



TOWN OF

COLONIE CHRONICLE

Spring 2011

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TOWN OFFICIALS

Paula A. Mahan
Supervisor

Nancy R. Hernandez
Deputy Supervisor

Robert D. Becker
Board Member

William E. Carl
Board Member

Daniel J. Dustin
Board Member

Daniel A. Hornick
Board Member

Linda J. Murphy
Board Member

A MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR MAHAN



Greetings,

Spring is finally here. After a long, hard winter, I think we're all relieved to see trees leafing out, grass getting green, and flowers beginning to bloom.

2011 has already been a busy and productive year for Colonie. We've taken action on many issues, including legislation to safeguard Colonie neighborhoods from the blight of abandoned properties. In addition, Colonie residents will soon have expanded telecommunications options after the PSC approved the Town's agreement with Verizon for FIOS services.

As in the past, my main focus will continue to be strengthening Town finances while safeguarding resident services. We've reduced the Town's budget for two years in a row, saving almost \$2 million, and I believe we are well-positioned for the future. A progress update appears in this issue in excerpts from my "State of the Town" message.

After years of planning, a new water tank, pump station, and upgraded water mains are now in operation. This new infrastructure was provided at no cost to Colonie following demolition of the Town's checkerboard water tanks on Utica Avenue, as detailed in this issue.

The Town is also beginning an energy-savings project expected to save us more than \$10,000 a year by upgrading lighting in Memorial Town Hall. Sixty-five percent of the project is being funded by a grant from National Grid.

We will again be at work on the second year of our major paving plan, with 33 roads slated for repaving this year. We will also be undertaking a number of significant stormwater management projects.

Also in this issue, we review our free curbside yard waste and hazardous household waste disposal programs and provide an overview of the many free services the Town provides to Colonie seniors and caregivers.

I am happy to report that the PGA has signed a lease for office space at the Colonie Town Golf Course. We are proud they chose to locate their new section headquarters at our golf course and welcome them to Colonie.

Finally, Colonie has been named the nation's safest community for the second year in a row, and our EMS has again been recognized for its success in emergency cardiac care. Congratulations to our police and our EMS. We also thank our fire services department and our volunteer firefighters for their outstanding service in making Colonie such a safe place to live and do business.

Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Paula A. Mahan
Colonie Town Supervisor

UPCOMING EVENTS

Red Cross Babysitting Courses

April 19 – August 23
Colonie Community Center

Open to Colonie residents age 11 to 15. \$45 per student. Registration required.

Call the Youth Services Division at 456-2135.

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 14
10 am – 4 pm
Buhrmaster Barn at the Pruyn House

Fort Orange Garden Club plant sale. Free admission.

Town of Colonie Summer Camp

June 27 – August 19
Open to children ages 5 (must have completed Kindergarten) to 13.

To register, call the Youth Services Division at 456-2135.

Colonie Town Pool

Open for Weekend

Saturday & Sunday
June 18 & 19
Noon – 7 pm

Open for Season

Saturday, June 25
Noon – 7 pm daily

The Colonie Chronicle

Paula A. Mahan, Town Supervisor

Sara Wiest, Editor

The Colonie Chronicle is published periodically by the Town of Colonie to provide residents with information on Town happenings and services. For more information, call 518-783-2728 or e-mail the editor at: wiests@colonie.org

COLONIE AGAIN HAS LOWEST U.S. CRIME RATE



Safety Net: For the second year in a row, Colonie had the lowest city crime rate in the United States, as published in the 2010-2011 City Crime Rankings by CQ Press. Discussing the honor before the press last December are Town Supervisor Paula Mahan and Colonie Police Chief Steven Heider. In addition to its number one ranking for two years running, Colonie was ranked one of the fifteen safest communities in each of the previous eleven years, placing in the top ten safest cities for nine of those years.

SHEDDING NEW LIGHT ON TOWN HALL

Work will soon be underway on a project expected to save the Town \$10,866 a year in energy costs by replacing light fixtures and light bulbs in Memorial Town Hall with new, energy-efficient models.

The project is being made possible with funding from National Grid as part of a program designed to help municipalities achieve energy savings. Through the program, National Grid will pay \$29,978, or 65 percent, of the project's \$45,741 total cost.

