

City
Manager's

update

Report

May 2007

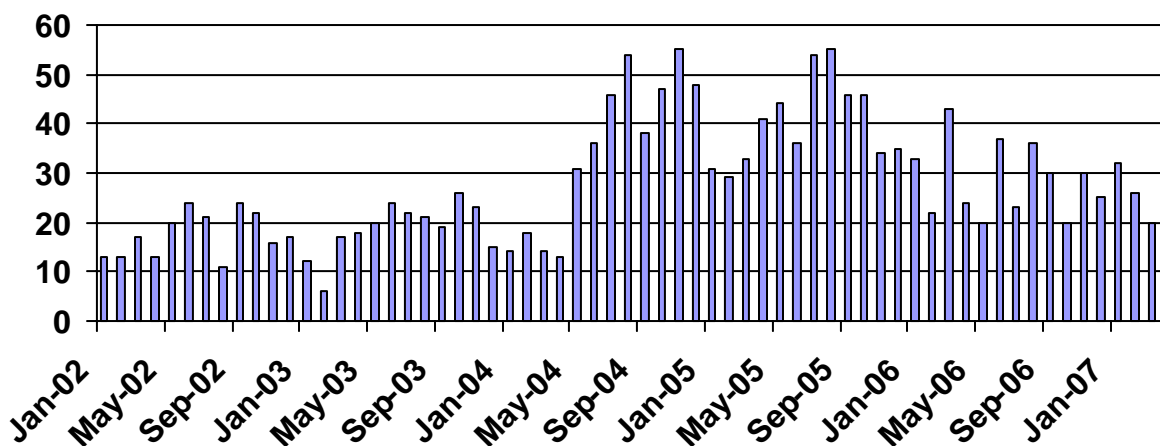
ASSESSMENT DEPARTMENT:

Assessment Reviews - Assessor hearings in January and Board of Review hearings combined resulted in \$9,019,847 worth of assessment reductions to the 2007 rolls. That was a 0.36% adjustment to the total assessed value. The Board of Assessment Review met for a total of nine days, heard complaints and decisions were rendered on 545 applications.

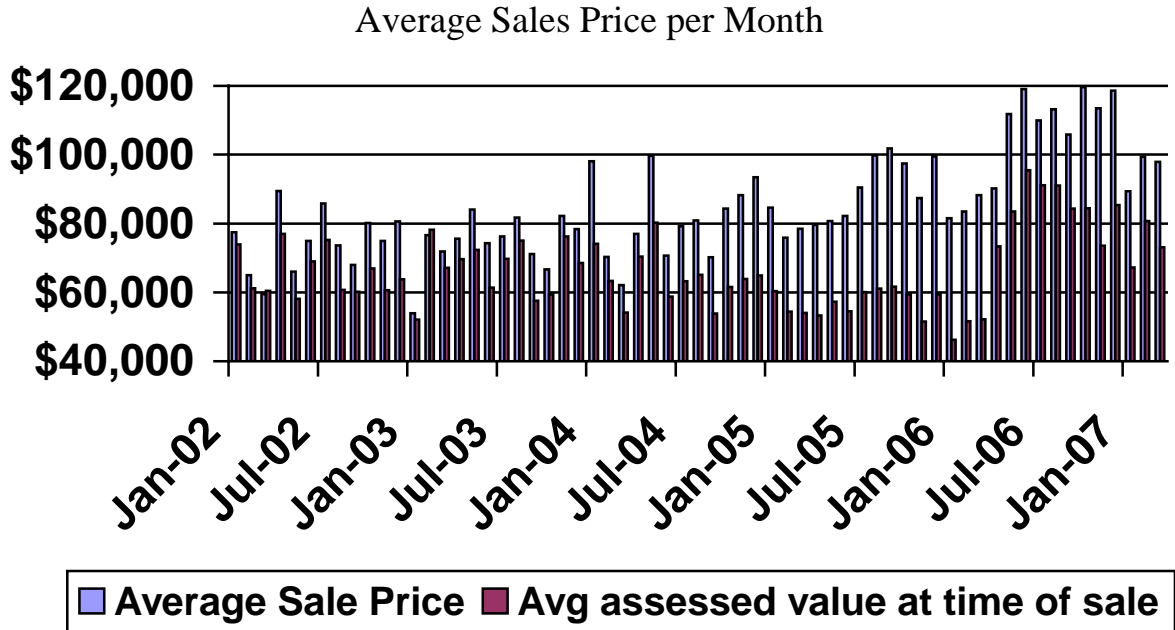
Claims - The final assessment roll was filed March 31st. We have to date received 2 small claims petitions and 12 Article 7 proceedings. Six of the Article 7 filings are the same as last year with one new filing coming from the new Walgreen's on State St.

