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# Flood plains threaten village

## Village seeks ways to mitigate/eliminate high flood insurance premiums

After hearing about news of skyrocketing flood insurance premiums hitting local property owners, the Village Board of Trustees is taking a three-pronged approach to lessen or rid affected property owners of the impact.

The Village is seeking engineering assistance, help from congressional and state representatives, and cooperation from other communities with similar circumstances.

Three creeks pass through the Village of Dansville: Mill Creek on the southeast and Bradner and Brewery Creeks on the east side of the community. While Mill Creek can swell in volume to a raging torrent, it has not been as big of a financial drain on property owners as the latter two creeks, which may seem strange.

Bradner and Mill creeks are very shallow streams that are generally little more than ankle deep and can be jumped over without much effort by older children. They only become a threat during some very heavy downpours or winter melt-offs when debris and ice jams can clogged them up and cause them to overflow. It does not happen often, though in more recent years it has happened or threatened to happen more than once a year, especially along Bradner Creek where it flows between Seward and Perine

streets.

That being said, flooding along either of these two streams hardly measures up to the catastrophes experienced along the Chemung or Susquehanna rivers, not to mention those caused by Irene, Sandy, and Katrina. Most flooding has been in yards and basements, neither of which is covered by flood insurance. In fact, when Agnes went through the area in 1972, neither stream caused a problem.

Still, according to data used by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), flooding could, under certain conditions, reach the first floors of many houses on the Bradner and Brewery creek flood plains, and as a result these houses have to have flood insurance if the mortgage is covered by a commercial loan. An estimated 200-plus residential properties could be affected.

The idea of insurance is not so much the problem as the amount. The deluge of nation-wide natural disasters has drained FEMA and brought on premium



**Tranquil Bradner Creek just before flowing under Seward St.**

increases that have been astronomical, in some cases more than doubling them. The perception is that small communities like Dansville are having to pay for the shortsightedness of those who would build in more destructive zones such as on low-lying coastal barrier islands and beaches. People here are having ownership of their homes put at risk not by flooding but by flood insurance. Even if a person owns the house outright, if they put it up for sale, who will want to buy it?

The critical issue is that if homes on the flood plains become unaffordable because of the insurance, then they will lose value and that will lead to numerous serious problems for the entire village. It could create a residential dead zone through the heart of the community.

The Village has already contacted its engineering firm, MRB Group of Rochester, asking for an proposal to study the situation and devise a plan to mitigate the impact or even eliminate the threat of flooding altogether. The Village has been told there are grants available from the state for such work.

A letter has also been sent to Congressman Chris Collins inviting him and a representative of FEMA to visit Dansville to tour the affected areas and meet with property owners. Both of our U.S. senators and our state senator and assemblyman have been copied in on that invitation. At the same time, Mayor Vogt is reaching out to other communities near and wide in order to combat this threat.

Stay tuned for more news as it develops.

## Village awarded state housing rehab grant

**T**he Village has been informed by the New York State Office of Community Renewal that we are the recipient of a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The CDBG will help the community address its affordable housing needs. Working collaboratively with community members, we will be able to revitalize our housing and improve the quality of life by providing new home ownership opportunities and by upgrading living facilities through rehabilitation.

The program details will be made available as

## Notices

### Water meter changeover

**A**bout 100 residences connected to the Village of Dansville water supply have yet to make arrangements to have the meters changed out for the new system. Rent payers who find themselves in this situation are requested to contact the Water and Sewer Office at 335-5270 immediately to schedule a time to make the switch. Going to the new meters is not an option; it is mandatory.

### Storm photos wanted

**A**nyone having photos of the impact of 1972's tropical storm, Agnes, is requested to contact the Code Enforcement/Zoning Office at 335-6955. Thank you!

### Sidewalk replacement program

**R**esidential property owners wishing to participate this year in the Village's sidewalk replacement program are asked to contact the Village Clerk's Office at 335-5330. The Department of Public Works will have a busy year repairing our streets and doing other major work, so interested persons are asked to apply as soon as possible so that the work can be scheduled before the department becomes busy on the other projects.

soon as the state forwards them. We will post them in the local newspaper and shopper and on the Village website.

## Notes from the Planning and Zoning Office

**Y**ou may have read that Taco Bell is coming to Dansville. The application still has to go through a couple of Planning Board steps yet,



but short of any major problems, the new business will be built on the site of the former Shaver collision business next to Wentworth Motor. It will not include a KFC. Still, it will provide more employment opportunities for locals, especially for young people.

The Planning Board also heard about a project for Dansville Animal Hospital. It also has a couple steps to go through before final approval. The project will about double the size of that facility, which is located across Route 36 South from Noyes Memorial Hospital.

Also, plans for the new CVS have been approved and work should commence shortly on the building at the corner of Milton and Main streets. Of course, demolition of the structures on the site will have to be completed. Two-thirds of the buildings (the former shoe factory and service station) are down, with the now empty One Milton to be taken down shortly.

## Sewer plant nears major milestone

**T**he Village of Dansville Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) project is about to enter a new phase. With the harsh winter weather behind us, work at the plant has progressed quickly to the point that the new influent, SBR, process, and effluent structures are nearly operational and ready to go on



**A year ago the structure at left in the foreground was a processing tank filled with sludge. Today, it contains the air pumps for the SBR tank at right and storage for the treatment chemicals.**

line.

Testing of the equipment and system is on tap for mid-May, with the switch over scheduled for the first part of June. This is a couple weeks later than had been slated but still within the 18-month window to have the WWTP completed by fall. Once the switch is made, there will be no turning back, and demolition of the worn out older structures will commence.

Once the old structures are down (probably around July), work is expected to begin on the composting facility. However, the composting facility schedule will depend on how fast the Environmental Facilities Corporation processes the Village's financing request.

What follows are a few photos showing the progress at the plant.



**This photo shows the new influent building in the right rear. Sewage will enter the plant and flow through that building where grit, rags, and other material will be removed before it is pumped to the SBR tank. The tank at left will be removed.**



**This is the old influent tank, which in the adjacent photo is in the center rear. The screw pumps have deteriorated and no longer work. The tank is an in-ground structure exposed to the elements. This, too, will be removed once the changeover is made.**





**After the sewage passes from the influent building, it goes to the SBR tank where it is treated. Shown here are the air diffusers lining the bottom of half of the SBR tank. The solids will subsequently be pumped to other tanks for further processing while the water, now acceptable for discharge into Canaseraga Creek, will be removed through two decanters, one shown at left. Immediately below is a view of the effluent structure. The treated water will flow through it to Canaseraga Creek. Some of the water will be recycled for use at the plant. The bottom photo shows the pump building. It will remove the solids from the SBR tank for further processing in other tanks before it goes to the composting facility.**



## Waste Water Treatment Plant Photos