

The Edgemont Community Council, Inc.

APRIL , 2009

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Edgemont Community Council, Inc. cordially invites you to attend its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, **April 29, 2009** at 8:00 PM in the Greenville School Cafeteria, Glendale Road, Scarsdale, NY. We will begin our 62nd year of service to the Edgemont Community. On the agenda for the **April 29^h** meeting are the President's Report; the Treasurer's Annual Report; the election of Officers and Directors of the Council for 2009-2010; the presentation of a special award for service to our community; and a Guest Speaker.

SPECIAL AWARD FOR SERVICE AND GUEST SPEAKER

This year, ECC will recognize a distinguished member of the extended Edgemont family. ECC will honor longtime Edgemont schools Superintendent Nancy L. Taddiken with a distinguished school and community service award. This marks the first time in more than fifty years of honoring distinguished Edgemont residents that the ECC has chosen to honor a non-resident. We are recognizing Ms. Taddiken for all she has done and continues to do for our schools and community. Please read about her on Page 5.

Ms. Taddiken also will have the honor of being ECC's guest speaker.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Despite the severe recession, this has been another good year for our school district, which is in its fourth year of a remarkable financial turnaround – with four consecutive years of single digit tax hikes, including this year's proposed hike of less than 4% which is the second lowest in 20 years. At the same time, the quality of an Edgemont education remains superb, as the district continues to receive state and national recognition for excellence. Unfortunately, as you'll read in this issue, the same cannot be said for the Town of Greenburgh, which has had more than a 30% dollar increase in taxes over the past two years – even with cuts in police and sanitation personnel – while surrounding towns and villages have managed to keep their increases over the same period within single digits.

ECC is the umbrella organization for all the Edgemont civic associations, and as such it is the only common forum representing the entire Edgemont community. As it begins its 62nd year of service to this community, I ask that you support ECC by sending in your membership dues. In addition to supporting the annual newsletter and other activities, your dues support the School Board Nominating Committee, which is funded solely by ECC. I also encourage you to become involved, either with your civic association or with ECC. The greater our awareness and participation, the more we will make a difference in the quality of life in Edgemont.

I look forward to greeting you personally on the 29th.

Bob Bernstein

The Edgemont Community Council, Inc.

Founded in 1947 to determine community opinion on civic matters and coordinate community action thereon and to plan and promote the general welfare of the community embraced within Union Free School District # 6.

Officers and Directors

OFFICERS:

President Robert Bernstein
1st VP Michelle McNally
2nd VP Todd Garvelink
Treasurer John Sganga
Recording Secretary Karen Kelly
Corresponding Secretary Lisa Wexler

DIRECTORS:

John Blakley, Sr. David Stern
 Christine Klerer Andrea Weiss
 Madelon O'Shea David Younger
 Larry Rusoff

SBNC Representatives Siobhan Dolan

Newsletter Editors: Mark Baron
 Robert Bernstein Michelle McNally

The eight member Associations of the Edgemont Community Council, Inc. are

- The Central Park Avenue Civic Association
- The Cotswold Association, Inc.
- The Edgemont Association
- Fort Hill Association
- Greenridge Association
- Longview Association
- Northern Greenville Association
- Southern Greenville Association

The Edgemont Community Council, Inc. Newsletter is published annually by the Board of Directors and is distributed without charge throughout the Edgemont Community

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

In accordance with the Council's by-laws, the election of Officers and Directors will take place at the Annual Meeting. The following names have been placed in nomination as Officers for 1 year terms; Directors for the terms indicated; and School Board Nominating Committee Representatives and Alternates, as indicated, by the Nominating Committee.

OFFICERS:

President Robert Bernstein
First Vice President Michelle McNally
Second Vice President Todd Garvelink
Treasurer John Sganga
Recording Secretary Karen Kelly
Corresponding Secretary Larry Rusoff

DIRECTORS:

3 Year Term Ending June 30, 2012 Marc Ackerman
 John Coleman
 Todd Garvelink
 Karen Kelly
 Lisa Wexler
2 Year Term Ending June 30, 2011 Larry Rusoff
 David Stern
1 Year Term Ending June 30, 2010 Robert Klerer
 Geoff Loftus

SCHOOL BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES:

Regular Member— 2 yr term ending 6/30/11 Catherine Woods
Regular Member—1 yr term ending 6/30/10 Amy Rothschild
Alternate Member—1 yr term ending 6/30/10 Nancy Shifren

Just a reminder from your Board of Directors about Voter registration. All citizens of the United States who are registered voters are eligible to cast a ballot in the School District budget vote and election on **Tuesday May 19, 2009**. The voting place is the Gymnasium at Edgemont Junior/Senior High School on White Oak Lane. The polls will be open from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM. Registration information can be obtained from the School District at its business office at Edgemont Junior/Senior School on White Oak Lane during normal school hours.