Trends - The following charts show the historic trend in volume of sales and the average sales prices of residential properties in the City. They show that although we are significantly off the peak number of sales, the number of sales is still relatively strong compared to sales prior to 2004.

Number of Valid Residential Sales per Month



This graph shows the long term trend of sales prices versus assessed value. We have seen the average prices declining in the last 3 months, but the sales prices are still consistently higher than the assessed values.



CITY CLERK’S OFFICE:

Marriage and Travel - With Spring, comes the thought of marriage and travel. To that end, the Clerk’s office has now issued the 250th marriage license for the year and performed the 150th wedding ceremony, some of which have been held in the gazebo.



200 passport applications have been accepted since January. Due to the high volume of applications being sent in to the US Dept. of State from around the country, the turnaround time for the passports has increased to at least 10 weeks.

Genealogy - Spring also brings out the genealogy researchers. This office has seen a steady increase in genealogy requests this month. Due to the fact that these are not public records, only staff can do the research for the certified certificates. On occasion, we are able to supply additional information from the public records in the Historian’s Room.

Historian's Room - Researchers have also been using the Historian's Room for information pertaining to topics in our city's history. Volunteers are continuing to catalog the files in this room.

City Permits - We know that spring has arrived and summer is not too far behind when we start issuing city permits for the ice cream and hot dog vendors in our community, as the Clerk's office has been doing this month.

Vital Records - We continue to receive requests for vital records from around the world. It is fascinating to see all of the places that our records are sent to. In many cases, individuals who were born here or who were married here have traveled to far distant countries to live. We even receive requests for records from our military stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan.



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT:

North Shore Access – This project was put out to bid on April 16th with bids due back on Friday, May 11th. A pre-bid meeting will take place on April 25th. Submittals for approval and permits were sent to US Army Corps of Engineers, NYS DEC, FERC and SHPO.

Hole Brothers – Work is progressing on the design. SHPO has given their approval of the project. Construction is still scheduled to take place in 2007.

J B Wise Parking Lot – We are working with the Engineering Department and Lu Engineers to finalize a proposal for the design portion of the project. The Engineering Department applied for additional funds from NYS DOT for this project. Will also collaborate with the Water Department for the replacement of the water line under the parking lot.

Website Design – L & P Media was selected to redesign the City's website after an RFP and interview process. Contract has been approved and the kick off meeting took place on April 27th. The project is slated to be completed in June 2007.

Way Finding Signs – Clough-Harbour has finalized the way finding sign plan. Infinite Media has started work on designing the signs. Once this is finished the construction of the signs will be bid out. Some signs in the Public Square area may have to wait for construction to be finalized before they can be placed.

Mural Arts Program – Currently working with the Watertown Urban Mission in having their wall facing their parking lot used for the mural program. A call for artists to participate in the process will be done in May along with the unveiling of the new logo which is being finalized. Cost estimates are being worked on by the committee.

LWRP – Behan Planning submitted a preliminary draft of the LWRP for review at the local and state level, without the updated zoning information. The City will continue to pursue funding from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to rehab the City’s zoning and bring it into compliance with the LWRP. The Dept. of State will also assist the City with updating the zoning.

Upcoming Grant Applications –Restore NY Grant (major projects), and 2007 EPF (water based or related projects), NYS OPRHP (land acquisition).

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT:

State Street Reconstruction Project - The contractor has some sidewalk and landscape work remaining in the area completed last construction season. The contractor will commence street excavation on the remaining portion of State Street on May 7th. Working 12 hours days, 6 days a week. Curb, sidewalk, and paving work will progress behind the excavation. Substantial completion of this project is scheduled for the fall of 2007 with punch list items completed in the spring of 2008.

Streetscape/Public Square Reconstruction Project - Street reconstruction work is delayed until utility relocations can be completed by Verizon and National Grid. National Grid Gas and Power have signed utility agreements to facilitate the relocations. As of the writing of this document, Verizon has not.

Sidewalk Program - Work on the remaining 06-07 district work started in April 2007. Inspections are completed in the areas outlined for the 2007-2008 district. The public hearing was held on 5 Feb 07 for the 2007-2008 Special Assessment District. This work will commence in July 07.

