

NCVOA NOVEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER

Published by the Nassau County Village Officials Association

Post Office Box 484, New Hyde Park, NY 1104

NCVOA November 2014
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Tuesday, November 11, 2014-7:00PM
La Marmite Restaurant
Williston Park, NY

Guest Speakers
Hon. Steve Corte
Nassau County Deputy Assessor
and
Martin Valk
Nassau County Deputy County Attorney
Assessment Bureau Chief

Vision Long Island Leader Lauds Village Government for Smart Growth



Eric Alexander, executive director of Vision Long Island, was the guest speaker at the October General Membership meeting.

Since joining Vision Long Island ((formerly Vision Huntington) Eric has worked tirelessly to support proactive land use planning decisions through the use of community visioning and other progressive planning techniques. Eric has led visioning processes in some twenty communities.

Eric, considered by many to be the leading guru in Smart Growth planning, said that he was humbled and honored to be cited for his work in revitalizing downtown areas.

Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander

was the evening's guest speaker

During his presentation, he was quick to recognize the villages of Mineola, Westbury, Great Neck Plaza and Farmingdale for their exemplary leadership in creating affordable housing projects. He pointed out the Village of Great Neck was in the process of changing its zoning to accommodate new housing. He also cited the achievements of numerous villages in the areas of traffic calming, cultural arts and preserving historic buildings to name a few.

Eric will be chairing the 13th annual **Smart Growth Summit** on Friday, November 21, 2014. The event, which will feature 26 workshops, is expected to attract more than 1,100 participants.

The NCVOA thanks Eric for his informative presentation and applauds him for his longstanding contributions to Nassau and Suffolk counties.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

Dear Mayors, Trustees and Friends:



I want to thank Eric Alexander of Vision Long Island for a very interesting and spirited discussion about smart growth and what villages can do to make their downtowns and communities more sustainable. Eric highlighted, as he always does, some of the really terrific projects that villages have undertaken in the past few years, and he credited villages for being at the forefront of many of the principles that VLI espouses to curb Long Island's "youth drain."

NCVOA President-elect Peter Cavallaro addresses the membership following the formal installation ceremony

At the November meeting, we will be talking assessment. Every village official I know, with few exceptions, has questions about the assessment process; how best to handle their SCAR cases; whether or not to adopt Homestead; what to do with the county assessment role, etc.

Our guest speakers, representing County Executive Ed Mangano, will be Steven Corte, who is the Deputy County Assessor for Nassau County and Martin Valk, Deputy County Attorney, Assessment Bureau Chief. Steve Corte is also a trustee in the Village of Westbury with many years of experience as a private real estate appraiser, prior to joining the County in 2011. He is a NYS certified Assessor, as well as a NYS certified Appraiser, and holds the additional professional certifications of IAO; IFAS; SRA; ASA; CSA-G. He is one of the State's preeminent experts on this subject. As Westbury's assessor, he led us through the adoption of Homestead in 2009, making our village its own assessment unit. Homestead is not the right approach for every village, but Steve is an expert in the process and can explain the benefits and detriments to such an election.

Martin Valk is an attorney who handles all tax assessment cases that are filed with the County Assessor.

This is an opportunity to hear what Nassau County is doing to keep its assessment rolls up to date and accurate, and to hear about any future plans and changes that the Department of Assessment has in store. The assessment process is a quagmire for many of us, so you should be prepared with any questions you may have. You may want to invite your village assessor to this meeting to hear what Steve and Martin have to say.

The November meeting will be held on November 11, 2014. I urge you to attend, or to send representatives from your village to attend this important discussion. As a head's up, our December meeting will be our annual Holiday Party, so please mark your calendar to join us. We are planning a program at that meeting with our counterparts from the Suffolk County Village Officials Association and NYCOM on the tax cap and related issues. More information will follow on those plans.

Peter I. Cavallaro

NCVOA EDITORIAL:

Maintaining a Reliable Infrastructure is a Shared Responsibility

by Peter Cavallaro, Mayor of the Village of Westbury and President of the Nassau County Village Officials Association

In his recent **LI Business News** Viewpoint article, **Survey blasts local leaders' road records**, Marc Herbst, Executive Director of the Long Island Contractor's Association, commented on the results of a survey his organization commissioned to gauge Long Islanders' opinions about the condition of the Island's roadways and infrastructure. According to Mr. Herbst, a substantial percent of survey respondents believe roads and infrastructure are essential services of local government, and 65% would consider voting against an elected official who intentionally does not repair roads.

As a native Long Islander, I know how important having a sound infrastructure is to all of us. In my current role as Mayor of the Village of Westbury and President of the Nassau County Village Officials Association, I know of no elected official who intentionally would not repair a damaged road. American author Arnold Glasgow once said, "The fewer the facts, the stronger the opinion." I believe the opinions expressed in the survey are based on perceptions and I think it helpful if we considered some important contributing factors affecting our aging infrastructure.

NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli outlined some of these factors when he released last month the results of his office's study entitled: **Growing Cracks in the Foundation: Local Governments Still Challenged to Keep Up with Vital Infrastructure Needs**. The report finds local government capital spending on roads, bridges and water and sewer systems declining by approximately 8% between 2010 and 2012. The Comptroller's office estimates municipalities should be spending about \$3.9 billion annually to keep up with deteriorating capital assets but are only spending roughly \$1.2 billion – less than a third of what is necessary.