❧ PRESIDENT'S REPORT ❧

The Edgemont Community Council, the umbrella civic group for the 8,500 residents of Edgemont, had a successful year in 2008, with a record number of new paid memberships, well attended monthly meetings and, through the School Board Nominating Committee, which we sponsor, the successful nomination and election of two new members to the Edgemont School Board, Wasim Salimi and Michaeline Curtis.

Interest in the ECC has grown steadily over the past five years, reflecting the increasing interest that many residents, both new and old, have both in improving the quality of life in Edgemont and addressing the inequities in how unincorporated area residents of Greenburgh are taxed for municipal services. Our monthly meeting minutes and other matters of interest can be viewed on our website at www.edgemontcommunitycouncil.org.

❧ Greenburgh's Budget ❧

The ECC was also active in trying to provide input to the Town's budget. With last year's 21% town tax hike, and this year's 7.8% hike – bringing the total dollar increase over two years to more than 30% — more than 80 Edgemont residents turned out this fall for an ECC sponsored meeting with the Town Board to discuss the reasons for the sudden spike in town taxes and what the Town Board planned to do about it.

Objecting to cuts in police, sanitation, snow removal and leaf pickup, Edgemont residents suggested that the Town Board first substantially reduce non-essentials, such as a \$100,000 gift to the Fairview Fire District and a \$165,000 expenditure for an after-school program at the Town's community center which many argued should be a school expense rather than a town expense, and which, like Edgemont's own after-school program that is paid for by the residents who use it, could be obtained from the YMCA at no cost to the taxpayers.

At the end of the day, the ECC succeeded only in getting the Town Board to restore \$100,000 to the police overtime budget. The Town Board thus eliminated six police officers, five sanitation personnel, and non-curbside garbage pickup, which upset a number of older Edgemont residents, while keeping all the non-essentials.

Because of continued concern about the Town's budget and what appeared to be an unwillingness on the part of Town Board members to set priorities, the ECC heard this spring from Town Comptroller Mike Kolesar,

who told directors that current projections show that with only a 3% increase in current spending for 2010, the unincorporated area of the Town could expect a tax hike of 11.2%. Mr. Kolesar also warned that there were insufficient internal financial controls in several town departments, including the Theodore D. Young Community Center, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Building Department.

After an account of the meeting was published later that week in the Scarsdale Inquirer, Mr. Kolesar was fired. He was the fifth town comptroller in five years.

❧ Zoning Issues ❧

The ECC also took strong stands against certain zoning changes. Among other things, the ECC supported residents of Fulton Park, a middle-income neighborhood near the County Center, in its efforts to stop the Town from granting a request by Westhab, a developer of affordable housing, to increase zoning density on a 0.7 acre lot it purchased. Increasing zoning density to accommodate more housing units than otherwise permitted is sometimes used by municipalities to encourage developers to build "workforce housing." Workforce housing generally means housing for local policemen, firemen, teachers, and sanitation and clerical workers who earn between 80% and 120% of the area median income.

The Westhab project was originally described as "workforce housing," and a zoning change which was introduced to accommodate Westhab defined "workforce housing" as housing for those with incomes between 80% and 120% of the area median income. However, on December 18, at the last minute, with no public notice or a hearing, the Town Board changed the definition of "workforce housing" at Westhab's request to those earning between 30% and 80% of the area median income. The changed definition effectively changed the project from "workforce housing" to housing for tenants earning low and very low incomes. The "workforce" that the project and zone change were originally proposing to accommodate would no longer be eligible.

The ECC, objecting to the Town Board enacting the change without notice or hearing, asked the Town Board to reconsider what it had done, and when the Town Board refused, the ECC joined Fulton Park

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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residents in complaining to the state attorney general. The complaint is still pending. A copy of the ECC's letter to the state attorney general is posted on the ECC's website.

ECC directors were concerned that if the Town Board were to ignore legal requirements on a zoning matter affecting Fulton Park, it could do the same thing in other parts of the town, including Edgemont – where a developer is currently seeking to build a four story multifamily “affordable housing” complex with 87 bedrooms on a two acre lot on Dromore Road adjacent to the Nature Center and the Edgemont Junior-Senior High School playing fields.