With more than \$10,000 in energy savings each year, the Town's \$17,741 investment will be amortized within 22 months, said Doug Sippel, Director of General Service. "After that, it is all clear savings," he said.

The Town applied for the National Grid funding as an outgrowth of a long-term energy efficiency plan designed to help Colonie become more energy efficient over the next twenty years.

"In these challenging economic times, good stewardship is more important than ever. We must safeguard both our public monies and our valuable natural resources," said Town Supervisor Paula A. Mahan. "This project and those funded last year with federal funds help us do both," she said.

Last year, as a result of a \$661,900 Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant announced by Congressman Paul Tonko, the Town was able to move up its timetable for replacing vastly outdated HVAC units at the Town Library and an aging boiler in the Community Center.

That grant required the Town to contribute \$338,125, or about one-third, of the \$1 million total cost of the energy upgrades at the library and community center. Savings from those two projects alone are projected at \$447,547 over fifteen years.

Colonie is now investigating whether other Town buildings might qualify for the National Grid program.

THE WATER GOES ROUND AND ROUND...

And it comes out here – out of the tap in your house, that is.

But first it travels many a long mile, beginning its journey when it is pumped from the Mohawk River, or one of a series of wells along the river, into the Latham Water Treatment Plant.

There, it undergoes five purification processes. In one of these, it is filtered through a 41-inch thick bed of granular activated carbon and sand. Then chlorine is added to insure bacteriological quality – the final step in purifying the water.

Potable water now flows into six different clear wells, where it is held until it is pumped into a water distribution system that ultimately fans out to 80,000 customers over 54 square miles.

Once in the distribution system, water may be directed to one of the Town's five pump stations, where it is either pumped further on into the distribution system, or into one of the Town's nine water tanks. Taken together, these nine tanks hold 22.5 million gallons of water.

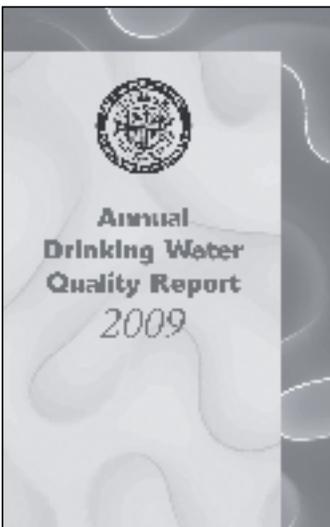
The largest pump station is the new 3.5 million gallon per day pump station constructed in connection with demolition of the old checkerboard water tanks on Utica Avenue. (See related story this page.)

Greatly enhancing distribution is 13,800 feet of new 36-inch water main, through which water can be moved more quickly and efficiently than before.

Ultimately, billions of gallons of water are sped along more than 420 total miles of water main every year – 3.44 billion gallons in 2009 alone.

Direct questions about the water system to the Latham Water District, at 783-2750.

COOL, CLEAR WATER



Colonie's water is monitored continuously all along the system, and a water quality report is issued by the Latham Water District each year. Last year's report showed no water quality violations in 2009. The next Drinking Water Quality Report, showing results for 2010, will be issued in May. Watch for it in the mail. It will also be posted online at: www.colonie.org



Farewell Old Friends: The Town's two checkerboard water tanks before demolition this spring.

ADIEU TO CHECKERBOARD TANKS

Known and loved by many as Latham landmarks, the two checkerboard water tanks on Utica Avenue have passed into the annals of history.

They were demolished by order of the Federal Aviation Administration because they penetrated the approach surface of Albany International Airport's Runway 28.

"We will all miss seeing the checkerboard water tanks, but public safety is paramount," said Town Supervisor Paula A. Mahan. "Plus, Colonie's infrastructure has been significantly upgraded as a result of the demolitions."

Now the Town has a new 2.5-million gallon water tank and a new 3.5-million gallon per day pump station at 343A Albany-Shaker Road. Both were funded by the FAA, the Airport Authority, and the NYS Department of Transportation.

Also funded were upgraded water line systems, including a new 36-inch water main that greatly improves delivery from the water treatment plant to the distribution system, and approximately 3,000 feet of new 24-inch water mains replacing existing aged mains.

