

MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETING
HELD ON JULY 8, 2025
LOCATION: ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC LIBRARY
221 N. VILLAGE AVE, ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY 11570

PRESENT: President Meghan Kearns, Vice President Catie Carter, Treasurer Emily Kearns, Membership Director Rich Collett, Corresponding Secretary Kelly Wexlar and Recording Secretary Caitlin McEntee

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES: A motion to adopt the minutes from the June 10, 2025 meeting was made by Vice President Carter, seconded by Secretary McEntee and carried.

UPDATES FROM PRESIDENT KEARNS:

- The objectives, goals and direction of the Civics Association:
 - Gain credibility as an organization within the community
 - Build membership.
 - Get seats at the table with decision makers (Village Officials, our County Legislator etc.)
 - Partner with local organizations. Work with other groups in town to do volunteer work, partner on issues affecting the Village and finding common ground with other organizations.
 - Educate members through presentations. This is to try to give members more knowledge of the workings of the Village and the various issues going on within it so that they understand the facts and are able to speak intelligently about them.
 - Long term vs short term projects. Historic preservation throughout the Village would be an example of a long-term project. An example of a short-term project would be something like 24 South Park Ave that comes up quickly and must be addressed right away,
- The Herald has hired another reporter who is dedicated to reporting on the happenings of the Civics Association. This is great exposure for the group and a way to explain to the community what the group is doing and how it's handling issues within the Village.
- President Kearns met with our County Legislator Scott Davis who represents the district that comprises of Rockville Centre and Hempstead to discuss issues such as beautification and traffic safety on main thoroughfares in town. A traffic study is being done on the three-way intersection on Long Beach Road. The county is looking to add bike racks to the area around the Long Island Railroad station to encourage more commuters to ride bikes. There was also discussion about any funds through the county that can be accessed to use for beautification opportunities.

UPDATES FROM TREASURER EMILY KEARNS: Dues have been collected from 41 members for a total of \$984. Checks that were collected have not yet been cashed pending the opening of our bank account.

UPDATES FROM MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR RICH COLLETT: Membership Director Collett will be walking around with flyers at the Fourth of July celebration at Lister Park to recruit members. A few new members were recruited from Eat, Shop, Rock.

UPDATES FROM VICE PRESIDENT CATIE CARTER ON THE BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE:

- Another meeting was held with the “Grand Beautification Committee” being run by the town and Mayor Murray about the beautification of the North Village (Quealy Place to Lincoln Avenue) pilot area. People have been power washing the sidewalks and watering the flowers. Looking to add flags and banners to line the streets. There will be another meeting the week of July 11, 2025 to solidify who is in the group and who will be running the group. There are grants given to Villages every year for beautification, many of which of our Village would qualify for. We would need the approval from Assemblywoman Judy Griffin after submitting proposals outlining the Village’s needs.
- An Instagram page for the Civics Association has been created. The handle is RVCCivic
- Reminder of the importance for members to attend Village Trustee meetings as well as Board of Zoning Appeals meetings to be aware of what is going on in the Village.

PRESENTATION BY JOE STALLONE OF THE NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS EDUCATION FUND: A not for Profit nonpartisan organization to educate New Yorkers on various environmental issues and empower them to make environmentally informed decisions. General overview of the organization and benefits of being registered as a Climate Smart Community.

UPDATES FROM SECRETARY MCENTEE ON THE BOLLA MARKET GAS STATION REDEVELOPMENT AT 345 SUNRISE HIGHWAY: The gas station that was formerly Anton’s autobody shop is now an operating Bolla Market. An application was submitted to close the autobody shop in order to build a new 3,600 square foot space to accommodate a minimart, a Tim Horton’s and a Moe’s Southwestern Grill. An additional variance was requested to reduce parking space sizes (where drivers park to fuel) by 2 feet in order to increase the amount of fueling stations that can fit on the property. The Village code requires parking spots be 9’x20’ and they have requested to decrease to 9’x18’. There are currently 4 fueling stations (8 spaces) and they would like to increase to 12 fueling stations (24 spaces). A third variance requested was to put 2 vacuuming stations in the front setback (on Morris Avenue). A fourth variance was requested to put up a 47 square foot sign verses the allowable size of 24 square feet. The application and variance requests have all been approved by the zoning board with the exception of the sign variance that

was adjourned. This obviously brings several traffic and safety concerns as this is one of our most active intersections in the Village. A larger issue is that we will never get notification of these developments with enough time to properly address them due to the timing of the when the Board of Zoning Appeals is required to notify Village residents of the meeting of agenda.

