



Westchester County Legislator
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Proudly Serving the 12th District



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Your Property Tax Dollars

Did you know that only 15 cents of every property tax dollar funds County government?

With that money and funding from other sources, the County provides the following services:

- Transportation infrastructure (including roads and bridges, the County airport, the BeeLine bus system, and paratransit for disabled residents);
- Sewers, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal;
- The criminal justice system (including courthouses, prosecutors and defense attorneys, probation and juvenile justice services, and the County jail);
- Preschool special education, early intervention, and Westchester Community College;
- Emergency services and County police;
- Parks, nature centers, golf courses, and trails;
- Restaurant inspections, rabies and other disease control;
- Social services (including Medicaid, assistance to needy families, homeless shelters, and child protective services);
- Programs for senior citizens and at-risk youth;
- Land use planning;
- Our elections system.

Two thirds of Westchester's operating budget funds services that are mandated by the state or federal government. Our non-mandated services — from our roads and sewers to our parks and police — are things Westchester residents need. ■

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Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

Winter 2016 Newsletter

MaryJane Shimsky

District 12 ~ Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Edgemont, Greenburgh,
Hartsdale, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington



Legislation to Ban No. 4 and No. 6 Heating Oils Approved

As a co-sponsor of this law when it was first introduced in 2014, I am very happy that it was unanimously approved by the Board of Legislators in June 2016. The banning of these heavy, dirty fuels will improve our environment — their byproducts include carcinogens and respiratory irritants. We'll all breathe easier as a result, especially those of us with respiratory problems.

The ban on the dirtier No. 6 oil will be effective on July 18, 2018; the ban on No. 4 oil, on July 31, 2020. ■

More Delays on Sprain Ridge Pool

It is hard to believe that we've had no Sprain Ridge Pool for six years. Last year, when we reached an agreement with the County Executive and passed an \$8.8 million construction bond, we knew that the County would have to adhere to a very aggressive schedule to complete the pool for the 2017 swimming season.

The Administration recently stated that only one of the two pools (the recreation pool, not the competition pool) will be ready next year. But completing even one pool may require some luck. A harsh winter can stop work for long periods of time and prevent the pool from opening.

The Infrastructure Committee will keep its fingers crossed, and continue to monitor the situation. ■

WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

Committee Assignments:
 Environment & Health
 Legislation
 Litigation
 Public Safety & Social Services
 Seniors & Constituencies

MaryJane Shimsky
 Legislator, 12th District
 Chair, Committee on Infrastructure

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It's been another busy year at the Board of Legislators. My main work as your Legislator has been to keep our infrastructure up and running. We have made some real progress on our local bridges. Some of you have raised concerns about the traffic issues at Ashford Avenue, and about the quality of the work at Warburton Avenue. Please continue alerting me to problems when you see them. I do pass on your concerns and suggestions, and they help make life better for everyone.

But even with this progress, the state of our infrastructure is getting worse. The County's capital projects backlog is approaching the \$1.5 billion mark. This is money that the Board has already allocated, but is not being spent. Failing to keep up with repairs will only increase the financial burden on our taxpayers, as projects become more extensive and more costly; and as we compensate victims harmed by our crumbling facilities.

Nor has this shortsightedness balanced our budgets. The New York State Comptroller's Office has rated Westchester County as fiscally stressed. We must find ways to make the most of our taxpayer dollars without mortgaging the future. To balance the 2017 budget, the County Executive has floated a hastily-cobbled proposal to privatize Westchester County Airport. As of now, we are nowhere near close to having the data we need to determine whether the deal is a good one for the people of this County.

But with the frustrations, come achievements. The Board's ban on low-grade home heating oils will make our air more breathable. We continue to work with our partners in government on numerous projects, from the fight against the proposed Hudson River barge anchorages to the Ridge Hill road repairs and other infrastructure projects. I will continue to fight the good fight, because I care about the people I represent.

I appreciate your input. Please send your comments, questions and concerns to me. Together, we'll build a better Westchester.

Sincerely,

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Bridge Repair Roundup

In the past year, the County has made significant progress in repairing its bridges in the 12th Legislative District. But with the Ashford Avenue Bridge project in its early stages, bridge repairs still will be with us for some time.

CRANE ROAD BRIDGE: The Crane Road bridge project has been completed. A section of the Bronx River Parkway crossing both the river and the Metro North railroad's Harlem Line, the "bridge" is actually two spans requiring completely different designs to adapt to the topography below.

Now that the bridge is complete, paving projects will make the Parkway a much better place to drive (and to ride bicycles on Bicycle Sundays!).

