

TOWN OF BEDFORD NEW YORK

Lee Roberts
Supervisor



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Welcome to the inaugural “A Chat with our Supervisor” email series dedicated to communicating top of mind developments in the Town of Bedford as seen through the eyes of our Supervisor, Lee Roberts. Prepared by the Town’s Communications Committee, these emails – which will be produced and distributed on a roughly monthly schedule - are intended to provide you, the citizens of our community, with conversational updates on a broad range of relevant town topics in a Q&A format. Please keep in mind that these updates are intended to impart development highlights only. For more detailed information, or if you have questions about what you read here, please feel free to contact Lee at Supervisor@bedfordny.gov



Q: There are so many ways we could start this conversation. How about asking how you’d view your greatest accomplishments to date?

LEE: Our efforts to sustain and improve on Bedford’s quality of life have been very successful. I’m especially pleased with the work we’ve done in the environmental area. I am so proud of what we started when we appointed the original Bedford Energy Advisory Panel back in 2007. The panel served as the starting point for Bedford 2020. The panel’s Climate Action Plan looked at every sector of activity in the Town in terms of how it impacts the environment and identified many areas for change – all with an eye to ensure that Bedford builds upon the unique qualities that make it such an attractive a place to live, work, and play. Some of those changes we’ve done and some are planned for the near future.

We have also focused on improving the town’s recreational facilities. We have remodeled or replaced the pool buildings at the town parks, rebuilt the gazebo in Katonah and built new platform tennis courts in Bedford Village and Katonah. We have formulated a forward-looking capital plan for our infrastructure and have reviewed and discussed each item in the Comprehensive Plan. I am pleased that the water filtration plant which connects the Katonah and Bedford Hills Consolidated Water District to the New York City water system will shortly be coming on line. And we are also hard at work to improve the convenience and efficiency of our recycling program.

Q: Could you provide a little more detail?

LEE: Well, I'm pleased to report that construction and testing of the water treatment facility is almost complete. Barring any surprises, the plant will likely be completed, tested and approved by regulatory agencies by the end of the month. At that point the Town plans to treat NYC water – making it a purer product than we now can provide - and supply it to our customers. The project continues to be within budget. In the area of energy efficiency, we just got delivery of eight donated electric charging stations. Two will be for Town use and the other six will be available to townspeople to charge their electric vehicles for a cost just above that of the electricity itself. We're working out where to place the stations, but we hope to have them easily available for use soon. I think this is a great example of our being on the cutting edge of civic services.

Q: Affordable housing has been a hot topic in recent times. Could you comment on that?

LEE: I am proud of what we have accomplished in Bedford through our Blue Mountain Housing Corporation. We continue to look for opportunities to diversify our housing stock and provide a greater range of choices relative to cost. We're getting a much better take on our available options thanks to the recent settlement between the County and HUD, but a lot more work needs to be done on this issue. Along those lines, there will be a public forum, an evening of presentations and dialogues on affordable housing, on May 1st at the Town House Court Room at 7 p.m. to discuss issues around the topic of affordable housing. The forum is sponsored by Blue Mountain and Pace Law School in partnership with Bedford and nearby towns.

Q: It's been months since Hurricane Sandy, but people are still talking about it. What was its overall impact on the town?

LEE: Oh my, as you know that storm caused extensive damage to roads, homes and property in terms of downed trees. Our DPW did an outstanding job in clearing the roads of debris after the storm and picking up logs and brush collected from property owners. The cost of the cleanup operation will be offset by a \$500,000 reimbursement from FEMA. Overall, the damage wasn't as devastating as it could have been but many people suffered damage needing repair. I'd like to take this opportunity to remind them that the funds from the Governor's Disaster Homeownership Repair and Rebuilding Fund are still available. Even those homeowners who have already qualified for FEMA housing assistance grants may still be available obtain up to an additional \$10,000 through the fund. And I'd like to remind everyone that the available funds come in the form of a grant, not a loan, and does not need to be repaid. You can apply through your insurance carrier or learn more by calling New York State at (855) NYS-SANDY [855 697-7263].