Sherman Street/ Arsenal Street Intersection - Final pavement work, installation of signal loops, and ADA compliant corner ramps will be programmed for completion by the DPW this year.

Drive Access (Anthony Street) From Public Square To J.B. Wise Parking Lot - We have received SHPO approval for the Anthony St. curb work and are proceeding with the plan to have Villager perform the curb work within the current project limits, and include the design and construction of the remaining portion as part of the scope of the J.B. Wise project.

Western Blvd-Gaffney Drive Connector Road - An RFP is being developed for consultant selection. It will be progressed through a consultant from the City LDSA Consultant Short List. Scoping meetings for the design services agreement will be held after the design services agreement for J.B. Wise project is finalized.

Capital Project Design Work -

- **WWTP Roof Replacement:** A change order was approved by the Council to add a vent replacement to the project. Project will be closed out in spring 07.
- **Project Survey:** Conducting project surveys for the NSTS, and Riggs Ave capital projects
- **Butterfield-Barben & Chestnut St.:** Final plans to be completed in the spring 07.
- **Sterling Street:** Final Plans are complete and received DOH plan approval 19 June 06. A preconstruction meeting will be held based on the programmed work schedule.
- **Municipal Parking Lot:** Project on hold pending grant funding.
- **N. Michigan:** Project survey is complete. Preliminary design is scheduled to start in spring of 2007.
- **Ten Eyck Ph-I & II:** Detailed design was completed this spring. A coordination meeting w/ utilities along the project area in May 07. Required relocations will delay the project start until they are completed.

Hydro Plant - The operations and maintenance agreement expires on 30 June 07. The agreement authorizes up to three two year extensions. We are proceeding with the use of the first two year extension.

Intra-Department Project Support (Calendar Year To Date) -

- Completed survey of a section along City Center Drive Retaining Wall to provide a design to DPW for work in spring 07.
- Completed a structural investigation for the relocation of the sign shop in the Newell St. complex.
- Performed survey at the proposed Newell St. parking area.
- Performed review of the Rte. 3 Wave and Black River Parks Development construction plans.

CSO Long Term Control Plan - Stearns & Wheler was selected as the consultant for the CSO computer modeling from submittals from the RFP. The Council approved the design services agreement at the 18 Dec 06 meeting. The first progress meeting with the consultant was held in April 07.

Iroquois Cosgrove Sewer Upgrade - Passero Assoc. was selected as the consultant for the design and was approved by the Council in January 07. Preliminary Plans were submitted on 21 Feb 07. Final Plans and bid specs are to be delivered the first week of May with a bid date at the end of May.

J.B. Wise Parking Lot Reconstruction - An RFP was sent to a consultant to develop a project proposal for design services. The consultant was selected using the LDSA short list for the City compiled from the NYSDOT Region 7 LDSA list. Two scoping meetings have been held to determine scope, schedule, and cost. The final design Services agreement is scheduled to be presented to the Council for approval in May 07.

NYSDOT Arsenal Street Reconstruction - We are coordinating on an as-needed basis with NYSDOT representatives to assist with the project.

DEC Sewer Extension Requirements - 6 NYCRR Subpart 750-2 requires DEC approval of sewer extensions with flows greater than 2500 gal/day or more than one connected lateral. Part of this approval is assurance from the City that adequate sewer capacity exists in the system. Developments with assurance letters submitted to the DEC since Mar 06: City Center Plaza, Towne Center, Pine Woods, Hampton Inn, Maple Park, Starwood, Leray Commons, Pleasant Acres, Columbia Development, Dorr Farm, Town of Leray DANC SD#1, and Eagle Ridge. Development with capacity under review: Liberty, Black River Development, Summit Wood I & II, Mall Expansion, Duffy Meadows, and Watertown Apts.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Teen Center - The City Fire Fighters faced off in a charity hockey game against the Syracuse Fire Fighters in February. The proceeds of the hockey game went to the Watertown Teen Center. A total of \$747 was raised by the event.

Water Main Break - City Fire Fighters responded to the Watertown High School to assist maintenance personnel with a water break. The water main feeding the school broke and was flooding the boiler room. This is the only heat source for three schools (Wiley, Case Jr. and the High School). City Fire Fighters pumped the water from the boiler room before significant damage could be done to the boiler.

Presentation - On March 2-5 Fire Chief Dan Gaumont presented a “white paper” at the National Fallen Fire Fighters 2nd International Symposium on Reducing Fire Fighter Injury and Death.

