

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Town of Hillsdale, NY

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Cover design by Sabina Curti

2007 Annual Report—Hillsdale, NY

INTRODUCTION



Hillsdale Town Board: L to R, Augie Sena, Peter Cipkowski, Ruth Dodds (Town Clerk), Art Baer, Ann Baldwin, Carmen Barbato

2007 ACTIVITY:

2007 was a milestone year in Hillsdale's history. Two major projects that have been on the Town's To Do List for decades, a hamlet sewer system and a new town park, were both begun.

- Ground was broken on the new sewer system in August and work continued into December, laying piping and installing new septic tanks as the first part of the project. Work will continue in the spring and is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.
- In September, the Town entered into an agreement with NY State that will provide 300 acres of land for a new municipal park at no cost to residents. A Steering Committee was formed that is spearheading the planning effort with town residents for the development of the park.

Other significant efforts either completed or begun in 2007 include:

- Enacting a local law to regulate development of property over 1100 feet in elevation, with specific language and penalties to protect crest lines.
- Initiating legislation to better regulate logging activities in the Town.
- Initiating an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Austerlitz to utilize a joint assessor, which resulted in a monetary bonus from the State Office for Real Property.
- Continuing our conservative fiscal management, which added approximately \$75,000 to our year-end fund balance.
- Passing a 2008 Budget of \$1.54 million, which represents a 4.5% increase in the tax levy over 2007, one of the smallest increases in the County.
- Obtaining grant money to study and inventory all historical properties in the Town.

Once again, the Board has worked collaboratively and effectively together to make the best decisions for Hillsdale. We would appreciate your feedback and input on our efforts so that we can continue to better serve our residents.

TOWN CLERK

ORGANIZATION:

Ruth Dodds is an elected official and served as Town Clerk in 2007.

Office hours are Tuesdays 9 am to 4 pm, Saturdays 10 am to 1 pm, and 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

MISSION :

The Town Clerk serves the people of Hillsdale by acting as a bridge between each citizen and the Town government. Because access to information is essential in a democracy, the Town Clerk maintains and makes available the records of the Town. Because certain licenses and permits are required by State and local agencies, the Town Clerk assists in filing applications and issuing licenses. In every interaction, the Town Clerk strives to provide clear communication, open access, and respectful service.



OPERATIONS:

In many ways, the Town Clerk is the “face” of the Town of Hillsdale. As recording secretary of the Town Board, she authors the official record of Town governmental activities: laws, resolutions, and minutes. As Records Management officer, she keeps legal records and the archives of the Town safe, complete, and organized. As Town Information Access Officer, the clerk makes the Town’s public records available to citizens upon request under the Freedom of Information Act. As Registrar of Vital Statistics, the clerk records births and deaths that take place in the Town and issues marriage licenses. The clerk also provides handicapped parking permits, hunting and fishing licenses, and licenses dogs.

In addition, the Town Clerk is the coordinator for Primary and General Elections, advising the State of vacancies for elections, overseeing polling places, and filing the boundaries of election districts. The clerk also notifies the public of registration day and polling places. Any special elections are also coordinated through the Town Clerk’s office. Absentee ballot applications and voter registration forms are available at the Town Hall.

ACTIVITY IN 2007:

Activities in the 2007 included:

- 80 dog licenses issued or renewed;
- 77 hunting and fishing licenses issued;
- 3 births and 5 deaths recorded;
- 10 marriage licenses issued;
- 47 certified copies of vital records made;

323 Records supplied under the Freedom of Information Act;
17 copies of the Town's Comprehensive Plan provided;
367 garbage bags sold.

Ruth Dodds, Hillsdale Town Clerk for 16 years, retired at the end of 2007. During her tenure, she greatly improved the security and accessibility of the Town's records and worked tirelessly to serve all her constituents. Her presence in the Clerk's office will be missed.

GOALS FOR 2008

During the next year, the Town Clerk will:

- Create an indexed Local Law Book so that laws can be easily accessed.
- Provide Internet access to forms and instructions for licenses and permits.
- Continue the process of indexing and archiving the Town's historical records.
- Provide evening and weekend hours to make the Clerk's services easier to access.



TOWN COURT



Town Court Officers, L to R: Juliette Crill, Jan Keefner, Russ Inmmarigeon
Photo by Sabina Curti

ORGANIZATION:

Justice Juliette Crill
Justice Russ Inmmarigeon
Jan Keefner, Clerk of the Court

Court is in session every Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. in the Hillsdale Town Hall. Cases involving the Columbia County District Attorney are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month unless otherwise announced.

MISSION:

The Hillsdale Town Court is the first level trial court in the New York State Court System. The Court has jurisdiction over vehicle and traffic matters, small claims (up to \$3000), tenancy, civil and criminal matters. It has the authority to arraign persons on all charges, but is generally limited to violations and misdemeanors. The Town Justices are also empowered to officiate at weddings of all who possess a valid marriage license, in the State of New York.

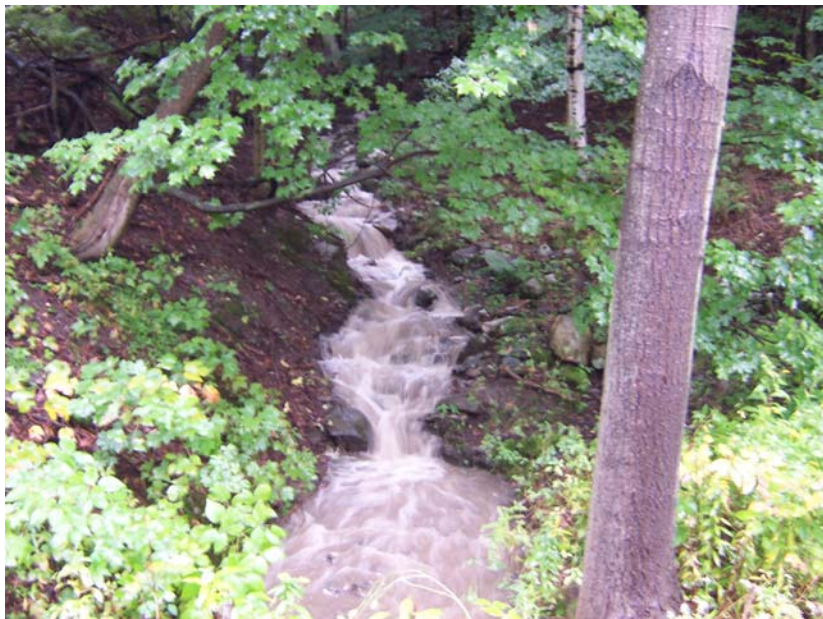
OPERATIONS:

