

## **Community Development: Record of Accomplishments**

*Under the leadership of Mayor Hall numerous projects have been completed*

Village of Hempstead Mayor Wayne J. Hall, Sr. and the Community Development Agency (CDA) announced this week the numerous accomplishments of the community development projects since 2005.

“Our administration has been focused on improving the Village overall, bringing economic benefit, development and an increase in revenue,” stated Mayor Hall. “From our youth to our seniors, we are constantly searching for projects and programs to improve our Village for all.”

The core focus of the CDA under the current administration has been on impacting the lives of the **existing community** and putting the “community back in community development.” With the HEALTHY Hempstead mantra, the CDA has a holistic approach, addressing the seven basic areas of focus: housing; economic development; aesthetic quality; living standards; taxes; health and youth. Major accomplishments include the revitalization of the Village’s downtown area, beautification projects, park improvements and safe routes for our youth.

“The increase in jobs and tax revenue from the downtown redevelopment will positively impact our residents,” added Deputy Mayor Henry Conyers.

“The current administration has lived up to its commitment to open government and in doing so, has crafted a plan for sustainable development,” stated Claude Gooding. “Our focus has been on responding to the community’s needs; our first mission was to understand it by engaging and listening to the needs of our residents.”

### **Downtown Revitalization**

The update to the Master Plan with a focus on downtown revitalization completed in September 2008 has been the greatest accomplishment. The planning process which commenced in 2006 utilized a participatory approach and public visioning. This model approach focuses on sustainable development and introduces a mixed-use, mixed-income concept to downtown revitalization also understanding the need to bolster its economy and revenue base, yet preserving the overall suburban aesthetic.

This plan promotes the development of 2,500 – 3,000 units of housing with a tiered-income approach and 150,000+ square feet of retail within a defined segment of the downtown area (area closest to the transit hub). Pursuant to this new plan, two developments have occurred: the development of lower Main and a plan for the urban renewal of North Main Street.

Trammel Crow Residential, with the Agency’s input planned the development of 268 units of luxury housing at the former Ford dealership at 300 N Main Street.

To foster downtown stability and shopping diversity, the CDA has sponsored the Art Space Project. This business incubator, houses four small art related businesses in storefronts just off Main Street. With rental and working capital assistance, these businesses have generated 8 full/part time jobs. In collaboration with Long Island Development Corporation (LIDC) through our Small Business Revolving Loan Program the Agency has awarded 4 area businesses, working capital soft loans of \$10,000 each.

## **Main Street Beautification Project**

The CDA has begun the implementation of the plan for the development of lower Main, between Front and Center Streets, known as the Main Street Beautification Project. With a \$2 million grant from the Department of Transportation this project will fund new decorative sidewalks, street furniture and fixtures. Additionally, commensurate with the street renovations is the Façade Improvement program. This is a \$385,000 program funded in two phases by the Division of Housing and Community Renewal for the improvements of storefronts along the lower Main street corridor.

## **Commercial Revitalization**

Through the Restore NY program, the CDA has granted to three buildings assistance of \$585,000 that will assist in providing handicap accessibility to an older structure, making it ADA compliant, as well as offset rehabilitation costs for the two others.

## **Affordable Housing**

The CDA's housing initiatives include the completion of 9 affordable single-family homes on scattered sites. Additionally, the CDA has worked with the new owners of the property at 800-820 Front Street in the planning of a new 800 bed assisted living facility.

## **Refurbishment of Hempstead Theater/Creation of Hempstead on the Green**

The old Hempstead Theater, a place for civic engagement and public use, has been long identified as a much needed facility in the Village and the creation of Hempstead on the Green at 310 Fulton was a culmination of public engagement and visioning. This project has been awarded a State grant of \$500,000 and will be a public/private partnership.

## **Park Improvements**

Since 2005, the Agency has devoted a tremendous portion --\$600,000+ to date-- to the rehabilitation of the 5 Parks in the Village. Kennedy Park received a new HVAC system; all pools at both Lincoln and Kennedy were relined with a user and maintenance friendly material; and all basketball and tennis courts were resurfaced and all playground equipment were replaced.

Recently, after many years of neglect the American Legion Hall, Gomillion Campbell Post were internally renovated. The CDA sponsored the rehabilitation of the Mother Brown house a site for the re-entry of ex-offenders.

## **Safe Routes to School**

Through public planning process, the CDA reached out to the school district to address the issue of the safety of school children and jointly applied for funding. This resulted in an award of \$1.6 million from the Safe Routes to School Program to widen sidewalks around three schools in the Village, namely ABGS Middle School, Fulton Elementary and Jackson Main.

The CDA also continues to fund \$250,000 annually to several public service entities that conduct programs enhancing the quality of life of adults and children that are of low- to moderate- income. These entities include the Hempstead Boys and Girls Club, CYO program, the Salvation Army and Hispanic Counseling Center.