

# Town of Canandaigua News

February 2018

[www.townofcanandaigua.org](http://www.townofcanandaigua.org)



## 2018 Begins with Ceremony for Elected and Appointed Town Officials



The new year began with a swearing-in ceremony on January 8, 2018, for new and re-elected Town officials and for citizens who received appointments to several of the Town's boards.

New York State Supreme Court Justice Craig Doran presided at the ceremony and administered the oaths of office.

The Town Board welcomed a new member Gary Davis who was elected

in November to the seat vacated by former Deputy Town Supervisor Keith Cutri.

Pictured above, from left: Supreme Court Justice Craig Doran; Thomas Schwartz, Chairperson of the Planning Board; Gary Humes, Planning Board member; Joyce Marthaller, Chairperson of the Environmental Conservation Board; Saralinda Hooker, Environmental Conservation Board member; Town

Supervisor Greg Westbrook; Town Clerk Jean Chrisman; Highway and Water Superintendent Jim Fletcher; Linda Dworczyk, Town Board member; Gary Davis, Town Board member; Mark MacNeil, Chairperson of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee; Terry Fennelly, Town Board member; and Mark Stryker, Agriculture Advisory Committee Chairperson.

## New Project Team to Focus on Local Culture and Historical Preservation

The Town of Canandaigua Citizens' Implementation Committee (CIC), comprised of a group of residents appointed by the Town Board in 2014, has been working steadily for the past four years to implement the goals of the Town's *Comprehensive Plan*.

Each year, various teams are assigned to accomplish individual goals. In 2018, the CIC has established a new team—the **Cultural and Historic Preservation Project Team**—to focus specifically on the following two goals from the *Comprehensive Plan*:

**Goal 5:** "Preserve the history of the

Town of Canandaigua and support the protection of significant historic properties."

**Goal 6:** "Promote awareness of the influences of our cultural heritage on the evolution of the Town and the greater Canandaigua area."

This new team will work to identify, preserve and protect important historical and/or culturally significant sites in the Town, as well as to promote public awareness of the Town's physical and cultural history.

The team meets monthly. For more information, contact Sarah Reynolds at



*School No. 5 in Cheshire, circa 1923.*

[sreynolds@townofcanandaigua.org](mailto:sreynolds@townofcanandaigua.org) or (585) 394-1120, ext. 2232.

More information about the CIC is available on the Town's website.



## Update on the Fiscal Impact to Residents:

# New Highway Garage Delivered On Time and Under Budget

From Town Manager Doug Finch

Residents of the Town of Canandaigua undoubtedly have noticed the new highway facility under construction on the Town Campus. As you will notice from the photos with this article, much has changed since June.

Our new big red highway barn hosted its first resident trucks at the end of 2017. With groundbreaking having been held only about six months earlier, having our highway trucks inside by the end of the year was the realization of a very ambitious goal.

The Town Board is happy to report that the overall project is on time and under budget due to excellent management of the schedule, cooperation between all the contractors and the assistance of Town employees who provided site work to keep the cost down.



### Estimated cost of \$8 million reduced to \$5.5 million

Early projected cost estimates ranged near \$8 million. However, the Town Board and the Project Team comprised of Highway Superintendent Jim Fletcher, Town Board member Terry Fennelly and resident Al Kraus was able to trim that back. The Town Board approved a budget of \$6 million for the construction of the new 41,000-square-foot facility, which also includes much needed and state mandated renovations to the fueling station and the storage areas.