The Town of Hillsdale funds the Court and receives a flat fee of \$15 for each fine levied for vehicle and traffic convictions. The Town's share of penal and local law violations varies, according to the infraction. Each justice must complete a mandatory certification program and attend bi-annual advanced training courses. Both justices were fully certified during the 2007 calendar year.

The voters of Hillsdale elect the Town Justices to four-year terms.

2007 ACTIVITY:

- Cases handled in the calendar year 2007 totaled 571, consisting of 514 vehicle/traffic cases, 38 criminal cases, 16 civil cases and 3 transportation cases. An increase of about 20% from the preceding year.
- Total fines, surcharges and civil fees were \$31,889.42, compared with \$28,097.50 in 2006.
- In 2007 the Court began using the electronic traffic ticket software program or E tickets. The New York State Police scan data from the driver's licenses and registrations directly into an in-vehicle computer, which electronically transmits the citation to the Court. It provides more timely data than the old paper ticket system.



HILLSDALE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007



Highway Department: L to R, Richard Briggs, Ed Brabender, Dave Hall, Robert Burns, Darryl Waite, Bill Stottlar

EMPLOYEES:

Richard Briggs Highway Superintendent

Ed Brabender Deputy

Dave Hall Foreman

Robert Burns

Daryl Waite

Bill Stottlar

Fred Dennis

Joe Ham (Joe will also work with the sewer district, when the system is up and running.)

The Highway Department maintains 76 miles of road, more than any other town in the county, of which 35 miles are paved with blacktop, and 41 miles are dirt roads.

The 2006 Highway budget was \$897,190.00, all but 60,000 was actually spent. The money was appropriated primarily for snow removal, general maintenance, salaries, and employee benefits. The Highway Department received over \$500,000 from FEMA, due to April flooding.

Accomplishments: In addition to snow removal, mowing and general road maintenance the highway department completed the following projects:

- Paved Oxbow Road and 1800 feet of Harlemville Road.
- Sealed 5 miles of hard surface.
- Completed extensive drainage installations on Oxbow Road, Wolf Hill Road, and Harlemville Road.
- Purchased and installed calcium systems on three trucks. Adding this with salt helps to clear hard surface roads at colder temperatures.

Goals for 2008 providing budget constraints allow them:

- Proper maintenance of all town roads
- Additional major drainage installations

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

ORGANIZATION:

Carmen Barbato (Chairman)
Bud Atwood
Ann Baldwin
Richard Briggs (Highway Superintendent)

MISSION:

The purpose of the Committee is to be a liaison between the Highway Department and the Town Board, and to oversee the expenditure of Town funds by the Department.

2006 ACTIVITY:

Participated in reporting the highway department activities to the town board.

The department is functioning very well. Bud and Carmen stop by the garage regularly to discuss repairs, replacement of equipment, and road improvement with Richard.

SEWER COMMITTEE



The Sewer Committee, L to R: Joe Hanselman, Bud Atwood, Bob Hopkins, August Sena
Photo by Sabina Curti

ORGANIZATION:

August Sena Chairman

Bud Atwood, Joe Hanselman Jr., Bob Hopkins, Committee members.

August Sena is an elected Town Councilman all other committee members are volunteers.

MISSION/GOALS FOR 2007:

1. Obtain additional grant money
2. Obtain final approvals from DEC
3. Obtain final approval of bidding documents from the governmental agencies funding the project
4. Go to bid in the spring of 2007 and begin construction in the summer. Targeting late fall or winter for completion

The year 2007 has seen some significant progress on meeting those goals and major progress in making the sewer a reality. We did receive our approvals and went to bid on the four major components of the system. Because all bids were over our estimates we had to rebid. The rebid produced much lower bids but three out of the four were still over estimate, one was below the original estimate.

The two contracts of the initial phase were approved and construction began in late summer and early fall. New septic tanks have been installed and the force main sewer line is nearly complete. Contracts 3 and 4 for the treatment facility have been accepted and will be approved in February 2008. Because of the higher than expected cost we immediately began discussion with the grantors for additional funds. We were encouraged by their response. Because of the nature of municipal projects with multiple approval from various funders and regulatory agencies the length of time in review and other inflationary factors the original estimates are usually exceeded; our overruns seem modest compared to other municipalities.

The Town is now in the process of completing the new grant applications. The Town awaits a court decision regarding the final cost associated with the land acquisition: that decision should come in February 2008.

We are pleased with the major progress has been made and we expect to complete the project before the DEC consent order deadline.

GOALS FOR 2008:

1. Obtain the needed additional grant money to cover the cost
2. Complete construction outlined in contracts one and two by late spring and early summer
3. Begin contracts 3 and 4 (sewer facility) in the summer and be complete and operational in late fall.