"Demolition of these historic tanks represents the culmination of a more than decade-long project to replace them," said John Frazer, Superintendent of the Latham Water District. "We're excited now to be operating the new facilities, which are up and running smoothly."

Built in 1964, the large checkerboard tank was 90 feet tall and held 3 million gallons of water. The smaller tank, built in 1931, was 80 feet tall and held 100,000 gallons. Both were painted with the distinctive checkerboard design in 1976.

As part of the project, the Town will also demolish the aging tank at the end of Ross Court in Loudonville.



Upwardly Mobile: Town Water Engineer Dan Seaver prepares to climb the new 2.5 million gallon water tank.

WHO ARE YOU GOING TO CALL? SENIOR RESOURCES!

The Town's Senior Resources Department is the place to start for senior services in Colonie. Caseworkers and staff are available to provide information, referral to programs and services, and short- and long-term assistance to seniors and caregivers.

All assistance is provided in a confidential manner, whether in counseling an overwhelmed caregiver or providing assistance with health-care and benefit programs.

Senior Resources staff can help seniors access Medicaid, EPIC/health insurance/Medicare; food stamps; heating and home weatherization programs; housing and transportation options; satellite outreach services; entitlement assistance; caregiver's assistance and respite care options; case assistance and client advocacy; and, by appointment, legal and tax assistance and notary services.

Recognizing that reliable transportation and help with home maintenance are at the core of remaining independent, 43 percent of the Town's senior funding is allocated to Colonie Senior Service Centers to support the senior transportation program and Umbrella of Colonie, which helps fund home repairs for low-income seniors.

The Town also provides nine percent of the operating budgets for the seven senior clubs located throughout the Town. These clubs are important hubs of recreational and wellness activities. Moreover, each is unique, tailoring activities around the desires of its members.

The Senior Resources staff includes Director Chris Cary, Case Workers Debra Heider and Angelina Searles, Specialist Carrie Blanchard, Administrative Aide Robin Zoller (who coordinates the Senior Clubs) and part-time typist Florence Muzio. For more information call 459-5051.

TOWN TO ISSUE DOG LICENSES

New York State is no longer processing dog licenses, a responsibility that in Colonie will be overseen by Town Clerk Elizabeth DeTorto.

As the Town has always collected dog license fees on behalf of the State and the cost is unchanged, the transition should mostly be seamless. However, when a license is renewed, the Town will issue a new dog identification tag. The tag, provided at no additional charge, will replace the current tag and be good for the life of the dog.

Renewal notices will be sent one month prior to license expiration. Owners can simply complete the necessary information and return the license with their payment.

We will also ask for an e-mail address, which is not mandatory. By having e-mail addresses, we hope to be able to communicate more quickly and cost-effectively and, ultimately, to be able to renew dog licenses online.

Please contact Town Clerk Elizabeth DeTorto with questions at 783-2734 or deltortoe@colonie.org.

AROUND THE TOWN



A Friend to Animals: Investigator Michelle L. Crowley of the Colonie Police Department was recently honored by the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society with the William O. Stillman Award for her dedication to animal cruelty investigation. Pictured at the event are, from left, Steve Caporizzo of WTEN, Brad Shear of MHHS, Crowley, Supervisor Paula Mahan, and Assemblyman Bob Reilly.



Farmers' Market: The Farmers' Market at The Crossings will be open June 4, adding even more vendors this year. The market will again feature flowers and produce, meat and eggs, artisanal cheeses, breads, baked goods, and prepared meals. In the past two years, the Market has raised more than \$20,000 to fund needed improvements at The Crossings Park. Visit the Farmers' Market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays through September 24.



Bibliophile and Bibliophobe? Young patrons in the Kids Korner at the Friends of the William K. Sanford Library's annual Book and Bake Sale. The March 12 and 13 sale at The Crossings generated more than \$650 to benefit the library and the park. This was the first year the event was held at The Crossings, where in summers the Friends sell used books at the Book Nook during The Farmers' Market. The Friends are actively seeking new members and volunteers. For more information, call 917-361-5634.

SUPERVISOR DELIVERS STATE OF THE TOWN

Supervisor Paula A. Mahan delivered her annual State of the Town address at the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce on January 12 and at the Town Board Meeting on January 13. Key points are summarized briefly below.