According to the report:

“Local governments must balance the need to invest in infrastructure with other spending priorities, while operating within constraints on available resources that include generally low growth in local tax bases as well as the State-imposed property tax cap. New York has sustained heavy damage from three major storms in recent years, Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee and Super storm Sandy. Local government officials have reported that revenues have not kept pace with increasing costs, indicating they cannot complete the annual number of infrastructure projects necessary due to funding constraints.

“With limited resources at their disposal, local governments need effective capital planning strategies to ensure the most cost-effective use of public funds. Such strategies should ensure that localities are able to shift their emphasis from reacting to short-term or emergency infrastructure needs to being proactive and planning for the future. Fixing potholes and broken water mains are essential activities. But, if the majority of available government spending addresses short-term problems such as these, local governments may not be able to provide the infrastructure required to support and grow their communities for the future.”

Comptroller DiNapoli says state lawmakers and local government officials must work together in addressing critical infrastructure needs. State agencies such as the Departments of Transportation, Environmental Control, and Health can play a critical role by creating and maintaining comprehensive, detailed assessments of major infrastructure assets at the local and state levels. These departments have produced studies but not in recent years. DiNapoli also points out that “local governments need to develop long term plans to assess and prioritize actual needs, and look for ways to pay for these improvements under various scenarios of potential federal and State aid.”

The report clearly outlines the challenges facing local governments and offers the following recommendations on how state policy makers and local government officials could work together in addressing this critical issue:

1. Strengthen Capital Planning – The State should establish a Capital Asset / Infrastructure Council, with comprehensive long and short term capital planning milestones as called for in the Comptroller’s 2013 Fiscal Reform Act. Local officials should identify both their long-term and short-term infrastructure needs and work with the applicable State agencies to coordinate their approach to appropriately address these needs, adopt comprehensive capital plans and commit to funding the plans.

2. Seek Increased Federal Funding – State policy makers should work with the federal government to develop strategies to provide additional funding for water, sewer and transportation systems.

3. Utilize Federal and State Grant Funding – State and federal agencies have grant programs and other services that can assist local governments with infrastructure improvement projects and planning. Local governments should seek out additional grant funding and State and federal expertise as a component of their capital planning process.

4. Explore Public-Private Partnerships – Local policymakers should explore the potential of Public-Private Partnerships to address some infrastructure needs; however, they must proceed cautiously to ensure a clear understanding of the potential benefits and costs of these projects before taking any action.

Creating and implementing sound and cost-effective capital planning strategies to successfully maintain our state’s roadways and infrastructure is a shared responsibility. Local governments and New York State must work collaboratively to ensure this important initiative is achieved.

[NCVOA December 9, 2014 General Membership Meeting:](#)

NYCOM/NCVOA/SCVOA Tax Freeze Meeting

NYCOM Deputy Director Barbara Van Epps will provide a summary of the Property Tax Freeze, including how it is intended to work and what local governments need to do to comply.

When: Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Cash Bar-7:00PM Dinner /Program 7:30PM

Dinner Cost: \$50:00 PP for non-NCVOA members

Where: La Marmite Restaurant

234 Hillside Avenue

Williston Park, NY 11596

Please RSVP to Warren Tackenberg, NCVOA Executive Director at exec@ncvoa.org before December 5, 2014.

More in our December Newsletter.

OCTOBER 2014 MEETING ATTENDEES



NCVOA President Peter Cavallaro, Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander, and NCVOA 1st Vice President Barbara Donno



Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander was the evening's guest speaker



NCVOA President Peter Cavallaro and Stewart Manor Mayor Jerry Tangredi



Vision Long Island Assistant Executive Director Tawuan Weber and Board Member Rich Bivone



Great Neck Plaza Trustee Jerry Schneiderman, Mayor Jean Celender, NCVOA President Peter Cavallaro, and Trustee Pamela Marksheid



Manorhave Clerk Leslie Gross, Mayor Giovanna Giunta, Deputy Mayor Lucretia Steele, Attorney James Toner, and Trustee Kevin Gately



Mineola Clerk Joe Scalero, Farmingdale Trustee Cheryl Parisi, Dep Mayor Pat Christiansen, Mayor Ralph Ekstrand, Mass PK Mayor Jeff Pravato, Clerk Peg Caltabiano



NCVOA Executive Director Warren Tackenberg discusses the evening's program with Plandome Manor Mayor and NCVOA 1st Vice President Barbara Donno



NCVOA Past Presidents Ernie Strada and Vicki Siegel



North Hills Trustees Gail Cohen and Elliott Arnold; Clerk Marianne Lobaccaro, Deputy Mayor Dennis Sgambati, Mayor Marvin Natiss, and Trustee Phyllis Lentini



Oyster Bay Cove Trustee Richard McDougall, Engineer Sweetie Christian, and Trustee Charles Goulding



Roslyn Harbor Trustee Jeremy Rosof and South Floral Park Trustee Gary McCollin



Westbury Trustee Bill Wise and Great Neck Mayor and NCVOA Past President Ralph Kreitzman

“It is not knowledge of ways and means we lack;
it is the will to
put them into effect”

Alfred Vanderbilt