Last year this developer sued the Town after the Zoning Board of Appeals upheld the Planning Commissioner's determination that the Dromore Road property was not in the Central Avenue multifamily zone as the developer claimed, but rather was in the R-20 (half-acre) zone which permits single family residences only. The court dismissed the suit claiming that the developer had not exhausted his administrative remedies. Accordingly, the Dromore developer has now applied for a use variance.

In order to obtain a use variance, the developer must show (1) that it cannot obtain a reasonable return on its investment in the lot unless it builds multifamily housing; (2) the property is unique such that there are no other similar properties that would qualify for the variance; (3) the change in use will not alter the character of the neighborhood and (4) that the developer's “injury” was not self-inflicted. The ECC expects to be working with the Edgemont Association, the Nature Center, the neighboring Monastery, and the Scarsdale Woods apartment complex in presenting evidence to show that the criteria have not been satisfied.

If the Zoning Board denies the use variance, the developer has indicated it will commence a lawsuit against the Town in federal court to seek damages for an unlawful “taking” of his property based on the Town's having corrected a zoning map error that had once classified the property as multifamily.

The developer could also seek a zoning change directly from the Town Board – just as Westhab was successful in doing for its own “affordable housing” project.

The Dromore proposal is, meanwhile, under preliminary review by the Town's Planning Board which, as is the case with most zoning changes, may require the

developer to complete an environmental impact assessment to analyze the impacts on traffic, impervious surfaces and steep slopes, among other things. The ECC will urge the Planning Board to study these issues, as well as the economic effect that any multifamily development may have on the school district.

The Fineran Law

The ECC also weighed in on proposed amendments to the Fineran Law. The Fineran Law is the state law, applicable only in the Town of Greenburgh, which requires unincorporated area taxpayers, like those in Edgemont, to pay for the cost of acquiring, operating and maintaining all town parks and recreational facilities, while at the same time restricting their use to unincorporated area residents.

After an appellate court ruling indicated that the Town's lifting use restrictions for the acquisition of Taxter Ridge Park Preserve was a violation of the Fineran Law, the Town Board formed a committee of residents to recommend changes to the Fineran Law that would give the Town Board flexibility to lift the use restrictions.

The committee recommended giving the Town Board authority to lift use restrictions when the Town wanted to acquire additional parkland or improve existing parkland in the future using state, municipal or other government entity or privately donated funds – if broader public access is required to obtain such funds. Fineran's use restriction currently does not apply when the Town accepts federal funds.

Any Town Board resolution to lift use restrictions in exchange for government or private funds would be subject to permissive referendum, which means that anyone opposed would have 30 days in which to gather around 750 signatures on a petition to put the issue to a referendum among unincorporated area voters. In addition, all existing instances where the Town has already lifted use restrictions because it has taken funding from a government entity would be legalized.

The committee also recommended giving the Town Board discretion – without referendum – to lift use restrictions for any other public park or recreational facility upon a vote approved by three-fourths of the Town Board; however, the lifting of use restrictions at the Veteran Park pools would be subject to per-

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Special Award for Service to Nancy Taddiken

Ms. Nancy Taddiken has led the Edgemont Union Free School District through extraordinary times, through times of prosperity and times of adversity, and given the current state of the economy, no time is more extraordinary than the present. Yet Nancy has remained unflappable in pursuing excellence at all levels — and the result is a school district that is nationally recognized for its excellence.

Ms. Taddiken is a native of the area. She was born in White Plains, raised in Hawthorne, graduated in 1965 from Good Counsel Academy and entered the convent at Good Counsel College and, with one year devoted to religious studies, graduated in 1970 with a B.S. in mathematics. She then taught math at John F. Kennedy High School in Somers until January 1974, at which time, before taking final vows, she left the convent, and began teaching math at Dobbs Ferry High School.

Ms. Taddiken received a National Science Foundation grant to pursue an M.S. in Math Education at the University of Dayton. She was “excessed” from Dobbs Ferry in 1976, and after briefly considering getting a law degree, she landed a job teaching math at Rye High School. While at Rye, she received a second M.S., in Educational Administration, from Pace University, as

well as a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies. Ms. Taddiken started Rye’s tech program, taught BASIC programming, and was chair of the Rye Math Department when Edgemont hired her in 1981 to become the high school’s Assistant Principal.