- We've reduced the Town budget two years in a row, saving almost \$2 million.
- At \$92.7 million, the 2011 budget is \$1.4 million less than last's year's. Last year's budget was almost \$500,000 less than the year before.
- This year we will also save almost \$500,000 in debt service, partly by having the negative outlook removed from our bond rating.
- We now have 37 fewer full-time employees, achieved by attrition, early retirements and departmental consolidations, saving almost \$1.2 million.
- We saved \$400,000 by combining Youth Services with Parks and Recreation, and Fire Services with our Building Department. Service will not be diminished.
- We are slowly beginning to see positive change in two of our biggest revenue sources, sales and mortgage taxes. However, we face steep increases this year in retirement contributions and health care premiums.
- For the first time, all Town employees contribute 10 percent of their health-care premiums.
- Last year we began an ambitious five-year, \$10 million paving program, completing 51 repaving projects and 56 drainage improvement projects.
- We have realized important infrastructure improvements through successful partnerships with our federal, state, and county counterparts.
- We were fortunate to receive a federal grant for new HVAC units at the Town Library and a new boiler at the Community Center.
- We are exploring potential opportunities to increase revenue generation, utilize new technologies, and extend the useful life of the Town Landfill.
- We've made strong progress by working together, and I look forward to working with all of you in 2011.

A podcast is posted at: www.colonie.org



Colonie On Par With PGA:

Tom Philion, President of the Northeastern New York PGA, with Town Supervisor Paula Mahan at a lease signing for the PGA's new section office headquarters at the Town's Golf Course. The PGA will lease space in the Clubhouse for two years following earlier approval by the Town Board. The PGA said it looked forward to a "long-lasting" relationship with the Town that would "promote enjoyment and involvement in the game of golf."

COLONIE PHONE DIRECTORY

Main Line	783-2700
Animal Control	783-2711
Assessor	783-2701
Attorney.....	783-2704
Building.....	783-2706
Civil Service	783-2721
Community Development...	783-2718
Comptroller	783-2708
Emergency Management & Planning.....	782-2609
EMS.....	782-2645
Fire Services	783-2712
General Services.....	783-2726
Historian.....	782-2593
Human Resources.....	783-2720
Justice.....	783-2714
Library.....	458-9274
MIS.....	783-2895
Planning & Economic Development	783-2741
Police (Non Emergency)	783-2811
Pruyn House	783-1435
Public Works Engineering ..	783-6292
Environmental Svcs.	783-2827
Highway.....	783-2795
Latham Water Dist.	783-2750
Pure Waters	783-2766
Recreation	783-2760
Senior Resources	459-5051
Supervisor.....	783-2728
Tax Department	783-2730
Town Clerk	783-2734
Youth Bureau	456-2135



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE 2010



DROP-OFF DAYS

APRIL 20 | 4:00PM - 7:00PM
SEPTEMBER 21 | 4:00PM - 7:00PM
JUNE 25 | 3:00PM - 6:00PM

PRE-REGISTRATION INFORMATION

! YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER BY CALLING TOLL-FREE
1-800-494-2273
MONDAY-FRIDAY 9-5 P.M.
Or visit www.colonie.org

Residents of the Town of Colonie will be accepted by appointment only. Proof of Residency will be required at the time of disposal.

WHERE

Town of Colonie Landfill • 1319 Loudon Rd. (Rt. 9) • Cohoes, NY 12047

SPONSORED BY

Town of Colonie & NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation



WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANY MATERIAL WHICH IS NOT DEEMED ACCEPTABLE TO THE MANAGING CHEMIST ON SITE.
For more information call: 783-2827 | Division of Environmental Services Or visit www.colonie.org

WINDOWS? WE DO HYDRANTS!

Every spring the Latham Water District does its spring cleaning – and it takes six full-time workers about ten weeks.

The job is flushing the water system. Each of the Town's 4,500 hydrants is opened and flushed out with a rush of water strong enough to remove any rust or sediment built up inside water pipes.

Flushing improves water quality and improves the taste and color of the water.

Occasionally, flushing may temporarily discolor water. This is normal and poses no health risks. However, residents should wait to use washing machines and dishwashers until water is clear. If discoloration persists, call the Latham Water Department at 783-2750.