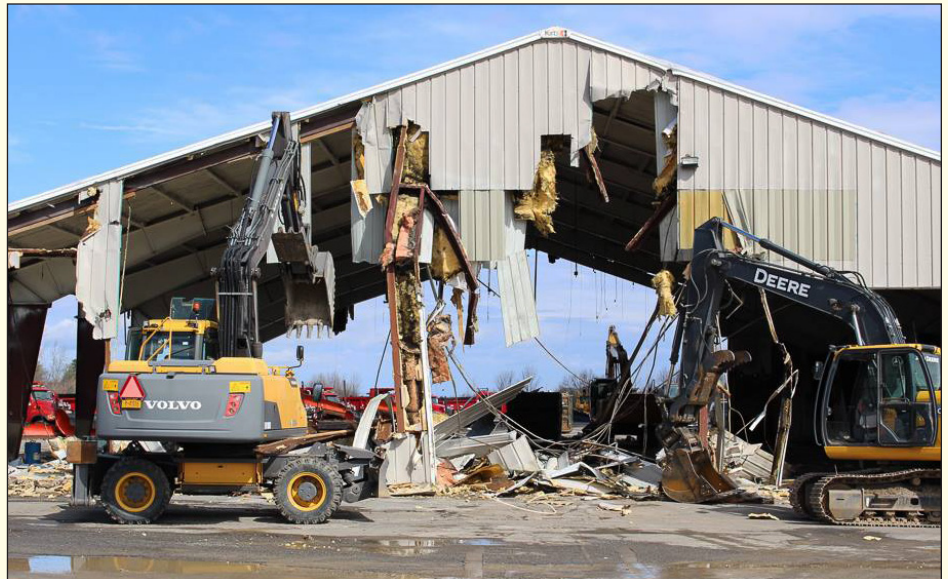
As of February 2018, expenditures are approximately \$3.5 million and work on the maintenance bay and administration offices are underway.

The current financial forecast shows approximately \$500,000 in unspent contingency funds. The Town Board has challenged the team to complete the project under budget without needing to use this contingency amount. Currently, the total anticipated cost for the project is forecast to be about \$5.5 million.

Residents are probably wondering how the Town is paying for the new



Groundbreaking for the new highway garage was held in June 2017. Pictured, from left, are: Town Manager Doug Finch; Scott Bova, AIA, MRB Group (the Town's consulting engineering firm); Town Board member Kevin Reynolds; Town Board member Linda Dworaczky; Highway Superintendent Jim Fletcher; Town Board member Terry Fennelly; Supervisor Greg Westbrook; Deputy Supervisor Keith Cutri; and Town Clerk Jean Chrisman.



Demolition and site work for the new highway garage began in the summer of 2017. To keep costs down, much of the site work was performed by Town of Canandaigua employees.

highway facility.

➤ The Town Board appropriated \$1 million dollars from the town's Fund Balance to get the project started. Fund Balance is money collected in prior years which was not spent due to good fiscal management. It is essentially in a savings account to help smooth out the impact of large expenses.

➤ Additionally, the Town borrowed \$5 million using a bond anticipation note (BAN) at 1.25% interest. At the end of the project later this year, the BAN will be refinanced into a more traditional

loan (bond) once construction is complete and the needed amount is known. The final borrowing will be like a home mortgage and will spread the payments over a longer term of either 15 years or a maximum of 25 years for this purpose. The final interest rate for our loan is likely to be in the approximately three-to four-percent range.

➤ The Town Board is reviewing all of our Fund Balances (Town money saved) to determine if any additional amounts could be used to offset the  
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## New Highway Garage . . .



*Town of Canandaigua Highway Department vehicles moved into the new facility by the end of 2017, which was only about six months from groundbreaking.*

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amount we will need to borrow for the final bond. The Town Board will also be examining options such as financing the project for 15 years rather than 25 years in order to save total expenses related to interest. On a project like this, financing the project for 15 years versus 25 years could save residents in the long run well over a million dollars in interest.

➤ From a taxpayer perspective, if the Town borrowed the remaining \$4.5 million (calculated by the \$5.5 million total project cost minus \$1 million already provided from the Fund Balance without any additional Fund Balance contributions) for 25 years at an interest rate of 4% (the highest estimated percent), the annual debt service (mortgage) payment would be about \$300,000 to \$350,000 per year.