UPDATES FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY KELLY WEXLAR: Secretary Wexlar gave a brief walkthrough of the website <https://www.rockvillecentrecivic.org>. Member Jenny Boller dedicated her time to build the website. The website will include a calendar with all of the important meeting dates and happenings occurring around the Village. There will eventually be areas with an overview of the various committees as well as a QR Code to be able to take electronic payments, our by-laws and meeting minutes. We are also considering contests for photo of the month and as well as monthly recognitions of various members to help get the word out and put faces to the group.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES FROM PRESIDENT MEGHAN KEARNS:

- The Civics Association Board Members would like to do a volunteer cleanup event in September as well as a December holiday charity event whether it be a food, toy or clothing drive.
- President Kearns was going to give a brief presentation on the Rockville Centre Village Government but opted to postpone in favor of leaving more time for open discussion. Just to members a who's and how our Village is organized

UPCOMING EVENTS IN ROCKVILLE CENTRE:

- The next Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) meeting is to be held on Wednesday July 9, 2025 at 7:00PM at Village Hall. The 24 South Park Avenue development as well as the Bolla Market sign are on the agenda.
- The Village Firework show will be on July 12, 2025 on the Village Green.
- The next Civics Association meeting August 12, 2025 at 7:00PM at the Rockville Centre Public Library.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

- Member Gina Wuestmann announced that she'll will be hosting a drive collecting clothing, toiletries, gift cards, pots and pans, etc. at her bar the North Village Tavern starting on July 27, 2025 through August 10, 2025. There will be a kickoff "Christmas in July" event on July 27, 2025 at 3:00PM.
- Discussion on parking and traffic in the municipal lots due to the repaving of the lot. This has not been discussed with the Mayor.
- Discussion on beautification and what it entails:
 - Understanding who is responsible for doing what in the Village such as power washing, watering, etc.
 - Adding banners, flags, lampposts new and an increased amount of garbage cans.

- Member Gina Wuestmann asked if there can be string lights on North Village. Vice President Carter advised that they were previously purchased but weren't long enough to go across the street.
 - Member Sean McEntee gave insight on routine maintenance that is performed throughout the Village of Garden City based on his experience of working for their Department of Public Works. There is a defined division of labor carried out by various departments in the Village and is dependent on the location. These departments include Public Works, Parks and Recreation, the Street Department, etc.
 - Accountability of business owners in town is huge issue. No one is being fined for lack of maintenance. It must also be noted that 9 times out of 10 a building owner will put all maintenance responsibilities on the tenant.
- 24 South Park Avenue Development:
 - Important to remember that the Board of Zoning Appeals does not pass laws, they are bound to follow laws passed by the Village Board.
 - The same plan was submitted by the developer. A three-story building with the ground floor to be restaurant space and the top two floors are general office space. There will be no medical offices and no rooftop dining.
 - They still need a variance for the front yard setback. The applicant's request for a 0-foot setback would have the new building line up with all of the existing buildings on the street.
 - 42 parking spaces are required for the building. A provision in the Village Code from 2005 states that if an "interior" building (not freestanding), contains a restaurant and abuts a municipal lot, it does not need a parking variance. The 42 spaces they are asking for are only for the office space and are not inclusive of the restaurant's parking needs.
 - The traffic study commissioned by the applicant studied municipal lot 4 on the West side of Park Avenue South and the municipal lot 8 on the East side of Park Avenue South. They combined the two lots to make it seem like there is more parking than there is rather breaking out by lot usage throughout the day. They also advised that resident parking would not be affected. Members Dave and Gina went out multiple times daily to record how many cars were using each lot. Based on this, Lot 4 would be most affected. Employees of businesses inside 24 South Park Avenue are more likely to pay for a parking pass than have to feed the parking meters multiple times a day. This would directly affect resident parking for tenants in the co-ops.
 - This building is unlike any other building on the block. It would be the only three-story building and it would also be the only mixed-use building that has professional office space. The existing buildings on the block are all two-story buildings that are mixed use residential.
- Discussion on potential developments coming into the Village and having the ability to act while always being at a disadvantage due to the timing of the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting agenda notification date as well as the lead time to get documents via FOIL from the building department.
 - Can we work with the Village to get more time i.e., push for an earlier agenda notification date?
 - It's also important to remember that we only hear about applications via the Board of Zoning Appeals when an application is denied because the applicant is not following the Village code and requesting a variance. Many other applications are being approved that we never hear about.

- Can someone consistently go up to the building department and ask to see all new applications for commercial developments?
- Discussion on 209 Sunrise Highway (Creative Child): The Civics Association will not be taking a position.
- Discussion on parking for restaurants.
 - There was a beneficial use assessment done when the municipal lots were constructed at least 25-30 years ago. Should we push to have this reassessed?
 - Should we bring back having nonresidents pay for parking after 6:00PM whereas residents can park for free.
 - Member Gina Wuestmann who owns North Village Tavern at 40 North Village Avenue is concerned it will hurt her business as the parking meters only allow for one hour and twenty minute parking blocks. Customers who stay for hours will not want to continuously have to go out and feed the meter. Can we increase the meter times to two hours?
 - Can the Village provide QR codes to make the Flowbird app more accessible to people?

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS DURING CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS: The Open Meetings Law presentation has been postponed.

UPCOMING CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETING: To be held on Tuesday August 12, 2025 at 7:00pm at the Rockville Centre Public library.

MOTION TO ADJOURN – Motion made by President Kearns, seconded by Vice President Carter and carried.

Please email any questions and concerns to RVC.Civic@gmail.com