Flushing began on March 21 and will continue from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. through May 26.



ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

- Acids Adhesives
- Aerosols Boric
- Acid Brake
- Fluid Cements
- Charcoal
- Lighters
- Chlorine
- Cleaning Fluid
- Corn & Wart Remover
- Degreasers
- Disinfectants
- Drain Cleaners
- Dry Gas Dyes
- Epoxies Flea Collars & Powders
- Hair Removers
- Herbicides
- Inks
- Insecticides
- Insect Repellants
- Lacquers
- Lubricants
- Moth Balls or Flakes
- Muriatic Acid
- Nail Polish
- Nail Polish Remover
- No Pest Strips
- Oven Cleaners
- Paints: Latex & Oil Based
- Paint Remover
- Paint Thinner
- Permanent Solutions
- Pesticides
- Photo Chemicals
- Pool Chemicals
- Rat Poison
- Rust Solvents
- Solvents
- Spot Remover
- Toilet Bowl Cleaners
- Tub & Tile Cleaners
- Turpentine
- Varnish
- Weed Killers
- Wood Pesticides (Some)
- Wood Polishes
- Wood Stains

Remember the "best method" for disposal of unrestricted pesticides is proper use. If not banned, restricted, or outdated...use according to directions or give to a friend to use.

UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

- Asbestos
- Anti-Freeze*
- Biological or Medical Wastes
- Dioxin Suspect Pesticides (2,4,5T, certain formulations of Weed-Be-Gone and Silvex)
- Electronics (tv and computer)*
- Explosives and Flares
- PCB's
- Pentachlorophenol
- Pressurized Tanks and Gas Cylinders (Propane Tanks)*
- Radioactive Waste (smoke detectors)
- Waste Oil*

* These materials can be brought to the Town of Colonie Landfill during regular business hours for recycling.

YARD WASTE RECYCLING PROGRAM 2011 CURBSIDE COLLECTION GUIDE

Place your yard waste in biodegradable paper bags or in your reusable container.

Containers MUST not be over 32 gallons in volume or 40 pounds in weight and be identified by a special sticker. Place the bags and/or containers at the curbside for your pick up day.

Biodegradable paper bags can be purchased at Supermarkets, Hardware Stores and Home Centers.

Stickers to identify your 32-gallon reusable container are \$.50 each and are available at Colonie Town Hall, Colonie Landfill and the Menands Village office.

WE WILL PROVIDE CURBSIDE PICK UP OF YOUR COMPOSTABLE YARD & GARDEN WASTE INCLUDING:

- Lawn Clippings and Leaves
- Plant Debris
- Hay
- Branches and brush up to 3" in diameter & 4' in length, tied with string in manageable bundles (or biodegradable bags)



Ghost of Christmas Past: Town employee Glen Roberts hefts a discarded Christmas tree into a truck in the midst of January snow. The Town's annual canvass for discarded trees is a joint effort of the Highway, Environmental Services, and Parks and Recreation Departments. The trees are transported to the Town of Colonie Landfill where they are ground up for compost.

WEEKLY PICK UP BEGINS APRIL 11 AND ENDS NOVEMBER 18

Collection is scheduled by Fire District

Monday - Shaker Road / Loudonville

Tuesday - Fuller Road & West Albany 1 & 2

Wednesday - Latham & Schuyler Heights

Thursday - Boght, Verdoy & Maplewood

Friday - Midway & Stanford Heights

Yard Wastes are collected in the Villages of Colonie & Menands on a weekly basis. For questions about collection within your Town or Village, please call:

Town of Colonie 783-2827

Village of Menands 434-2922

Village of Colonie 869-7562

If your collection day falls on a legal holiday, place your yard waste at the curb as you normally would. Pick up will occur either on the holiday or on another day during the week of the holiday. All other collection days during a holiday week will remain the same as usual. You may also bring your compostable yard waste to the compost facility located at the Landfill, 1319 Loudon Road, Coboes, at no charge.

