



March 2008

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Upcoming Events

March 6 – Fire

District Public Meeting

on Bond Vote

March 11 - Fire

District Bond Vote

Civic Association Meeting Dates

All meetings are scheduled to be held at the Emma S. Clark Library at 7:30 p.m.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Monday, March 3	Town-Wide Issues	Monday, April 7	Library TBA
Monday, May 5	TVSD Budget	Monday, June 2	Party/Review

Good Planning Takes Time

At our February meeting, the Setauket Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners presented their plans for construction of a new fire house on the corner of Main Street and Old Town Road, and a new Fire District administration building on Nicolls Road to the rear of the existing Nicolls Road fire house. A lively discussion followed the presentation, with many interesting questions posed by community residents. The amount of the proposed bond issue is approximately \$14 million, plus interest payments over the life of the 20-year bond. A vote is currently proposed for March 11, 2008. A recent editorial in The Village Times Herald asked, "What's the Rush?" – questioning why the commissioners have allowed the public little time for consideration prior this important vote. This will be the second time the Board of Fire Commissioners will have asked the residents for permission to borrow funding for this project – the first attempt, back in the Fall of 2005, for \$17.5M, met defeat - 90% of the votes cast were against the proposition.

Here is part of a letter sent by our Association earlier this year to the Town and Fire Commissioners:

"Firehouses play a unique role in the downtown areas throughout our country. They provide essential emergency services and are a dominating architectural element of the neighborhood streetscape. In many ways, these "citadels of safety" anchor the design and development of the surrounding areas.

The main Setauket Fire District firehouse, located at the corner of Route 25A and Old Town Road, has a major influence on the commercial streetscape of our downtown. Because of this, and the considerable public expense to fund any new construction, we believe it is important to seek public opinion input in working out the best site plan and architecture design for any new firehouse construction."

Viewpoint by Ron DiBiase: The Upcoming Fire District Bond Issue Part II

At our general membership meeting in February, the public learned for the first time the specifics of a \$14 million, two building construction project: cash on hand \$2 million dollars; amount to be borrowed \$12 million; projected interest rate for the \$12 million to be borrowed, over the 20 year life of the Bond, is 5.25%; projected start date of construction is one year from the date of bond approval; the new buildings WILL NOT be LEED certified (Green Building), and energy modeling was not completed; the Town of Brookhaven building department HAS NOT given approval for any site plans or architectural plans.

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P.O. Box 2432, Setauket, N.Y. 11733

Web address: www.CivicAssociationOfTheSetauketsAndStonyBrook.org

Civic Association of the Setaukets and Stony Brook

PO Box 2432

Setauket, NY 11733

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NEXT MEETING:

MONDAY, March 4, 2008

EMMA CLARK LIBRARY, 7:30 P.M.

All Things Town a presentation by our Town Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld. This will be a special opportunity to learn about the latest developments at One Independence Hill, as well as a chance for you to discuss issues of local concern. Please join us in the Emma S. Clark Memorial Library's Community Room at 7:30PM!

Viewpoint by Ron DiBiasi (Continued from front)

The Fire Commissioners stated the project has been in the planning stages for over twenty months. **WHY** did it take so long to inform the public? **WHY** do we only get a month to think about it before a Bond vote is cast upon us? **WHY** weren't the Fire Commissioners prepared to answer basic questions about energy modeling, funding, and interest rates? **WHY** are the workings of the Setauket Fire District so secretive? Shouldn't our elected officials want public input? Due to the overwhelming amount of public interest and questions raised during the presentation, and the inability of the Fire Commissioners to answer many questions, our civics requested the Setauket Fire Commissioners push back their Bond vote so as to give the public more opportunity to learn more of specifics and ask questions about the project.

The Setauket Fire Commissioners presented their ideas, and are asking for our support to allow the borrowing of \$12 million, and the use of \$2 million currently sitting in reserve funds. Do I have confidence that this project will succeed... and our hard-earned dollars will not be wasted in cost overruns due to poor planning? NO, I do not.

We are now faced with a difficult choice. Do we **NOT** support the Bond, and thereby **possibly** hamper our volunteer firefighters and EMTs, or do we close our eyes and hand \$14 million to four extremely ill-prepared elected officials?

Our Nomination Process

During the next few months, our Association's Nominations Committee begins the process of determining a new slate of officers to guide the Association from September 2008-May 2009. (QUESTION: Is it just officers, not board members as well?) The Nominations Committee seeks civic leaders and activists that represent the diverse interests of the Three Village community. If you wish to serve, or know of someone who would make a good addition to our Association's Executive Board, please forward the name of the candidate with any pertinent information to: The Civic Association of the Setaukets, PO 2432, Setauket, NY, 11790, Attention: Nominations Committee.

Greenway Update

As reported in our last issue, the first phase of the Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway is under construction on the old Route 25A Bypass. Work is suspended now due to the winter weather, but it is anticipated that by this Fall the bike path will be accessible to hikers, walkers, bikers, birdwatchers, and naturalists. Over the next few years, the remaining portions of the 3.3-mile public right-of-way will be constructed - creating a pedestrian/bike link from Stony Brook to Port Jefferson Station. And there seems to be good news that the long-discussed Rails to Trails project from Port Jefferson Station to Wading River is making solid progress. This eleven-mile bike and hiking trail on an unused LIRR roadbed would be easily linked to the Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway. The result: a unique, safe, and beautiful fourteen-mile recreation corridor.

The Friends of the Greenway, an arm of the Three Village Community Trust, has been formed to maintain, protect and enhance the Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway. Consider becoming active in the Friends of the Greenway! For more information visit the web site: www.threevillagecommunitytrust.org.