WARBURTON AVENUE BRIDGE: This year also saw completion of the Warburton Avenue Bridge project. The bridge was in serious need of repair; with a score of 4.44 on the New York State Department of Transportation rating scale (a score under 5 requires immediate attention to avoid more serious repairs).

The \$10 million project included deck, joint and sidewalk replacement, major pier rehabilitation, lighting replacement, and safety screening.

ASHFORD AVENUE BRIDGE: The poster child for Westchester's crumbling infrastructure is finally getting its due. Almost four years to the day after chunks of the bridge came crashing down on the New York State Thruway, the Ashford Avenue Bridge reconstruction project began with demolition of the ramp to the Northbound Saw Mill River Parkway. Words cannot describe my relief that we're finally getting somewhere.

Ridge Hill Settlement Road Improvements Update

September 2016 witnessed the completion of the Route 9A widening in Ardsley, which was funded by moneys won in the Ridge Hill lawsuit. We are not going to feel the full effect of this project until the Ashford Avenue Bridge reconstruction is complete, but I have heard that the widening already has produced some benefits for 9A's southbound traffic.



In its updates to the Infrastructure Committee, the County's Department of Public Works has indicated that the work is on schedule to be completed by June 2018. I have requested the construction timeline, so we can track the project's progress.

There is bad news along with the good — the additional traffic along Ashford Avenue, Route 9A, and Lawrence Street. Our engineers will gladly entertain suggestions to help ease the pain, so please pass them on. Meanwhile, please allow extra time for

your trips in the area, especially during rush hours; and consider alternate routes where possible. And by all means report traffic or construction problems to my office.

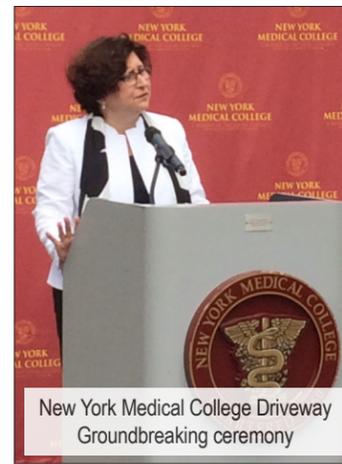
Once the bridge is complete, it should be free of major repair work for the next 50 years — very good news indeed. ■

If you would like weekly updates on bridge construction closures, please sign up for my e-newsletters at Shimsky@westchesterlegislators.com.

Meanwhile, the saga of completing the traffic safety improvements on Jackson Avenue continues. By the time you read this, the Town of Greenburgh should have received the last of the land-use approvals from the County, permitting the work to proceed. The project will turn the Y-intersection with North Sprain Road into a T-intersection with a traffic light; and straighten

the curve on the section of Jackson Avenue leading to that intersection. The area has a history of accidents, including fatalities.

I will continue to work with Supervisor Feiner and with Mayor Mike Spano of Yonkers (who recognizes that this Greenburgh road also endangers Yonkers residents), as they seek outside funding to help defray the costs. ■



New York Medical College Driveway Groundbreaking ceremony



With Santa and Ardsley Board of Trustees



Discussing stormwater management along the Bronx River



Working with Senator Schumer to protect the Hudson River



Hastings Gun Safety March



Dobbs Ferry Senior Dominic DeGeorge turns 102 surrounded by friends and family. 2016 23:13



Celebrating Dobbs Ferry Senior Week with Prudence Ferraro



Grand Opening of Paws Crossed Animal Shelter

Board of Legislators Joins Coalition to Save Hudson River from Dangerous Oil Barges

Just last year, the Board of Legislators joined a broad coalition that successfully fought the LG tower that threatened our treasured views of the Palisades. This year, a new threat looms over our beloved Hudson River -- and again, the Board of Legislators has joined the fight alongside other elected officials and local environmental groups.

The United States Coast Guard proposed an expanded system of new anchorages from Yonkers to Kingston, to accommodate planned increases in barge traffic. The largest site would sit just off of the Hastings and Dobbs Ferry waterfronts.

The new anchorages will likely support environmentally catastrophic oil extraction efforts in North Dakota.

The barges' increased presence -- not to mention the potential for spills or explosions of highly volatile crude oil on our waterfronts -- could set back a generation's investment in transforming our waterfronts from post-industrial brownfields into vibrant networks of parks, restaurants, offices and shops. The barges will also endanger recreational boaters, and overburden our local first responders.

The Board of Legislators joined officials from all levels of government to call for public hearings and proper cost-benefit analyses. On September 12, we became the first county board in the Hudson Valley to pass a resolution opposing the new anchorages.

We will continue to stand with our communities to protect them from this latest environmental outrage. If you are interested in helping the opposition effort, please contact my office, and we'll put you in touch with local groups working on this vital issue. ■