Tuxedo Town Supervisor’s Update

Esteemed Tuxedo Neighbors.

I’d like to take this opportunity to update you on the issues that are facing our town and the actions taken to address these concerns.

I’d like to briefly summarize the journey over the last four years. The progress this Town Board has made is undeniable. I'm so proud to call Jay Reichgott, Michele Lindsay, Maria May, and Deirdre Murphy, my Town Board colleagues. We give it our all.

Progress…

I’ve heard since I moved here 20 years ago that nothing happens in Tuxedo, no development, no improvements to our Town Center, no new residents to support the Tuxedo Union Free School District (TUFSD), etc. I was told it would be a miracle if Tuxedo Farms came to be.

Well, the miracle has happened. After almost two years of negotiations, we were able to execute an agreement that kept Related negotiating while we came up with a plan that works for the Town and the Developer. Lennar, the nation's largest builder of quality homes, was engaged by Related, and has now bought the property, just last month. They are before the Planning Board every month submitting the real plans for building. You’re welcome to come to any of those meetings to find out for yourself. Related is still a major partner, and will build the new Town Center, called The Commons. This will offer residents a new mixed use commercial area, which includes retail, hospitality, and services and high end apartments. It will also provide a municipal building with meeting space for 250 people that will accommodate Town Board and community meetings.

So when will construction begin?

The necessary preparations for spring construction are happening NOW! Filling and grading work that’s needed to start construction is on-going. The sewer and water pipes for the first neighborhoods are in the ground. Many of the streets are already laid out. We’re poised for action.

Other benefits of Tuxedo Farms…

Along with the Special Permit we approved last year, $2,500,000 in cash was given to the TUFSD and 40 acres of beautiful property worth a lot of money. In order for the school to survive, like any public school, you need property tax dollars and kids. The Tuxedo Farms development will deliver both and be very cash positive to the school district. From the beginning of our negotiations this Town Board insisted that promises made to the school in 2015 must be honored. Related tried hard to remove these. We got it done, amidst rising interest rates and a deteriorating housing market. Just in the nick of time!

Additionally, the Town received hundreds of acres of pristine forest from Related along Warwick Brook Road and Long Meadow Road, now in conservation forever, protecting our Parklands for all to enjoy.

We got Related to start up the new sewer plant, rescuing the 216 properties that connect to it from the brink of losing reliable sewer service. The old plant is well beyond its usable lifespan.

We also got $1,100,000 for the Tuxedo Local Development Corp (LDC)., a Town agency, from Related and Lennar to revitalize the Hamlet business district. There are FIVE projects on Rt.17 underway right now. The train station is being totally renovated, with $140,000 from Lennar, saving taxpayers big bucks. The old Orange Top Diner will be totally renovated and should have a new tenant very soon! The Tuxedo Historical Society, (THS), was gifted the old Chase Bank building, thanks to THS President Betty Langberg's dogged persistence, and the Tuxedo LDC provided $100,000 of matching funds which is being used to totally restore this architectural gem.

Additionally, the Karlin Warehouse building is also undergoing a major facelift necessary to attract a new tenant.

Other actions taken that will build our tax base…

In the south end of town, a new Skylight assembly business is coming to Sterling Mine Road that will bring a $3,000,000 state of the art commercial building. The building is architecturally beautiful, with an expansive landscaping plan, and will bring dozens of well paying jobs! It will bring real tax dollars to our town with minimal traffic. The abandoned eyesore there now will be demolished soon. We avoided high traffic options that would have drastically changed the area.

We lowered your taxes by reassessing NYS Parklands, the State pays much more, so our share is much less. We did this through a comprehensive assessment of all NYS park properties in Tuxedo. Here it is! It looks like an old Manhattan phone book. That helped both of our school districts get much needed tax revenue, M/W and TUFSD, as well.

On the Environment…

We protected the environment, cleaning up the 10,000 truckloads of construction debris dumped, I suspect in the dead of night on the Town's highway Dept. site. That happened before I took office in 2020.

Rob Dollbaum, Highway Superintendent, and his team have moved a mountain of debris, meeting every expectation the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation set, avoiding the potential of $3,000 a day in fines! They screened tons and tons of materials, separating the rocks, concrete, wood, and various plastics and debris, into processed piles for disposal. The job is nearing completion. This property is in the center of our watershed. These actions protect our drinking water. We've shut down any further chance to harm this Town owned property.

We bought 27 acres of undeveloped forest on the Indian Kill Reservoir on Rt. 17A at the County Tax auction, protecting our drinking water, and saving it from developers.

We're developing a plan to restore the sewer pipes in the Hamlet district which are 100 years old and in desperate need of repairs.

We brought accountability to the Town's Municipal service, verifying payroll by installing an electronic timecard system, required for government audits. We restored five days of service, Town Hall was closed on Fridays! Town Hall got a new roof, $100,000 funded by NYS. New ADA compliant bathrooms were added. New ramp, new accessible doors, making it easier for our seniors to get into the building.

We brought Town meetings into the 21st century, in the height of COVID, adding Zoom technology, making it easy to attend meetings that are recorded for all to see. Now that's real TRANSPARENCY. Marisa Dollbaum, Town Clerk, has totally updated procedures in Town Hall, reorganizing our records, responding to residents needs, and working hand in hand with the Town Board.

We restored 24/7 Police coverage, hiring four new experienced police officers in 2023! We have a new professional Police Chief, John Trazino, who is preparing Tuxedo for today's world problems. Unfortunately, Tuxedo is not Mayberry anymore. Crime finds the soft targets and we MUST be ready.

Roads are being paved, parks renovated, and we restored the tennis court and basketball court at Tichey Field. We purchased new heavy equipment for our Highway Dept. and are awaiting two new high end Police Cars, expected to be delivered any day.

Our new Account Clerk, Carey Alley, has brought her professional accounting skills and Municipal Government experience to our Fiscal management activities. We've recovered thousands of dollars in uncollected fees and set up systems that will keep this from happening in the future.

As you may know, I am not seeking re-election. My twin brother, Kevin, is fighting Stage IV melanoma cancer, which has spread to his spine and lungs. I must refocus my priorities toward my family.

I'm thankful for those who came before us. Anyone who has given time in public service should be acknowledged. These members of the Town Board have proven themselves. I’m proud of my service and I hope you will join me in extending a well deserved Thank You to my fellow Board members.