Based upon early estimates in 2016, this annual payment would likely equate to the need for a tax rate increase of about 25 cents to 31 cents per thousand of your property's assessed value. Anticipated savings and financial cost-saving strategies will likely reduce this



original projected rate increase.

Your Town Board and all Town officials are committed to minimizing the financial impact of this necessary project to our residents. As the information is finalized on the final cost of the project, on the interest rate which we are able to get on the bond, on the amount that we need to finance, and on the resulting impact on the tax rate, we will be openly sharing it with you.

The analysis provided here, along with any forthcoming new information, will be reported at every Town meeting until we have the final numbers.

The minutes of Town Board meetings are available online and all are welcome to attend Town Board meetings. Sign up for notifications by visiting the Town's website at [townofcanandaigua.org](http://townofcanandaigua.org) or on the Town of Canandaigua Facebook page.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach out to me anytime, or any of the board members. I am at the Town Hall Monday through Friday traditionally between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., or you may contact me via e-mail at [dfinch@townofcanandaigua.org](mailto:dfinch@townofcanandaigua.org).

# 2018 Townwide Assessment Revaluation Program Begins

## From Assessor Christopher Lyon

As part of the 2018 Townwide Assessment Revaluation Project, the Residential Assessment Disclosure Notices for the 2018 assessment roll will be mailed to property owners during the first two weeks of February.

Following receipt of the notice, property owners may wish to schedule an informal valuation review, which provides an opportunity for the property owners to submit market and/or property condition information which may affect their 2018 assessment.

These informal reviews will be held from the end of February through the beginning of May at the Canandaigua Town Hall. You may schedule an appointment online or by calling (585) 394-1120. Please wait until after you receive your notice to determine whether you would like to schedule an informal review.

If you are unable to attend an appointment but would like an informal review of your preliminary assessed value, complete an Informal Residential Review Form, which is available on the Assessor's page on the Town website in the "Assessor Resources" section, and return it in person, by e-mail, or by postal mail to: *Town of Canandaigua Assessor's Office, 5440 Route 5&20 West, Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424.*

## What to Bring or Submit for an Informal Valuation Review

- Residential Review Packet
- Assessment Disclosure Notice



- Copies of any supporting documentation such as recent appraisal, photos, sales listing, etc. You will leave the copies with the reviewer.

Property information is available on *OnCor*, the Ontario County Online Resources website:

➤ [www.co.ontario.ny.us/714/OnCor](http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/714/OnCor)

and on *Image Mate*, the Town of Canandaigua online real property database:

➤ <http://townofcanandaigua.sdgny.com/index.aspx>

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will a revaluation increase my taxes?

A revaluation may result in an increase or decrease of individual assessments. It does not mean that all property taxes will increase. You may be saying, "Sure!"

But remember that assessments are only the base which is used to distribute the Tax Burden. The Tax Burden is the amount which the Town must raise to operate our local government and support the many services which each of us has come to expect such as road maintenance, police, etc.

If the same amount of money is to be raised after the revaluation as the previous year and each assessment doubles, the tax rate would merely be cut in half.

### What is Market Value and who determines my property value?

Market Value is determined by the revaluation staff, by the activity in the real estate market and the by general economy. The value of your property is based upon an analysis of the entire market for the full two to three calendar

years prior to the completion of the revaluation project.

The market can generally be defined as the property owner, the person who sold the property to you, and the person willing to buy it from you. It is the role of the revaluation staff to research and analyze the values in a particular area or neighborhood.

In effect, the revaluation staff does what you would do to determine the selling price when offering your property for sale. But the staff has specific guidelines to follow. General factors which are examined for each property are location, size, quality of construction, age of improvements, topography, utilities, zoning restrictions (if any), etc.

### How do market changes impact assessments?

As illustrated in the accompanying example, four owners purchased homes in Canandaigua for \$200,000 in 2008. Over the years, the value of real estate has changed. House "A" may now sell for \$180,000, House "B" may still sell for \$200,000, House "C" may now sell for \$220,000 and House "D" may now sell for \$260,000.