Groundbreaking ceremony

PARKS, RECREATION, AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION



ORGANIZATION:

Chairman: Peter Cipkowski

OPERATIONS:

Most activities are fully organized and run by the volunteers and are coordinated with the Highway Department, Parks Commission, Preservation Committee and the Roeliff Jansen Park Steering Committee.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION:

Park Director: Lauren Avenia

Committee Members: Lauren Avenia, Melanie Arre, Cori Barbato, Lynda Brenner, Heather Canetto, Peter Cipkowski, Heidi Cottini, Tara Decker, Bette Gallup, Sally Hopkins, Jan Keefner, Mary Pollack, Mary Ann Schafer, Jill Sims-Elster, Ann Stosiek, Wonell Van Tassel, Dave Wheeler

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:

Committee Members: Lex Lalli (chair), Timi Bates, Julia Brandi, Geoff Brookman, Liz Pike Brookman, Carol Hanselman, Christopher Ross, David Ruede, Amelia Sydlosky, Joan Wallstein, Robina Ward

ROELIFF JANSEN PARK STEERING COMMITTEE:

Committee Members: Caroline Stewart (chair), Judy Anderson, Art Baer, Peter Cipkowski, Doug Clark, John Farrell, Ira Halfond, Ed Herrington, Wayne Miller, Bill Newcomb, Patti Rohrllich, Jill Sims-Elster

PARK AND RECREATION MISSION:

To develop and enhance the beauty of Hillsdale and provide recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

2007 ACTIVITY:

The Committee coordinates a variety of annual events, including

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Town Wide Clean-up Day
 - o The committee raised \$9,895 for the Town Park from public donations of scrap metal on Clean-up Day.
- Beautification Project Day
 - o The committee raised \$1,225.00 to replenish the town whiskey barrels with flowers and fresh soil.
- Community Day
 - o The committee raised \$2,800 for Hillsdale Community Day from public donations.
- Youth Program
 - o The program was operated from July 9 through August 17.
 - o The committee purchased a new refrigerator from funds that were donated by Hillsdale Community Day that will be utilized in 2008.

YOUTH PROGRAM MISSION:

To provide a safe, educational, purposeful and enjoyable summer program for local youth.

2007 ACTIVITY:

- During the summer of 2007, the Hillsdale Youth Program consisted of 37 children (ranging in age from 5 to 13) and 6 Counselors.
- The program ran from July 9th through August 17th and took place on Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until 4:00pm.



- Activities included a number of routinely scheduled recreational activities such as kickball, softball, soccer, basketball, and others. Twice daily the children were involved in craft activities and made a craft that they were able to take home. The children made beaded necklaces, dream catchers, birdhouses, pot holders, sun visors and other creations.
- Throughout the day the children also had time to play on the playground, participate in board games and read books.
- The Hillsdale Youth Program not only gave the children the opportunity to enjoy sports and craft activities at the park, but also allowed the children to experience activities at other locations.

1. The children took two trips to the Taconic State park to work with Fran Martino and learn about butterflies, stream life and other aspects of nature. The program participated in the Junior Olympics, organized by the Lions Club, at the Hudson Middle School. There the children took part in different athletic events and were given the chance to win awards.

2. The children also went to the Columbia County Sheriff's Day. During this event the children were able to learn information about the Columbia County Sheriff Department and were also able to socialize and become comfortable with talking to their local law enforcers.

2008 OUTLOOK:

The Youth Program will launch this summer with a similar schedule and activities. Recruiting will begin in April. It remains to be seen if the program can be moved to the new Park, which is contingent on the availability and readiness of the property.

Historical Preservation Mission:

To promote the preservation of the unique heritage of the town of Hillsdale, including public buildings, homes, cemeteries, historic sites and trails, landscapes and other features of the town in order to protect and preserve that which gives Hillsdale its character and enhances our quality of life.



2007 ACTIVITY:

- The Committee completed applications for funding of a survey of historic resources in the Town of Hillsdale. The application was submitted to the Town Board for review in March, 2007.

- By September 2007, both grants were awarded:
 - o Berkshire Taconic awarded \$1,500.00
 - o NYCA Historic Preservation awarded \$7,500
- The owner of the Doerr House, Lisa Berman, submitted an application for landmark designation. Her application was accepted making the Doerr House an official landmark.
- The Committee explored appropriate ways of noting landmarks and working with homeowners who may be interested in having their property identified.
- In October 2007, the team of Jill Fisher and Neil Larson of Larson Fisher Associates began work on the survey of the historic resources of the town of Hillsdale. The kick off was an open house in Town Hall on Saturday, November 17, which was attended by residents of Hillsdale who had information about their property and/or wanted to learn more about the survey.
- On February 1, 2008, the Phase I report was submitted: a written report, a delineation of the boundary for the report, and a database constructed from Assessor's records which will serve as the annotated building/parcel list for the survey project.
- A reconnaissance survey and assessment of the hamlet to establish its content and parameters are the results of a visual survey of the hamlet and 194 photos that were taken of structures that could be considered as historic resources after further study.

2008 OUTLOOK:

- The next step will be an "Area Form" which will be prepared in Phase 2 that would provide a foundation for the future designation and or nomination of a historic district. There are 109 properties of which 79 are considered "contributing" to an historic district designation, six are questionable, and 19 are "non contributing" due to recent construction, plus five vacant parcels.
- The committee will meet on February 23 with the consultants to determine the scope of Phase 2 and whether the funds will cover that work or if additional funds are needed. They will also discuss individual designation reports, with the consent of the owners of Aubergine, the Church, and the Library. Both the Preservation League and the State Historic Preservation Officer, Bill Krattinger, have been sent copies of the interim report.
- The committee members are looking into the possible renovation of historic cemeteries of Hillsdale, the Toll House on Rte. 23, and doing research on what other towns in the county are doing in this regard.
- The committee is determined to revisit many of the recommendations provided by the Hamlet Committee that might be overseen by the Town Board and ensure that they do not fade from view.

ROELIFF JANSEN PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MISSION:

To oversee the development and maintenance of the new Roeliff Jansen Park that will ensure its prominent role in our combined Roe Jan communities as a place of agriculture, open space, recreation, and scenic beauty.



