



Week of April 16, 2018

From The Desk of Mayor Don Ryan

Recently, two projects that will have a major positive impact concerning our youth are finally getting into full swing in Hempstead Village. The first involves a Safe Routes to Schools grant that's being administered under the direction of the Hempstead Community Development Agency. The initiative will improve the safety of getting our children to and from school by creating safer walking paths, wide sidewalks and better signage for pedestrians and drivers. Ultimately three schools will benefit from this worthwhile endeavor – David Paterson and Jackson Elementary Schools and ABGS Middle School. Work on David Paterson School will begin this summer and Jackson and ABGS Schools is slated for next year. Once the construction portion of the project is complete the grant will allow us to advance a program to teach pedestrian safety for both students and parents. All told this is a win-win for everyone involved since students and parents will benefit from improved safety conditions while traveling on foot to and from school while improved signage will alert drivers moving about in and around the three school properties. Anything we can do to increase the safety of our youngsters traveling to and from school is always welcome. The fact that 100 percent of the grant money comes from federal funds that will pay for these improvements is an added bonus since there is no additional burden to our taxpayers.

The second program that will benefit our youth is a brand new skate park at Kennedy Memorial Park, a move that will help get kids off the street and able to enjoy an increasingly popular recreational activity in a safer and more controlled environment. Recently, Spohn Ranch Skateparks, an award winning firm, was selected to design our new skate park and is currently preparing preliminary drawings for review and approval by our Department of Recreation and Parks. With that process expected to be finalized by the end of April or early May, construction on the skate park should begin in May with a targeted completion date by the end of August. Funding for the skate park was secured through a state grant that will also include a complete renovation of the kitchen facilities at Kennedy Memorial Park. Special thanks are extended to Deputy Assembly Speaker Earlene Hooper who was instrumental in helping to secure the necessary funding to allow this project to become a reality. Once completed later this summer it will serve as a popular recreational and venue for our youth to enjoy for years to come.

As someone who has served as a volunteer coach for well over 50 years and continues to invest time and energy in our youth, it gives me great pleasure being part of this additional investment in those who are the true backbone of Hempstead's future.

Sincerely,

Don

Don Ryan
Mayor of the Incorporated Village of Hempstead