

Conversation with the Mayor April 16, 2007

Vicky Daly

What's Happening with the Canal Projects?

If you think its been a long time between updates on the Palmyra Canalside Nature Park project, you are right. Thats because nothing much has been happening. Things move depressingly slowly, but they are now moving and in the right direction.

To refresh your memory, the Village applied successfully for two separate grants through the NYS Canal Corporation Erie Canal Greenway Grant Program. One was to make improvements at the Port of Palmyra Marina, the other to make improvements at the Terminal Wall, east of the marina near the Route 21 bridge. The first includes the building of a bathroom complex at the marina on village land east and north of the parking lot. I have no doubt that this improvement, as utilitarian as it will be, will be much appreciated by visiting boaters, local residents who use the marina as a village park, and by the many cyclists and walkers who use the trail. Signage and possibly an expansion of the existing parking lot are included in the plan.

The second grant is to be used for the creation of a boat launch and a parking lot to accommodate tow vehicles and boat trailers. Repairs to the terminal wall and the installation of a floating dock are part of this plan, as are landscaping and, as always, signage. Another key piece of this phase of the project is a walkway from the terminal wall to the shops, restaurants and services on the east end of Main Street. This small component is of obvious value to boaters tied up at the wall and to the merchants whose products and services they will buy.

Neither project is grand or elegant. Restrooms and a boat launch are pretty basic items. Parking lots are not exciting either. Consider, however, what those enhancements will do for Palmyra. Residents will benefit from their actual presence in the community, making this an even better place to live and to work and to play. Residents will benefit, too, from these added amenities as they bring more people into Palmyra, enable them to stay longer, and have a better, more comfortable time, and to put money into the local economy. Its a win-win for everyone.

So much for background and rationale. At its April 16th meeting, the Village Board authorized the mayor to sign the contracts to move us into action. Trustee Chris Piccola will oversee the projects working with Code Officer Bob Grier, Highway Superintendent Mike Boesel and Brian Bieda, manager of Village water and sewer plants. Village Engineer Bob Raeman is preparing necessary documents to determine costs. Is this exciting? Yes! This is a good time to thank our predecessors former Trustee Dan Wooden and former Mayor Jim Elliott who had the vision to see what was possible, and our late Mayor Peter Wilson who moved it forward. We are just building on their efforts.

So, that's what's happening. The Canal will be opening soon. The busses have already started to come. Our pedestrian kiosks should be installed on Main Street in the near future and the surest sign of spring is about to happen - the filling of the brochure racks at the marina and on the trail and at the Nature Trail as well. It's time to be outdoors!