HISTORY:

- The Town of Hillsdale has searched for decades to find suitable and affordable land to expand its park activities and children's summer programs.
- More than 10 years ago, the Columbia Land Conservancy pledged to help the Town of Hillsdale in its search for a park—a park where kids and adults could enjoy baseball, soccer and all the traditional aspects of a park, along with the landscape characteristics which make our region so special.
- During that time, work continued on locating an affordable and beautiful piece of land. Those discussions led the Conservancy to talk to NYS on behalf of Hillsdale.
- About a year and a half ago, New York State identified a 300-acre piece of land they wanted to acquire to provide further access to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and greater recreational opportunities.

ACTIVITY:

- After much discussion, the State entered into an agreement with Hillsdale for the town to manage the property and develop any part of it for a community park.
- Located adjacent to the Hillsdale town line, south of Route 23 and including land on both sides of Route 22, the new Roeliff Jansen Park is a magnificent piece of property.
- Currently the property is being rented for agricultural purposes. All rents received will be used to help the town defray park costs.

2008 OUTLOOK:

- Open Phase 1 of the Roeliff Jansen Park before June 2008:
 - o Establish trails: Design, establish, maintain (regular mowing with tractor and brush-hog), and mark for hikers.
 - o Provide fishing access: Design, establish, and maintain fishing access.
 - o Establish a parking area: Design, establish, maintain an enclosed interim parking area that would allow for 15-20 cars. This parking area would likely be within the Farmstead Complex court-yard.
 - o Build an information kiosk: Construct and install an information kiosk to house rule

- and regulations, contact information, update and event information, trail maps and an overall property trail map.
- o Develop trail map, brochures: Establish a well-designed, simple but professional, trail map and brochures to be educational and user friendly in tone, located at the information kiosk.
 - o If funded, develop a picnic area and overlook benches: Consider establishing tasteful, yet vandal “resistant” picnic benches and overlook benches in key areas of the park.
 - o Secure all buildings and remove unnecessary nuisances: Buildings to be removed include the milking parlor and double wide trailer. Removal of old metal debris and barbwire within the east side of the park was seen as beneficial.
 - Generate public relations and outreach.
 - Schedule community events for the park and coordinate with area activities in Hillsdale and Copake.
 - Later this year, hire a professional community planning and design firm to coordinate a community-wide survey and planning process for the park.
 - Funding to hire the community planning and design firm will come from dedicated park funds and donations.
 - Determine what is feasible and appropriate and obtain estimates related to various proposed improvements and develop a fundraising plan.
 - Establish routine budgeting and accounting practices to ensure park improvement coordination, fiscal tracking, and fundraising.



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



The Communications Committee, L to R: Steele Andrews, Bob Kessler, Ann Baldwin, Peter Cipkowski

ORGANIZATION:

Chairperson: Ann Baldwin

Members: Steele Andrews, Peter Cipkowski, Bob Kessler

MISSION:

The primary mission of the committee is to keep the public informed of the activities of town government. We want the people to be able to readily gain access to the decisions of the Town Board. A secondary mission is the promotion of the town and its businesses. We would like more people to become aware of the beauty of Hillsdale and the variety of its businesses so as to encourage visitors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The website has had about 275,000 hits this year; we included more town government information . The majority of the hits this year were from people looking at the annual report and new local laws.
- The Welcome Brochure will be mailed to 25 new property owners, additional brochures can be found in the Town Hall. Five of these new owners are Hillsdale residents.
- The writing, editing, and compilation of this fourth annual report.

The costs have been minimal. They included copying, postage for mailing the brochure, printing the annual report, and \$650.00 for the Webmaster. We have a budget of \$1800.00 for 2008.

GOALS FOR 2008:

1. Improve communication between the townspeople and Town Government officials
2. Publish a quarterly newsletter.
3. Update the website

THE PLANNING BOARD



The Planning Board, L to R: Ellen Levy, Richard Freiman, Patti Rohrlich, Hank Henward, Ron Morales, Scott Cooper, Bud Gardner
Photo by Sabina Curti

ORGANIZATION:

Chairman: Howard (Hank) Henward

Vice Chairman: Scott Cooper

Committee Members:

Richard Freiman

Charles (Bud) Gardner, III

Patti Rohrlich

Ron Morales

Ellen Levy

Robina Ward, Secretary

All members of the Planning Board are volunteers.

The Planning Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 PM in the Hillsdale Town Hall. For an appointment, call Planning Board Secretary Robina Ward, at 518 929-2580 or e-mail her at PlanningBoard@taconic.net.

MISSION:

The charter of the Board is to review and guide proposed development projects so that they are in compliance with the concepts, philosophy and regulations set forth in the Hillsdale Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, 5/1/95 (revised 6/20/00). The principal goals of the Comprehensive Plan are to maintain the rural character of Hillsdale and protect our environment.

The Board is therefore committed to maintaining the rural character of Hillsdale and protecting its environment.

OPERATIONS:

The usual business of the Board meetings includes informational sessions regarding lot line adjustments, minor subdivisions (four or less parcels), and major subdivisions, which have five or more parcels. The Board endeavors to work with applicants during the planning process to mitigate the impact of proposed developments in keeping with the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. When the review process has been completed and all criteria have been satisfied, a public hearing is held. The Board makes a concerted effort to bring interested neighbors into the planning process so that the issues of the proposed development are addressed during the early stages of the review process.

2007 ACTIVITY:

PROJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION:

- Joseph Haley – School House Road – minor subdivision
- Alfred Matikow – Old Highway/Texas Hill Road – minor/major subdivision
- Frank Mac Gruer – Green River – major/minor subdivision

PROJECTS REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

- Kathleen Williams - a Community Land Trust creating four cluster houses on a 12.6 acre parcel.
- Peter Greer – Dawson Road – major subdivision
- Gregory Olsen – Mitchell Street – major subdivision
- Neil Costa – Ridge Lane - minor subdivision
- Brendan Maloof/Les Partners – Mitchell Street – major Subdivision
- Chris Bloch – Dugway Road – minor subdivision
- Broadway, Inc. – East End Hill – industrial building site plan review
- Tom Mansfield – Overlook Drive - minor subdivision

OTHER BUSINESS:

Resignation of Board Member Mary Lou Kersten and term expiration of Ellen Levy
Received \$2360.00 in application fees and \$5400.00in recreation fees.

