

## Annual Message 2010

I am once again appreciative of being afforded the opportunity to present this Annual Message, on the second anniversary of my official election as Clayton Town Supervisor. As we are all aware, the current economy has had a great impact on the way that we live our lives. While it has presented both detriments and opportunities, we have all had to make active changes in our lifestyles in an effort to deal with the issues. Just as each of us has had to make those hard decisions, individually, so too has the Town of Clayton.

Over the last two years, one of our major goals was to increase public access and education for the community and our taxpayers. Towards those goals, we have offered numerous public education workshops on assessment and other local topics, have posted immense amounts of material on our website, and have even had a meeting “live fed” onto the internet for those taxpayers who do not live locally year-round. We have invested a great amount of time in keeping our website updated with important local news, legal and public notices, upcoming events, and other information that we feel is our responsibility to share with the public. Even more, we have worked toward broadening our GIS capabilities with tools that allow us to provide more information to our taxpayers, such as the information that is available on our Clayton Map Viewer.

Beyond public access and education, we also plan to continue to support those organizations that rely on us as a major part of their operating budget, including the Paynter Senior Center and the Clayton Local Development Corporation, as well as those who we provide a helping hand to, such as the TI Museum, the Clayton Figure Skating Club, the TI Youth Hockey Association, etc. In addition, we plan to continue to offer quality services at our own facilities. The newly renamed Cerow Recreation Park will receive some new signage this year and the new Joint Town/Village of Clayton Court Complex will be completed at the Village Municipal Building. Also, the Town of Clayton has received two new grants for further construction in the public access area of the Riverwalk at the former Frink America site. There will undoubtedly be much going on there this coming Summer.

Within our Town Departments we have also seen many improvements. Our Code Enforcement office has made it through 18 months of operation and has successfully linked our Zoning Enforcement and Assessment offices in an effort to further ensure that assessments are equitable. The Highway Department has seen the completion of its new Sand/Salt Storage Building which will save taxpayer dollars previously lost through runoff from storage of materials outside. The Town is also part of the recently awarded Joint Infrastructure Management Initiative project, along with Jefferson and Lewis Counties

and several other municipalities. This will allow the Town to better manage their pavement and infrastructure. The Town, as a whole, is also currently participating in an asset management program to work toward better maintaining and preserving our assets. In addition, we are anticipating the acquisition of new computer equipment in the Town Clerk's Office that will allow for quicker deposit of payments received by check and fewer trips to the bank. This addition will provide for a more efficient operation.

The Town as a whole has taken great strides toward becoming more energy efficient and plans to continue on this path. To date, all Town buildings have received energy audits and as a result, the Town has implemented numerous suggestions. We have also agreed to further an energy-efficiency project at the Cerow Recreation Park pool which will occur early this year. Even more, we have applied for several grants through NYSERDA for solar projects at our Highway and Cerow Recreation Park Arena facilities.

Important to our community as a whole, the Town of Clayton received a designation as a Preserve America Community late last year. Preserve America is a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the program include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. And, late last year we were notified that we had successfully managed to pass legislation which named the Chaumont River as a Designated Inland Waterway. This opens up opportunities for other parts of the Clayton community, including the Hamlet of Depauville, and the communities of Orleans and Lyme, to grant opportunities through the NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. In addition, we currently await the Certificate of Completion for the Frink project from the Department of Environmental Conservation—which is expected in February. This document will officially end the environmental remediation efforts at the site and allow the Town and CLDC to solicit proposals from the prequalified developers for the site. Even more, the CLDC, Town, Village and Clayton Chamber of Commerce, as partners, anxiously await word on a grant that would provide \$1,114,971 of federal funding to assist in providing fifty additional dock slips at the Frink site. The Clayton community truly enjoys a great relationship between its government entities, service organizations, not for profits, businesses and community members!

Overall, our goals for this new year will be to expand upon all of the opportunities before us. We hope to continue to provide affordable, innovative, and high quality services, while preserving our heritage. In order to accomplish these goals, we will need to make tough decisions. But, together, we can make the right decisions. "When all is said and

done, the real citadel of strength of any community is in the hearts and minds and desires of those who dwell there.” ~Everett Dirksen, former U.S. Senator Minority Leader.