FREE COMPOST FOR RESIDENTS

Residents may pick up compost produced from the yard waste program free of charge starting May 2. Compost can be used for the following:

- Soil Conditioner
- Increase moisture-holding capacity
- Soil permeability
- Lawn establishment
- Ornamental plant potting soil
- Ornamental plant & shrub mulch

*** COMPOST IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR USE IN
VEGETABLE GARDENS**

WE WILL NOT PICK UP

- Bags or Containers over 40 lbs. in weight or 32 gallons in volume
- Any yard waste in plastic bags (this includes orange pumpkin bags)
- Wreaths (due to wire)
- Branches or Brush that are not bundled with twine, string or bagged
- Branches or Brush over 3" in diameter and 4' in length
- Branches stuffed in Containers
- Garbage
- Yard waste containing rocks, sod or dirt
- We will not enter private property to pick up yard waste.
- Yard waste frozen in reusable containers

YARD WASTE MUST NOT CONTAIN:

- Rocks
- Sod or Dirt
- Garbage
- Non-organic material
- Plastic bags
- Cardboard
- Treated wood
- Construction/Demolition Debris
- Metal of any type



Office of the Supervisor
Town of Colonie
Memorial Town Hall
534 Loudon Road
Newtonville, NY 12128
www.colonie.org

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HARD TIMES AND ABANDONED PROPERTY by Michael Magguilli, Town Attorney



*“Can anyone remember when times were not hard
and money was scarce?.”*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1882)

Last summer, my office received many complaints from residents about vacant real property in the Town. Upon investigation, we typically found that the properties were bank foreclosed, abandoned, and either not maintained or minimally maintained by banks more concerned with the bottom line than with neighborhoods.

Thankfully, most of the complaints we received were minor, such as trash in the yards, overgrown lawns, and the like. Some complaints, however, were more serious and gave rise to public safety concerns. These complaints involved unsecured buildings, partially collapsed structures, and vagrants in the premises – matters the Town needed to address expeditiously.

Acting on these complaints often proved difficult. First, at times it was hard merely to determine which bank owned the foreclosed property. We found that many foreclosed properties are held by out-of-state banks with no ties to the community.

Second, if the correct bank was found, it was often difficult to connect with the right person or department at the bank responsible for maintaining the properties. Many times we were told that the bank contracted maintenance to a private company and that the bank could not provide us with any contact information. Other times we were advised that the bank’s foreclosure attorney contracted for maintenance of the properties on behalf of the bank, and it was impossible to get anyone at the attorney’s office to answer our phone calls or respond to our letters. By now you will be getting the picture: the Town was getting the runaround.

Finally, even if we were successful in speaking with the responsible person or company at the right bank, under the old Town Code we had no means of forcing the bank to correct the maintenance issues short of an expensive, time-consuming Supreme Court action. For many of the problems, the Town just

couldn’t wait the six months to a year a Supreme Court action would take to correct the problem.

On January 6, 2011, the Town Board amended Chapter 62 of the Town Code to correct the problem and deal with abandoned and foreclosed properties. Under the new law banks must register a property with the Town when it commences a mortgage foreclosure action. The banks are also required to provide the Town with the contact information of the party or company responsible for maintaining the property while held by the bank. The responsible party or company must be located in Albany County.

Most importantly, the new Town Code provides a quick and efficient means of prosecuting an action against a bank, or any other negligent property-owner for that matter, in the event that notices to repair are ignored and property is not maintained according to the requirements of the Code. As an incentive to comply with the new Code, the Town can impose hefty fines on banks or persons who fail to abide by its terms.

A full copy of the amended local law can be found at Chapter 62 of the Town Code, Articles III, IV and V (sections 62-27 to 62-66). The new Code is online through a link in the Town website. (Go to www.colonie.org, click on “Town Quick Links” located in the left-hand margin, then click on the “Town Code Online” button and follow the prompts to “New York” and then to “Town of Colonie, NY.” Scroll down to Chapter 62.)

In 2011, as in Emerson’s day in 1882, times are tough and money is scarce. In amending the Town Code, the Town tried not only to address deficiencies in the existing Code concerning abandoned and foreclosed properties, but to be proactive in the event the mortgage crisis gets worse and the number of homes foreclosed in the Town increases. While we all hope the economy improves and that we have seen the worst of the foreclosure meltdown, the new provisions of Chapter 62 of the Town Code provide the tools needed for the Town to protect our neighborhoods and residents.