Members of the Planning Board were active participants in most of the Comprehensive
Plan Review Subcommittee

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE



The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee: standing, Mia Conti, Caroline Stewart, seated, L to R: Alexia Lalli, Gretchen Stevens, Patti Rohrlich, Sabina Curti, Robina Ward

ORGANIZATION:

Chairman: Patti Rohrlich

Replaced by Tom Carty in late 2007

Steering Committee

Affordable Housing Committee: Ellen Levy

Agriculture Committee: Caroline Stewart

Enforcement Committee: Robina Ward (committee currently inactive)

Hamlet Committee: Iona Lutey – replaced by David Ruede in late 2007

Natural Resources Committee: Gretchen Stevens

Preservation Committee: Alexia Lalli

Scenic Overlay Committee: Sabina Curti – replaced by Deborah Bowen in late 2007

The committee is made up of full and part-time residents of Hillsdale, all Volunteers.

2007 ACTIVITIES

In late 2007, the steering committee appointed a new chairman, Tom Carty. Tom has been a full-time resident of Hillsdale since 1992.

In order to clarify the work of each of the sub-committees listed below, each group spent the latter part of 2007 preparing individual mission statements that will help focus their efforts in the coming year. These mission statements will be completed early in 2008.

The Affordable Housing Committee continued its efforts to develop strategies to increase the availability of affordable housing to the Hamlet and town wide.

The Agriculture Committee continued its work in developing the Farmer's Market and expanded the number of market days.

The Hamlet Committee's work during the year centered on Hamlet beautification and fundraising to continue these beautification efforts, development of ideas for a pedestrian friendly downtown and the encouragement of small town friendly business development. A "request for proposal" for a Hamlet Planner will incorporate all of these and other ideas and will be completed and ready for submission in early 2008.

The Natural Resources Committee worked to find a firm to perform an aquifer study and to find grant money to fund the effort. This search is nearing completion.

The Preservation Committee applied for and received two grants to hire a consultant who would identify buildings in the Hamlet that are of historical or architectural significance. The grants received were \$7,500 from the New York State Preservation Society and \$1,500 from the Berkshire Taconic Foundations. The consulting firm of Larson Fisher Associates of Woodstock, NY was retained and work on the project has begun.

The Scenic Committee was most active during 2007. Under the direction of Sabina Curti, the committee, after hours of research and meetings, prepared a draft proposal for changes to the zoning regulations to protect our ridgelines and steep slopes and to prevent clear cutting in designated areas. This proposal was presented to the Town Board and was instrumental in having regulations passed by the town board in late 2007.

ZONING ENFORCEMENT



Zoning Enforcement Officer:
Ed Ferratto.

ORGANIZATION:

The Town Board appoints this position.

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 9-11 AM. Inspections are performed Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

MISSION:

The zoning officer investigates complaints about possible zoning violations and determines if building plans are in compliance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Ed Ferratto has been the Zoning Officer for the Town of Hillsdale since January 2005. He was also a Code Enforcement Officer until the Town Board realized the need for a separate Zoning Officer position, due to increased activity and new town laws. The responsibilities are to determine building setbacks, issue building permits, area variances, and special use permits. In addition, the zoning officer responds to resident complaints about properties.

The complaints are in the form of letters, phone calls or office visits. Complaints for property violations are usually for debris, unregistered automobiles, or buildings done without a building permit. These complaints often require several visits from the zoning officer before the individuals come into compliance with either the Town's Comprehensive Plan, or the New York State Building Codes, or the New York State Property and Maintenance Codes.

2007 ACTIVITY:

- 11 office visits
- 58 phone calls
- 47 property visits
- 6 special permits
- 27 complaints
- 1 Cease and Desist Order
- 5 Orders to Remedy Violations

ZONING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT



The Building Department, L to R: John Florio, Code Enforcement Officer,
Teresa Kisselbrack, Secretary, Peter Goldman, Deputy CEO
Photo by Sabina Curti

ORGANIZATION:

John Florio, Code Enforcement Officer / Zoning Enforcement Officer
Ed Ferratto, Deputy Code Enforcement Officer
Pete Goldman, Code Enforcement Officer / Zoning Enforcement Officer
Teresa Kisselbrack, Secretary

The Town Board appoints all three positions.

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday 9:00 – 11:00 am
Thursday 9:00 – 11:00 am
Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 am

Appointments are encouraged

Inspections are routinely scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Zoning Officer investigates zoning violation concerns and assures building plans are in compliance with the Towns Comprehensive Plan.

The Code Enforcement Officer review all building plans and issues building permits. Throughout, and at the completion of construction, the structures are inspected for compliance with the Town building permit and the NYS Building Code. If all is in compliance, a final Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

2007 ZONING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICE ACTIVITY

Total Permits 114

Residential

New homes	11	Garages	4
Alterations	10	Garage Additions/Alterations	3
Additions	8	Accessory Buildings	2
Decks / Porches	11	Pools / Enclosures	5
Re-siding / Re-roofing	7	Miscellaneous	12

