



# HEMPSTEAD VISIONS

March 2012

VOL. 26 NO.3

## A Better Hempstead Today; a Brighter Outlook for Tomorrow

### Mayor's Vision for the Village is Within Our Reach

On February 29, Hempstead Mayor Wayne Hall presented his annual State of the Village address to residents and local officials. This newsletter highlights several of the most important issues the Mayor spoke about to the crowd of 200-plus gathered at the Hempstead Public Library.



*"My vision is to see a thorough revitalization of Hempstead Village ... to see our Village become one of the most desirable communities on Long Island in which to live, work, learn and play. We are a community of diverse and gifted individuals, and through a coordinated economic and social-development strategy, I wholeheartedly believe that we can rise above the challenges and set a precedent for positive change. Indeed, we have already made great strides in that direction."* - Mayor Wayne J. Hall Sr.

### Downtown Redevelopment Plan Gains Momentum

The Village Board unanimously approved an agreement that officially designated Renaissance Downtowns-Urban America (RDU) as the master developer for the revitalization project, expected to create more than 3,500 permanent jobs and 10,000 construction jobs. In December, the Village received \$5 million in state aid to fund the project, which includes plans to rebuild the Village's antiquated sewer infrastructure. Other facets include new housing for residents of all income levels, a catering hall, shops, office and commercial uses, public open space and amenities, parking and entertainment.

The Village is currently working with the developers to create a Community Benefits Agreement that will detail a large-scale training and jobs program to ensure local participation in the economic development generated by the downtown redevelopment. My priority is to see that Village residents are not only given first consideration for new jobs, but that they have the opportunity to learn trade skills for a variety of permanent careers. The Village will appoint a Community Benefits Committee to ensure that all constituencies in the community benefit from the Village revitalization.

To kickstart the development, work on the sewer system is expected to begin early this summer. Although this project is separate from the work being overseen by RDU, the

connection is of critical importance to the Village. State officials have made it clear that it was because of our larger economic development plan that the money for sewer improvements was granted. The Village will apply for additional state and federal grants to increase the scope of repairs to the sewer system. We intend to use this funding to provide more jobs for local residents.

Construction projects under the oversight of the RDU is anticipated to begin by fall of 2012. I encourage all community members to learn more about the plans in order to gain the greatest benefits. Dozens of groups and hundreds of individuals have already met with the developers, and community meetings continue. Anyone interested in meeting with the developers or who wishes more information can call Latoya Sanders, Community Liaison, at the Renaissance office: (516) 307-8310. Similarly, residents who want to have a say in what types of shops and other amenities will be included in the development project are encouraged to share their views. For more information, visit [www.renewhempstead.com](http://www.renewhempstead.com). The link can also be accessed from the Village website: [www.villageofhempstead.org](http://www.villageofhempstead.org).

Sincerely,

Mayor Wayne J. Hall Sr.

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# Hempstead on the Rise: Village Improvements and Updates

*“The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as what direction we are moving.”*

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

## Winning the Battle Against Crime

Crime in the Village continued to decrease in the past year. In nearly every category, incidents of crime dropped from 2010 – 2011, with a 7 percent overall decrease over the previous year. Mayor Hall attributes these improvements in large part to the Village’s community policing initiatives. Several comprehensive police programs have been put in place, and the Village has partnered with county and community organizations in numerous efforts to increase the safety and security of residents, many specifically aimed at young people.

## New Acting Chief of Police

The Mayor’s administration and the Village Board are tremendously thankful for the hard work and dedication of recently retired Chief of Police Joseph Wing, whose efforts have contributed significantly to crime prevention in the Village. Last month, the Village appointed former Assistant Chief of Police Mike McGowan to Acting Chief of Police. The Mayor and his administration are confident that under his leadership the Village of Hempstead Police Department will continue to make great progress in reducing crime and increasing safety.

## New Cabaret License Requirement

While the Mayor’s administration and Village Board are actively supportive of new business development within the Village, historically, Hempstead has been inundated by an overabundance of businesses that thrive primarily on the sale of alcohol. Often, these establishments have indirectly contributed to alcohol-related incidents of crime, and it is clear to the Mayor that these kinds of businesses must be closely monitored to ensure the protection of residents, and young people in particular.

This January, the Village Board voted unanimously to amend the Village code to require any business providing entertainment to apply for a cabaret license. The code amendment makes it mandatory for bars and restaurants that have music, singing, dancing or amusement to obtain a cabaret license. Licensing provides Hempstead with a valuable tool to protect residents from public disturbances and criminal activity.

## Leading the Fight for Fairness and Equality Village is First in U.S. to Take Proactive Stance Against Reprehensible Foreclosure Policies

Last year, in an unprecedented move, Hempstead Village pulled its money out of JP Morgan Chase bank as part of a statewide campaign led by New York Communities for Change. The organization called on the bank to improve its lending and loan-modification policies. Hempstead has been recognized as the first municipality in the country to terminate a bank account due to foreclosure policies. Several weeks ago, the Mayor and other Village officials marched alongside community members in a show of solidarity against the abuses of big banks and the housing crisis that has resulted from their policies. The Village administration continues to work toward improving the situation for mortgage holders.

## Education: The Key to the Future

An important theme of Mayor Hall’s address was *Education + Opportunity = Individual and Community Success*. The Mayor expressed his commitment to ensuring that the Village’s young people be given every opportunity to succeed. “We urgently need to improve education results in Hempstead. Our children deserve better. By aligning the private sector with our public schools and the community we will eliminate the widening achievement gap for all children and ensure that every child has the best opportunities for success.”

The Mayor urged the community to work together to build a better education system, from pre-natal health, to kindergarten readiness, to reading and math skills, to family supports, to career-readiness. “These are the building blocks we need to create healthy, diverse, equitable communities,” he said.

Mayor Hall also discussed several Village initiatives to strengthen the educational experience of Hempstead children and teens, including his own involvement with the school spelling bee contest and other joint efforts, and the Youth Court program, designed to provide an alternative for troubled youth.

“Positive change will happen if, and only if, our elected officials, community leaders and residents work together to make it happen,” said Mayor Hall. “It is a priority of my administration to respond to community concerns and to ensure that all actions of the Village government are open and above-board.”

*“Hempstead is moving forward. We are taking all steps necessary to transition our Village into a leader in the region and a jewel on Long Island.”* - Mayor Wayne J. Hall Sr.