Equipment - On April 5th a contingent from the Department held a pre-construction meeting with American LaFrance at their Hamburg NY facility. Expected delivery for the new rescue is December 7, 2007. On Tuesday, April 24, 2007, the City took delivery and placed into service a 2007 Pierce Enforcer 1500

FLOWER MEMORIAL LIBRARY:

Historic Restoration Project - The contracts for the proposed project, which includes restoration of the interior of the dome, stained glass work, historic decorative painting, restoration of art work, marble cleaning, and woodwork refinishing in the original portion of the Library building, is tentatively scheduled to begin on Monday, April 23, 2007. Final execution of the contracts should be completed the week of April 16th.

The project is being supported by grants from various state and local funding sources, as well as from private donations.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

License Plate Reader - The PD recently took possession of a license plate reader from New York State Criminal Justice Services. This is permanently attached to a patrol car (see attachment - notice the “readers” on the car roof). This equipment will automatically scan license plates and will sound an alert to the officer if the scanned license plate is any of the following: part of an Amber Alert, suspended or revoked registration, is a reported stolen vehicle, the registered owner is a wanted person or is a missing person. WPD was able to take part of this Initiative with the assistance Pete Keenan of the Information Technology Department who helped us set the unit up and also with the assistance of Fire Chief Dan Gaumont, who lent a laptop computer to meet with a deadline to get the unit installed. Patrol Officers will be required to track “hits” received while using this equipment and quarterly reports will be filed with DCSJ for a 2 year period.

Police Academy - The Black River / St. Lawrence Valley Police Academy which is run by WPD has been approved by the Division of Veterans Affairs. This means that any new police candidates who are hired will be able to receive addition compensation from the Veteran Education Bureau under the GI bill. We view this as a tool to assist in recruiting Honorably Discharged Veteran and are also proud that our training meets the muster of the Veterans Affairs Division.

Intake Inspection - On March 20, 2007 WPD was evaluated by the NYS Commission of Corrections for compliance with housing prisoners in Intake. I received a response back of April 2nd, 2007 advising we were “In Full Compliance” with the department’s standards. A comment was also made that “Overall, the detention area was clean, neat, and orderly and the operation of the department was consistent with applicable statutes and regulations”. They also reviewed our Juvenile Detention and Processing and it was noted that we have the required rooms for questioning Juveniles and we meet with the States requirements concerning Juvenile Processing. They also advised us of a new requirement from the Family Court that requires a female officer / matron is present when questioning a female juvenile. We will incorporate this into our policy and procedure but our present procedure of having a parent or guardian present during questioning will keep us in compliance.

Funeral - On April 18th 2007, WPD sent fifteen members led by Chief Goss to the funeral in Utica, NY for slain Police Officer Thomas Lindsey. The fifteen included the seven members of the police academy class who are scheduled to graduate in early May.

Equipment - In April bids were opened for the departments Entry Team Van. A new van for transporting Entry Team members has been accepted by Council and on 04-23-07 an order was placed. Members are hopeful that the van will be delivered in approximately 8 weeks; this van will replace a 1982 used van which is in very poor shape. PD members worked with Bob Cleaver to ensure that this vehicle meets our needs and are grateful for all his assistance.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

Snow Removal - Since the March edition of this report an additional thirty four inch (34") of snow has fallen on the City. This brings this season's snowfall total to one hundred forty one inches (141"). Snow removal operations took place around the clock. These snow removal operations include the sanding, plowing, and removal of snow from the City's streets, parking lots, sidewalks. Since the beginning of the season crews have logged a total of 11,055 man hours of which 3,902 were overtime, 8,990 equipment hours, and have used 3,480 tons of salt performing these snow removal operations.



Preparation for the 2007 Spring/Summer Schedule at the Arena - The last day of public skating was held on March 24th. On March 25th, the ice removal process began along with the preparations for the 2007 Spring/Summer Schedule of Events to be held at the Arena. The Wratten's Annual Trailer and RV Show kicked off this season's event schedule on March 30, 31, and April 1st.



Fairgrounds Surface Drainage- Storm Sewer Maintenance Crews began the installation of a closed drainage system for the area behind the Grandstand. This project includes the installation of two (2) catch basins and underdrain pipe. When the installation is complete this project will help to alleviate the water issues located behind the Grandstand.

Academy St Basketball Court- Crews have commenced the rehabilitation of the Academy St Basketball Court. The fence around the court was removed and crews are at work excavating the former playing surface. When complete this project will include the installation of a new half court with a playing surface measuring 45' x 45', new fencing, and a new basketball goal.