Commercial 1

Alterations/Additions 3
 Gas station 0

Demolition Permits 2
 Renewal of 2006 permits 22

Total Construction Costs: \$10,446,423.00

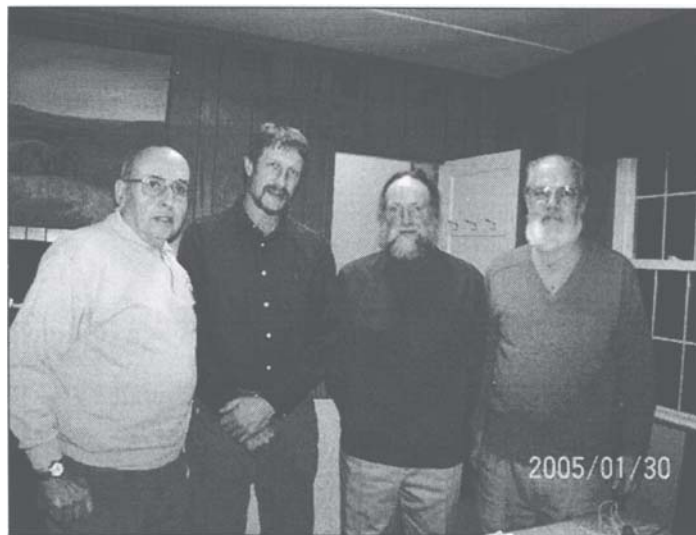
Total Fees Collected: \$55,292.00

Certificate of Occupancy 29
 Certificate of Compliance 7
 Certificate of Inspection 3
 Collected Fees \$1,195.00

Title Search Reports 49
 Collected Fees \$1715.00

Total Fees Collected: \$58,202.00

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS



ORGANIZATION:

Craig Norton, Chairman

Juanita O'Rourke

Rocco Defronzo

Casey Kuhn

Jeffrey Sills

All members of the committee are volunteers who find this work interesting, challenging, and richly rewarding. The Zoning Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month in the Town Hall.

MISSION:

The Zoning Board of Appeals issues permits and variances to applicants who need special permission due to the interpretation of the Comprehensive Plan by the Zoning Officer or Planning Board.

OPERATIONS:

Hillsdale's innovative zoning law, which has been called "state of the art" and has become a model for other communities wishing to update outdated zoning, places an unusual amount of responsibility on the zoning board of appeals, a responsibility we take seriously. The law is deliberately worded in such a way that we frequently need to refer to the "introduction" and "title and scope" chapters to ensure that we are interpreting the law as was intended. In Hillsdale zoning law there are very few activities which are actually prohibited and also very few activities which are permitted without first going through the special permit process. Accordingly, property owners are afforded the greatest possible freedom in how they use their land, while at the same time providing the greatest possible protection against incompatible uses to neighbors and to the town as a whole.

TAX COLLECTOR



Joe Hanselman Jr. is the tax collector for the town of Hillsdale. It is an elected position.

The tax collector prints the tax bills and mails them to the property owners. He collects the tax money due and keeps complete records.

Copies are readily available from him at his place of work or by way of a fax machine.

There are 1565 tax parcels in Hillsdale.

Joseph Hanselman Jr., The Tax Collector, welcomes you to the Town of Hillsdale.

The Tax Office is responsible for the collection of property taxes for approximately 1,600 parcels. All powers and duties of this office, as well as collection procedures, are statutory and defined in the New York State Real Property Tax Law.

My deputy, Carol Hanselman, and I welcome any inquires pertaining to collection policies as well as general tax information. We offer our assistance to residents, realtors, lending institutions, title companies, and other entities that may require tax information. The tax roll is available for public inspections upon request.

The hours of the Tax Office during January only, are Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon located at the Town Hall, phone (518) 325-5073. Other days or hours are available by appointment by calling our home office at (518) 325-5537.

DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF TAX COLLECTOR

The Town of Hillsdale Tax Collector is a four-year elected position. Before entering upon the duties of the office, it is required that all tax collecting officers take and subscribe the Constitutional oath of office. Once the Collector has taken the oath, he/she becomes the insurer and guarantor of all moneys, securities, papers and records that the law provides shall be in their custody.

The Tax Collector collects the General Property Taxes in January. The bills are mailed in early January. The tax bill covers the period of January 1st. - December 31st. Payments can be made upon receipt of bill through January 31st, without penalty. If they are paid on/after February 1st, there is a penalty, see the following chart.

After May 31st, the bills for all unpaid parcels are turned over to Columbia County.

Payments may be made in person by check or cash and are accepted during the previous hours listed. Payments can also be made by mail to: Hillsdale Tax Collector, PO Box 232, Hillsdale, NY 12529. *Please do not send cash through the mail.*

The Property Tax bill contains levies for the Town, County, Fire District, and any special districts. In addition, if school or water bills are unpaid, they will be re-levied on the Property Tax Bill. If a previous owner was receiving an exemption, a payback amount may also appear in the bill which covers the time period that the new property owner enjoyed a previous owner's exemption to which they were not entitled.

The Hillsdale Tax Office does not collect School Taxes for the Taconic Hills School District. School Tax Bills are mailed in early September. The due date is specified on the bill. Please contact Harriet Kane at (518) 325-0320 with any questions you may have regarding School Taxes. All unpaid School Tax bills are turned over to Columbia County, and are re-levied on the following Property Tax Bill with an additional penalty.

THIRD PARTY REQUEST

To assist our elderly and disabled residents, third party notification of tax bills is offered. Property owners who are disabled or 65 years of age or older, and own a one, two, or three family home, may designate an adult consenting third party to receive duplicate copies of tax bills and notices of unpaid taxes. In order to receive this service, one must fill out a third party notification form RP-923, which is available in the Tax Office.

Many residents have their taxes escrowed with lending institutions. It is the lending institution's responsibility to notify the town for which they are responsible for paying. Many banks contract with Tax Service Organizations (TSOs), which are agencies that service escrow accounts for the banks. These organizations provide us with a listing of their customers and their identifying account numbers. The larger organizations do this primarily by computer disc. In the event that a resident received a bill that should have gone to the bank, it is still the responsibility of the bank to call for that bill. If the bill should have gone to the homeowner, but went to the bank, it is the homeowner's responsibility to know that taxes are due. Please call our office immediately and we will issue you a duplicate bill. The failure to mail a statement or the failure of a property owner to receive a statement will not affect the validity of the taxes or interest prescribed by law, (New York State Real Property Tax Law §922). If you should have received a bill, but have not during the first week of January, please contact this office for a duplicate bill.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. I never received my bill, or received it late; do I still have to pay the penalty?