Updating the assessments will reflect the new market values and will fairly distribute the tax burden based on the current market value of each property.

### Do I have to let the Assessor in to inspect my property?

No, you don't have to let the Assessor into your home. This is a request, not a court order. However, if you choose not to let the Assessor in, he or she will be forced to estimate the condition of the interior.

	House "A"	House "B"	House "C"	House "D"	Total Taxes Collected
Assessment Prior to Revaluation					
2008 Market Value	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	
Property Taxes Prior to Revaluation	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$16,000
Assessment After Revaluation					
2016 Market Value	\$180,000	\$200,000	\$220,000	\$260,000	
Property Taxes After Revaluation	\$ 2,782	\$ 3,479	\$ 4,174	\$ 5,565	\$16,000

# Canandaigua Town Board Implements New Committee Structure

In January, the Town Board implemented a new committee structure with the intent to streamline planning and improve efficiency. There are five committees, each chaired by a Town Board member and focused on a different aspect of the general operations of the Town.

The following is a list of each committee, its chairperson, and several of the topics to be discussed this year.

## Financial Planning

Linda Dworaczyk, *Chairperson*



Multi-year financial planning; communicating Town financial status with the public; planning for stable tax rates; technology improvements

## Environmental

Kevin Reynolds, *Chairperson*

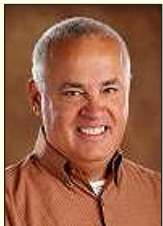


Recycling and waste reduction, drainage improvements/drainage districts; open space/transfer of development rights/conservation/farmland protection; public

awareness and education

## Economic Development

Supervisor Greg Westbrook and Oksana Fuller, *Co-Chairs*



Local economic vitality and business retention; shared services with surrounding municipalities

## Ordinance

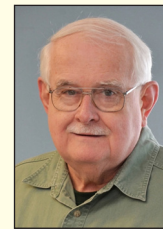
Gary Davis, *Chairperson*



Town Code revisions and updates; reviewing and improving planning, zoning, and development processes in the Town

## Planning and Public Works

Terry Fennelly, *Chairperson*



Highway project completion; water and sewer improvements; parks expansions; long-range project planning



## 2018 Town Board Committee Meeting Schedules

### Ordinance Committee

1st Monday of each month  
9:00 a.m.

### Finance Committee

1st Thursday and 4th Tuesday of each month  
8:00 a.m.

### Environmental Committee

4th Wednesday of each month  
4:30 p.m.

### Economic Development Committee

1st Tuesday of each month  
12:00 p.m.

### Planning and Public Works Committee

Meetings as needed and will be announced on the Town website.

All committee meetings are open to the public.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Meetings will be held at the Canandaigua Town Hall,  
5440 Route 5 & 20 West, Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424.

## Town Meeting Dates—March 2018

- 1—Environmental Conservation Board, 4:30 p.m.
- 1—Agricultural Advisory Committee, 6:00 p.m.
- 5—Citizens' Implementation Committee, 9:00 a.m.
- 13—Planning Board, 6:00 p.m.
- 14—Complete Streets Committee, 10:30 a.m.

- 19—Town Board, 6:00 p.m.
- 20—Citizens' Implementation Committee, 9:00 a.m.
- 20—Zoning Board of Appeals, 6:00 p.m.
- 27—Planning Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
- 28—Parks and Recreation Committee, 8:00 p.m.





# Natural Resource Protection News

*From the Town of Canandaigua Environmental Conservation Board*

## Snowy Owls: Coming to an Airport Near You

With the recent sightings of Snowy Owls in the vicinity of the Canandaigua Airport on Brickyard Road, the Environmental Conservation Board is pleased to share this article on this remarkable and highly visible species.

**From *The Land Steward: Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Land Trust*, Winter 2015–2016, Vol. 28, No. 1**  
*Reprinted with permission*

In the winter of 2013–2014, there was a massive southward irruption of Snowy Owls (*Bubo scandiaca*); it was, by some estimates, the largest in a century. Snowies (as the species is affectionately called) breed in the Arctic and normally winter in Canada.

