

Conversation with the Mayor - April 20, 2009

Vicky Daly

This Place Matters

Among the many, many topics which the Palmyra Village Board addressed at its April 20, 2009, meeting, was the issuance of a proclamation declaring that in the village the month of May 2009 would be Preservation Month. It was the theme adopted by the sponsors of Preservation Month, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which caught my attention – ‘This Place Matters’.

And it does. We may not say that out loud, but what happens here demonstrates that we believe it and that we act on that belief. The unusually lengthy board meeting on the 20th provides examples of how actions speak louder than words in this area. Normally, we wrap up in anywhere from 90 minutes to 2 hours, but that meeting ran almost 3 hours. Why? Because so much is going on. You have probably already read about the meeting in the news reports, but there are some items which need more mention.

Historic Palmyra has been designated by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission and the National Park Service as one of 16 sites in New York State worthy of being named a Cultural Heritage Site Destination. Bonnie Hays and the tireless volunteers whose work and dedication made this happen know that this place matters.

The Board thanked Dick and Claudine Schreiner, who donated a flag, which was flown over the Capitol Building, to the village. Their generosity is appreciated. A photo of DeClerk L. ‘Lyman’ Snyder in his World War II uniform will be hanging in the Village Hall shortly thanks to Ann Guest. The photo, probably dating from 1942-1943, shows Mr. Snyder and his dog in front of the Village Park fence. In the background is one of the panels on which names were inscribed as Palmyra people left for the service. It seemed appropriate that the photo hang next to that reproduced list of names in the Village Hall, explaining and adding to the message. This place, its history and the people who were part of that history matter.

Noteworthy action items by the Board at that meeting included the decision not to replace the current open burning ordinance. The ordinance now in place should take care of any problems if, and this is a very big if, aggrieved neighbors contact the code office or the police of the fire department when they believe there is a problem. That has to happen for action to be taken. Residents came to voice their opinions because they know that in this place, their opinions matter.

In an entirely different realm, the Village Board acknowledged with regrets the retirement notification from Officer Ron Hall. Ron has been a real asset to the village and he will be missed. We wish him well. In this place, we all know that public servants – police, fire, village crews and staff matter.

Late last week, a phone call brought me the question why is the focus on Hyde Parkway being moved to Canandaigua Street? It may appear that way, but it isn’t. The two road jobs are unrelated – two different pots of money. The work on Canandaigua Street will be funded by federal stimulus funds. We requested stimulus funding for Hyde Parkway also, but were told

that it was not eligible despite the amount of daily traffic on the street. The cost of re-doing Hyde Parkway is borne by the local taxpayers. Because of litigation between the contractor working during the Main Street reconstruction and its sub-contractor, the village has not been reimbursed for the cost of completing their work nor for repairing resultant damage. We will have a decision soon, but not as soon as we should have. In this place, your questions matter.

On an entirely different note, the updated Pirates of the Erie Canal website, www.eriecanalpirates.com, is up and running. Specs for the Pirates Bed Race, our signature event, are available for downloading. In this place, family fun matters.