Yes, the failure to mail a statement or the failure of a property owner to receive a statement will not affect the validity of the taxes or interest prescribed by law (New York State Real Property Tax Law §922). In addition, neither the Tax Collector nor any other official has legal authority to waive statutory penalty charges. These are fixed by the Real Property Tax Law. If they are waived, the collecting officer will be personally responsible. As all records are audited by State examiners, there is absolutely no discretion in this matter. The Constitution and the law of the State mandates the procedure.

2. If I mail my payment on the due date do I have to pay a penalty?

No. New York State Real Property Tax Law §925, provides as follows: "Payment of taxes by mail, when enclosed in a postpaid wrapper (envelope) properly addressed to the appropriate collecting officer and is deposited in a post office or official depository under the exclusive care and custody of the United States Post Office shall, upon delivery, be deemed to have been made to such officer on the date of the United States Postmark on such wrapper. The provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of postmarks not made by the United States Post Office. A postage meter postmark is not a postmark made by the United States Post Office and, therefore, is not within in the provisions of Real Property Tax Law §925. Payments can not be deemed timely because of a postage meter postmark date on an envelope containing a tax payment (Op. New York State Comp. 69-170).

If taxes are not received until after the due date, they are not paid until after the due date unless they fall squarely within the provisions of section 925 of the Real Property Tax Law, and the penalty must be added and collected. No Town Official or employee can waive the penalty (Op. New York State Comp. 68-626).

3. Do you accept payment with credit cards?

No. The Town has not entered into an agreement with a credit card processing center to enable tax payers to use any major credit card to pay their property taxes. If you would choose to use this method to pay your taxes, there is a convenience fee of approximately 2% of the tax bill added to the transaction. This money goes to the credit card processing center, not to the Town of Hillsdale. There is a cost to the Town for providing this service. To keep the tax rates down, the town chose not to adopt this service, since most property owners are already complaining of high tax bills. If you are willing to pay the additional fee, please call and let us know so we can keep track of the responses for possible changes in the future.

4. Can I pay my taxes in installments?

The Town of Hillsdale does accept partial payments. The recommended installment is payments in thirds, the first in January, the second in March, and the final payment in May. Please be aware the penalties are still in effect and does not exempt you from paying them. Please contact this office for the amount due if you are interested in this option, especially the final payment due.

5. Can I pre-pay my taxes?

No, the warrant constitutes the mantle of authority for the collecting officer to receive the taxes. Therefore, the warrant must be regarded as the instrument which empowers the collecting officer to begin the collection. Collection authority can not begin prior to the date of the warrant.

6. What if my mailing address changes?

Address changes must be made in writing. Notify either the Tax Office or the Assessor's Office by mail or fax if you wish to change your mailing address.

7. What if my mortgage is paid up?

In order to make sure you will receive the tax bills prior to the penalty period (February for Town/County Taxes), you must notify the Tax Office in your Town. Send or fax a copy of the "Satisfaction of Mortgage" letter from your lender.

8. How do I apply for exemptions?

All exemptions are handled by the Assessor's Office. Any questions, please call Pam Cook, Assessor at (518) 325-3636, between 8:30 am and 12:00 noon or email hillsdaleassessor@fairpoint.net

9. Why don't I see the STAR exemption?

The basic STAR exemption only affects your School Tax portion of your primary residence.



FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Department: L to R top: Fred Miller, Mark Edelman, Richard Briggs, Robert Burns; bottom Clif Conklin, Darryl Waite, Bill Stottlar



ORGANIZATION:

Executive Officers

President: George W. Stottlar

Vice President: Brian C. Edelman

Secretary: Chad Malarchuk

Treasurer: Leland W. Edelman, Jr.

Company Trustees:

Robert Hopkins James

Knickerbocker

Richard Miller

Line Officers:

Chief: Frederick R. Miller

1st Asst. Chief: Mark C. Edelman

2nd Asst. Chief: Richard H. Briggs

1st Capt.: Robert W. Burns

2nd Capt.: Clifton Conklin

1st Lieut.: Teddy M. Baird

2nd Lieut.: George W. Stottlar

Fire Police Captain:

Herbert Schmeichel

Lieut.: Robert Briggs, Sr.

Fire District Commissioners

Chairman: Robert Arnholter

Secretary: Herbert Schmeichel

Treasurer: Betsy Edelman

George Atwood

Fred Canetto

Thomas Kane

Ladies Auxiliary Officers

President: Wina Briggs

Vice President: Margaret Baird

Secretary: Heather Conklin

Treasurer: Amanda Burns

Total Members: 45 – 100% volunteer

MISSION:

To be on call 24/7 to respond to all emergencies and to assist as requested with neighboring Fire Departments.

OPERATIONS:

- The Department is dispatched by the County 911 System. The Department is also hooked into the police radio network and can respond to emergencies in their area.
- Three new firefighters completed a 26 week Fire fighting 1 course. This course is mandatory training for all new members and is taught by State instructors.

- Further, there is “OSHA” training and other life-safety drills. The training is extensive and certification is awarded to those that meet all requirements.
- The Firehouse is solely owned by the Fire Company.
- Funding comes from public donations.
- Fire equipment and apparatus is owned by the Fire District.
- The Fire Company’s major fund raising events include the Palm Sunday Brunch and the Annual Ball.