However, two years ago, the giant raptors showed up in unprecedented numbers from the Midwest to the Carolinas; a few stragglers even made it as far south as Mississippi and Florida and as far out to sea as Bermuda.

The story of this extraordinary event began months earlier and thousands of miles away, with a population explosion of lemmings. Lemmings, which are rodents of approximately the same size and general appearance as hamsters, are a foundational species of the Arctic: they eat the plants of the tundra and everything else eats them. Although Snowy Owls will hunt birds and mammals as small as voles or as large as snow geese, they rely primarily on lemmings to feed themselves and their chicks during the breeding season. Snowy clutch sizes are dependent on food supply: during flush years, mated pairs may lay up to 14 eggs; during times of lemming scarcity, there may be no chicks at all. In the summer of 2013, a superabundance of bite-size rodents seems to have ensured that the clutches were very large and that no chicks starved to death. As the bumper crop of young owls left the nest and struck out on their own, they



were forced to move farther and farther south in order to find winter territories to occupy.

The deluge of Snowy Owls was all the more noticeable because they are a highly visible species. Unlike most owls, they are active during the day as well as at night, an adaptation to the high latitudes in which they live; there is, after all, no darkness during the Arctic summer. They have no innate fear of humans and are attracted to open, flat areas with minimal snow depth that resemble their native tundra: fields, wetlands, shorelines. For some reason, they seem to be particularly fond of airports, where they can pose a serious threat to planes.

Even people who pay little attention to birds are likely to notice the arrival of Snowy Owls because their appearance is so striking. With their mostly white plumage (females and immature birds tend to be heavily barred with brown), round heads, and piercing almond-shaped yellow eyes, they look a bit like very large, earless Persian cats. As with most raptors, females are larger than males, and a large female can be two-

and-a-half feet high and have a five-foot wingspan. Although a white bird is difficult for humans to see against the blinding snow, Snowies do not seem to be taking advantage of cryptic coloration. Like all owls, they do not change the color of their plumage from season to season, and their white feathers are highly visible against the arctic summer vegetation. In addition, they only appear white to species like ourselves who cannot see UV radiation; to other animals, they appear dark gray. There are few places for prey to hide on the tundra, anyway, so perhaps their coloration is merely a practical energy-saving strategy, since melanin is energetically expensive to produce.

The future of the Snowy Owl may ultimately depend on the fate of the lemming, which in many places is increasingly uncertain. As the tundra warms because of climate change, the grasses, mosses, and lichens that lemmings eat are replaced by trees and shrubs. The rodents rely on thick, stable layers of snow in which to hide and raise their young, but warmer temperatures often bring less snow, or snow that is wet and icy. As a result of these changes, the lemming populations of Scandinavia and Greenland have dwindled, and Snowy Owls are disappearing in some parts of Europe.

In North America, however, climate change seems to be working in both species' favor, at least for now. Snowy Owl irruptions have become an almost annual event, and we seem to be on track for another one this year (winter of 2015–2016, *ed.*). The giant white birds have already begun appearing in large numbers in the Upper Midwest, and several have been seen in the farm fields of Seneca County and at the Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

—Jacqueline Stuhmiller

# Hamlet of Cheshire Topic of New Book by Town Historian Ray Henry

A *Walking Tour & History of the Hamlet of Cheshire* is the latest local-history book which has been re-leased by Canandaigua Town Historian Ray Henry and is based on research and interviews with residents of the hamlet, which is one of the earliest settlements in the Town.

