great Embankment Park. This marks completion of our **playground improvement project**. It provides three new playgrounds for Pittsford kids and families, at Hopkins Park, Thornell Farm Park and soon at Great Embankment, in addition to a fully renovated, expanded and improved playground at our Spiegel Community Center, with completely new equipment.

Of course, kids and families aren't the only ones who appreciate a place to play. Since late last year we've been working with a community partner to plan a public **dog park** in Pittsford. As planning proceeds in the months ahead we'll have more details to report. This dog park would be in addition to, not in place of, a potential joint Town-Village dog park we've discussed with the Village, that could be sited on Village-owned property next to the proposed Erie Canal Nature Park and Preserve – or within it, if the Village chose to include its property next to the Preserve in a larger, joint Town-Village nature preserve. This of course would be subject to consideration and approval by the Village Board. Come what may on that front, the Town Administration is committed to a dog park for Pittsford.

Our **Erie Canal Nature Park and Preserve** project will open up to public access a forgotten piece of prime, unspoiled open space consisting of approximately 15 acres in the heart of Pittsford. It includes 4 ponds and adjacent wetlands that comprise an active and healthy habitat for amphibious life. Located along the Erie Canal path, next to the Monroe Avenue Canal Bridge on the north bank of the Canal and running east, the Nature Preserve creates a centerpiece for Pittsford's "Ribbon of Green" along the Canal. The Town won a State grant for this project in 2014. Work will include trails to make the property publicly accessible, connections between the Erie Canal Path and the Auburn Trail, interpretive signage, and a boardwalk and overlook for observing wetland areas. It would add native trees in some areas now overtaken by weeds and would include, in places, some low-impact landscaping compatible with the existing natural environment. The Village of Pittsford also has the option to similarly conserve its 15 acres adjacent to the planned Preserve, creating in effect a joint Town-Village Nature Preserve of 30 acres along the Canal. If the Village did so, then the Town's

project would represent the first phase in making this important resource along the Erie Canal publicly accessible in a manner appropriate to preserving its natural state.

Our Parks Department staffers are working again on the **Town trail system**, to keep it accessible and easy to enjoy. Walkers, hikers and cyclists can take advantage of over 85 miles of recreational and public pathways in Pittsford offering trails and destinations of natural beauty, historic significance, quiet seclusion. Work this year will include improving the **Auburn Trail** to ensure its continuity and accessibility throughout the Town from the Victor town line to Brighton. Specifically, improvements include realigning the trail in the area between Mill Road and Thornell Road back to the original pathway of the old Auburn railway line and resurfacing that section.

In addition, this season we inaugurate a new partnership between the Town of Pittsford and Wegmans, by introducing the **Wegmans Hit the Trail Passport program**. It includes eight Pittsford trails of various lengths and degrees of difficulty. Hike or cycle six of the designated trails and receive a Wegmans reusable shopping bag. Complete all eight trails and you're eligible to win a \$250 Wegmans gift card. To kick off the program, our Recreation staff will have information at the Pittsford Village Farmers Market on June 15, at Spiegel Community Center at 35 Lincoln Avenue. You can pick up your passport there. After June 15, passports and program information will be available at both the Community Center and the Pittsford Wegmans at 3195 Monroe Avenue.

You'll be seeing **environmentally-friendly changes at King's Bend Park** this summer, as our crews install **solar panels** on the rooftop of one of the two lodges. This is paid for by a State grant the Town won by qualifying as an early adopter of the State's Clean Energy Communities program back in 2017. The same grant is also paying for a new **Electric Vehicle charging station** that we'll be installing **at the Spiegel Community Center** this season.

When the weather's right, summer evenings can be so conducive to enjoying the outdoors with family and friends. Pittsford's **Summer Special Events** bring members of our community together and offer something for everyone. Continuing a venerable Pittsford tradition, our **Summer Concert Series** in Carpenter Park at the Port of Pittsford Park begins on Friday, June 14. For complete details about the concert series and about the **Pittsford Triathlon** (June 2), our **Concerts for Kids** (July 10 and August 7) and our **Family Outdoor Movie Nights** (July 18 and August 1 & 15) visit www.townofpittsford.org/community-events.

And don't forget the **2019 Pittsford Classic Car Show** on Sunday, June 2, in the Town Parking Lot behind the Library from 11am to 4pm. This independently-run event benefits the Pittsford Food Cupboard.

To all of you, every good wish for a delightful summer. I hope you'll be able to enjoy some of the many programs and events offered this season. If you'd like to discuss any of our Town projects, events, or any other topic, you can reach me directly by phone at 248-6220 or by email at bsmith@townofpittsford.org. As ever, my door is open and I answer my own phone.