Variable Message Boards - The message boards are now in use at active DPW works zones and are providing safer work zones for both DPW crews and those navigating their way through the work zone. The message boards are primarily used for traffic safety warnings at active work zones. They may also be used for public information display purposes of City sponsored events.

DPW Fuel Farm – Pad Rehabilitation - In the fall crews replaced the pad located on the easterly side of the pump island. Now, that the weather broke crews have begun the excavation of the westerly side of the pump island. Work on this side of the pump island also includes the removal of the concrete above the tank as well as the replacement of manholes and electrical components which have been corroded.



Waterworks Park Trail Extension Project - Work on the extension of the Waterworks Park Trail system is ready to resume. The trail extension has been staked out and is scheduled for excavation. This trail will extend from the existing park approximately 1100' to the west behind property owned by Blackwater Development.



City Hall/Library Sidewalk Replacement - This project includes the replacement of the sidewalk located along Washington in front City Hall and the Library. It also includes reconstructing the handicapped access ramps located on the northeast corner of the Washington/Sterling Intersection. Crews have already excavated, set, and poured approximately 55' of sidewalk and are currently excavating the next 60' that is to be replaced.

Fiber Optic Network - This project will provide a fiber optic connection between City Hall, the Massey St Fire Station, DPW facilities, and the Public Safety Building. The first phase includes the continuation of an underground conduit run from the southeast corner of Massey St/Stone St intersection to the Massey St Fire Station. The City's Electric Department has completed the installation of the conduit required inside the Massey St Fire Station in preparation for the first phase of this project.



Sweeping - Our Street Sweeping Program commenced on April 1st and we are approximately 95% complete with the first pass of the City and have completed three (3) passes of the Downtown Business District. Following our standard operating procedures we will now sweep on a day to day basis predicated upon manpower availability. The Downtown Business District will be swept every Friday during the midnight to 8:00 A.M. shift throughout the season.

WATER DEPARTMENT:



Thompson Park Pump Station - The new pump station to supply water to Thompson Park and the upper Gotham Street area is nearly complete. National Grid is scheduled to install the gas service beginning next week, so that the heat and emergency generator can be activated. National Grid started work on installation of the gas main extension in January, a day or two before we started getting all of the snow, which shut down the job. Once the gas service has been installed and activated, the contractors can

complete the project and the pump station can be placed in service.

Administration - The Water Department billing office conducted the semi-annual water shut-off process for delinquent water and sewer accounts. Delinquent notices were mailed on March 15, 2007 to property owners for 915 metered accounts, with total of \$233,822.28 in outstanding water and sewer charges. On Monday, April 9th, water distribution crews began shutting the services for the 194 accounts that remained



unpaid. 135 services were actually shut off. As of the close of business on April 11th, 53 accounts remained shut, with an outstanding balance of \$12,806.04. Some of these properties are vacant.

Site Plan Review/Project Management - The Superintendent continues to review site plans as they relate to water supply, is involved on a daily basis with coordination of construction projects with contractors, the NYSDOT, City Planning, the City Engineer's office, and regulatory agency personnel and continues his involvement as the project coordinator on the restoration project at the Flower Memorial Library. He has also attended meetings with DANC and Ft. Drum personnel relative to the additional reliance on City water supply by the base.

Annual Water Quality Report - This year's Annual Water Quality Report has been completed and has been sent to the printer. It will be mailed and distributed to consumers on or before the end of May.

Water Plant - The Chief Operator continues to work on various regulatory issues such as the disinfection by-products related studies.

Plant Production - The water plant has been producing and delivering more water to the DANC water line. Consumption on this line in October of 2006 averaged 0.48 million gallons per day (MGD). Consumption in successive months has been 0.87 MGD in November, 1.58 MGD in December, 1.51 MGD in January of 2007, and 1.76 MGD in February, and 1.76 MGD in March.

Water Services and Shut Offs- Distribution and maintenance personnel continued thawing frozen water services and keeping the fire hydrants cleared of snow and properly inspected to ensure that they are operable if needed. 14 broken water mains and services were repaired during the winter months. Distribution personnel performed the semi-annual shut-off of delinquent water and sewer accounts.

Capital Projects and Flushing - Personnel from distribution are working closely with on water main related construction projects on Public Square, State Street, and Arsenal Street and at Starwood Apartments and are gearing up to begin the annual hydrant flushing program, which is scheduled to begin in May.