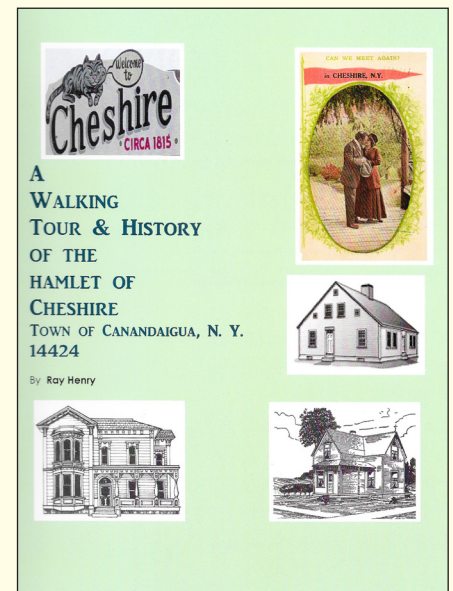
With photographs and a map of Cheshire, the book takes the form of

a walking tour which chronicles the homes, businesses and personalities who lived in this once bustling section of the Town.

This is Mr. Henry's third book on the history of Canandaigua. His previous titles are *Memories of the Heart I*, *Memories of the Heart II* and *The Natural Science Camp of Tichenor Point*.

In December 2011, Mr. Henry was honored by the Ontario County Historical Society with the Herb Ellis Award "for outstanding contributions to the study of the history of Ontario County."

The wirebound, 71-page publication is now available at the Ontario County Historical Society. To order, call the Society at (585) 394-4975 or e-mail [newsfromochs@gmail.com](mailto:newsfromochs@gmail.com).



**5440 Routes 5 & 20 West  
Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424**

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#### Town Board

Supervisor Greg Westbrook

Gary Davis

Linda Dworaczyk

Terry Fennelly

Kevin Reynolds

#### Town Manager

Doug Finch

#### Deputy Town Supervisor

Tina Bloom

#### Town Assessor

Christopher Lyon, IAO

#### Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer

Chris Jensen, P.E., MCP, CFM

#### Director of Parks and Recreation

Dennis Brewer

#### Highway and Water Superintendent

James M. Fletcher

#### Town Clerk

Jean Chrisman

#### Town Historian

Ray Henry

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#### Town Clerk's Office Hours

Monday–Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Open until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays

#### Court Clerk's Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday  
and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Winter Weather Highway Safety Tips

### From Highway Superintendent Jim Fletcher

The Town of Canandaigua Highway Department would like to thank all Town residents for following these safety tips during the winter months as crews work to clear Town roads and keep drivers safe.

➤ Please refrain from plowing snow from private property onto or across public roads. This presents a hazard to drivers and is, in fact, illegal (Highway Law 214). Appropriate action will be taken by the Town to all known offenders. Snow should be kept on private property in an area that does not obstruct your view or that of drivers on the roadway. It is also best to plow snow to the right side of your driveway (if looking toward the road) in order to avoid having snow that has been cleared from blocking your driveway again after the plows pass by. If you hire someone to plow for you, please remind your contactor of these rules as well. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

➤ Keep a safe distance behind Town trucks, plows or any large vehicles. Remember, if you cannot see their side mirrors, they cannot see you. Trucks also frequently back up at



intersections. Please give them extra space so they can back up and get out of the way.

➤ Never let children play in snowdrifts or banks near the road. This is very dangerous as it is extremely difficult for plow operators to see them.

➤ Keep your house numbers clear and visible in case of an emergency. And if you have a fire hydrant on or near your property, consider shoveling out around it. This could save the fire department precious time in an emergency.

The Highway Department spends thousands of hours and dollars annually on snow removal to keep the roadways clear and safe. Your cooperation improves our efficiency and safety, and is very much appreciated.

Questions or concerns? contact Highway Superintendent Jim Fletcher at (585) 394-1120 or [jfletcher@townofcanandaigua.org](mailto:jfletcher@townofcanandaigua.org).

### Town Meeting Calendar

Visit the Town of Canandaigua website for a complete 2018 calendar of meeting dates:

**[www.townofcanandaigua.org](http://www.townofcanandaigua.org)**

Select the "Town Calendar" tab from the Quick Links list on the home page.