2007 ACTIVITY:

Total Calls	116	Volunteer Hours	Man Hours
Fire Alarms	23	Drills	321
False Alarms	30	Fires:	1363
Good Intent	15	Training	1272
Hazardous Conditions	21	Other (fund raisers, etc.)	1978
Rescue/EMS	10		
Service	17	Total	4934



COMMUNITY RESCUE SQUAD

283 Mountain View Road
P.O. Box 327
Copake, New York 12516
(518)329-2200 Fax (518) 329-2159



Rescue Squad: Harold Jensen, Hank Lambert, Betsy Edelman, Jeanie Scottie, Patti Proper, Dee Dee Shadic, Diane Hamm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Betsy Edelman, Executive Director
Harold Jensen, Director
Diane Ham, Director
Danielle Shadic, Director
Patti Proper, Director

ADMINISTRATION

Jeanie Scotti, Administrator
P. Henry Lambert, Assistant Administrator,
ALS Coordinator
Joanne Pilkington , Treasurer

PROGRAMS

CLASSES:

CPR Classes and Health Care Provider Education, many of our members are trained and NYS certified to instruct these classes.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS:

At anytime you can come into our station and have one of the on duty personnel check your blood pressure for free.

WHEEL CHAIR or OTHER MEDICAL EQUIPMENT:

If you need to borrow a wheelchair, walker, crutches or may be a cane, we have a supply of donated equipment you may borrow simply by filling out an equipment loan form. Then return it when you or your loved one is back on their feet.

RESTAURANT CPR EQUIPMENT:

This program helps the local eating establishment comply with the Health Law that requires them to provide CPR equipment in their restaurant. This equipment is available to anyone with experience in CPR. If a patron suffers a cardiac arrest or respiratory arrest it can be used until EMS arrives.

PATHWAY TO REMEMBRANCE:

This is a brick walkway at our building. You may purchase a brick in memory of a loved one, a special person, or pet in your life. This pathway has grown beautifully over the years.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

The staff regularly attends community days and community events, as well as school events and special programs to promote the better health of our community members.

PERSONNEL

NYS PARAMEDICS: 16

NYS EMTS: 14

NYS ADVANCED EMTS: 1

VOLUNTEERS: 10

NYS CERTIFIED FIRST RESPONDERS: 2

We are Proud of our Volunteer Board Members and our Staff Employees for their continued efforts throughout the year.

EQUIPMENT:

2004 Ford Van Type III Ambulance 99,301 MILES

2003 Ford Van Type III Ambulance Four Wheel Drive 34,403 MILES

2 State of the art Heart Monitors, CPAP Unit,

Total miles traveled 49,072 by both or units

CALL VOLUME:

Total 911 Calls: 856

BREAK DOWN OF CALLS

Patient was transported to a Hospital 421 times

Patient condition required Advanced Life Support 315 times

Patient condition required Basic Life Support 173 times

The patient refused care or refused to go to the Hospital 196 times

We stood by at a fire scene 117 times

We stood by at a community event 39 times

We assembled a second crew for a second call 66 times

Requested mutual aid from area agencies 56 times

We gave mutual aid to other areas at their request 24 times

Helicopter transport for critically injured patients 14 times

The Community Rescue Squad is dedicated to providing the best and most cost effective Advanced Life Support Ambulance Service to our community members. We provide this pre-hospital care 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Our staff trains many hours each year to insure they have the most up to date information and techniques to care for our patients. We applaud our employees and volunteers for their dedication.

**Proudly serving the Towns of Ancram, Claverack, Copake,
Gallatin, Hillsdale and Taghkanic Since 1946**

GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Town of Hillsdale

General Fund

Comparative Summary of Fund Balance, Revenue and Appropriations
for the years ended December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007

	12/31/06	2007	12/31/07	2007
	Actual Budget	Adjusted	Acutal	Variance
Fund Balance 1/1	<u>\$420,908.00</u>		<u>\$555,740.00</u>	
<u>Revenues</u>				
Property Taxes	\$140,752.00	\$114,808.00	\$114,808.00	\$ -
Paid in Lieu of Taxes	1,227.00		-	\$ -
Penalties on Taxes	6,513.00	6,000.00	6,434.00	(434.00)
Sales Tax & Franchise Fees	151,194.00	130,000.00	133,869.00	(3,869.00)
Department Income	78,442.00	2,000.00	65,472.00	(63,472.00)
Intergovernmental Charges	15,991.00	15,100.00	16,649.00	(1,549.00)
Use of Money & Property	27,244.00	11,000.00	37,403.00	(26,403.00)
Licenses & Permits	1,503.00	50,500.00	435.00	50,065.00
Fine & Forfeitures	17,079.00	16,000.00	22,225.00	(6,225.00)
Sales	4,336.00	5,000.00	9,762.00	(4,762.00)
Insurance Recovery & Misc	7,404.00		6,008.00	(6,008.00)
State Aid	145,920.00	106,907.00	187,642.00	(80,735.00)
Federal Aid			10,458.00	(10,458.00)
Appropriated Fund Balance	120,600.00			
Total Revenue	\$597,605.00	<u>\$577,915.00</u>	\$611,165.00	<u>\$(153,850.00)</u>
Total Revenue & Fund Balance	1,018,513.00		1,166,905.00	
<u>Appropriations</u>				
General Government Support	\$196,434.00	\$253,941.00	\$234,898.00	\$19,043.00
Public Safety	25,523.00	36,219.00	33,793.00	2,426.00
Health	270.00	280.00	280.00	-
Transportation	69,169.00	73,089.00	70,496.00	2,593.00
Economic Assistance	1,548.00	1,800.00	1,134.00	666.00
Culture & Recreation	47,452.00	52,530.00	49,142.00	3,388.00
Home & Community Service	35,481.00	28,225.00	28,599.00	(374.00)
Employee Benefits	86,896.00	81,639.00	76,211.00	5,428.00
Interfund Transfers	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Total Appropriations	\$462,773.00	<u>\$577,723.00</u>	\$544,553.00	<u>\$33,170.00</u>
Fund Balance 12/31	<u>\$555,740.00</u>		<u>\$622,352.00</u>	