Nancy served as Assistant Principal for four years and was then offered the position of Principal at the high school. When Dr. Frank Calzi retired as Edgemont’s Superintendent in 1990, Nancy became the District’s new leader. The rest requires no telling. As our Silver Box recipients are individuals who demonstrate exceptional commitment to the civic well-being of our community, Nancy is their equal in her exceptional commitment to Edgemont’s schools. As a District we are truly fortunate to have her, both as a leader and a model for our community.

Nancy is not only involved in all aspects of our schools, but you can see her at just about every Edgemont function — including flipping burgers for E Club on E Day. Nancy has given so much of herself to Edgemont, and our district is richer for it. She is a truly special individual without whose presence, whether we knew it at the time or not, it’s fair to say, many of us would not have even chosen to live here in Edgemont.

Edgemont’s Civic Associations

The Edgemont Community Council is a large umbrella organization for all residents of the Edgemont Community. There are 8 local civic associations in the Community as well, whose presidents serve as directors of ECC. Our member associations are –

Central Park Avenue is on the east side of Central Ave and includes the following address: 300; 330-356; and 370-372. This organization is currently not functioning and as a result, sends no delegates to the School Board Nominating Committee

Edgemont Association is one of the two original Edgemont civic associations, with boundaries running from Central Avenue to the Bronx River Parkway, Dromore Road to the Yonkers line east of Old Army Road and the co-ops with addresses 500-509 Central Ave.

Ft. Hill encompasses the area north and south of Underhill Road. It runs from Fort Hill Road south to include Stonleigh Close and the east side of Anadale, and west along Sheridan. On its northern side it includes Rock Hill Lane and goes west to Sprain Road.

Greenridge is centered around streets adjacent to the Scarsdale Golf Club and has a Hartsdale address.

Longview runs from Central Avenue west to Sprain Parkway, from the north side of Ardsley Road to the invisible east/west line that runs down the middle of Sheridan Road.

Northern Greenville includes Scarsdale Country Estates; Scarsdale Meadows; Stoneridge Manor and all of the area behind the post office north to Healy Avenue.

Southern Greenville roughly corresponds to boundaries of Central Avenue west to Sprain Parkway, Jackson Avenue to Ardsley Road.

The Cotswold Association dates back to the late 1920’s. Its boundaries run from the Yonkers line to Ardsley Road, from Central Avenue to the west side of Old Army Road.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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missive referendum.

The amendments would also legalize a contract that the Town entered into in 2007 without a public hearing and disclosure of its terms with a private vendor to install a tennis bubble over the Veteran Park tennis courts pursuant to a 15-year lease. One of the contract's terms was that if the law required that use be restricted to unincorporated area residents - a position the Town was advocating in court - unincorporated area residents would have to bear the vendor's cost of up to \$3 million in improvements, plus a guarantee of lost profits.

The ECC debated the measure and concluded that the proposed amendments were not in the best interest of unincorporated residents. ECC directors said that if only unincorporated area taxpayers must pay for town parks and recreational facilities, then to protect unincorporated area taxpayers from abuse, the use restrictions should be enforced - unless the Town Board could make a good case for lifting them, in which case the matter should be subject to a mandatory referendum among all unincorporated area residents. A mandatory referendum is one that does not require a petition from residents.

Edgemont Burglaries

Throughout the year, the ECC continued efforts to publicize the problem of burglaries plaguing Edgemont neighborhoods. The problem became so acute that one neighborhood in the Greenville section actually hired a

retired Greenburgh policeman to guard their streets during Edgemont's spring break.

Cell Phone Tower Near Midway

The ECC also become involved in mediating a dispute between the Town and Edgemont residents living near the Midway Shopping Center who were angry over not being notified in advance of a town decision to approve "as of right" a cell phone company's application to build a monopole cell phone tower disguised as a flagpole overlooking their yards.

To remedy the situation, the ECC proposed an amendment to the Town's Antenna Law which would require that residents living within 1500 feet of a proposed cell phone monopole site be given written notice when an application is filed so they could follow proceedings before the Town's Antenna Review Board. The amendment would also require that these same residents be given notice and the same rights of appeal as cell phone companies when the Town's building inspector decides whether or not to issue a building permit for such a tower.

The ECC met with the Town Board in September and was told to draft the amendment, which it did a few days later. The Town Board referred the matter to its Antenna Review Board. Arguments were presented to the Antenna Review Board in December - but no action was taken by either the ARB or the Town Board since then.

Traffic & Safety Reminder

Council reminds all drivers to observe local speed limits; to obey traffic signals — especially stop signs and to be considerate of pedestrians.

Council reminds you to support the Edgemont Foundation. The Foundation operates as a not for profit corporation for the purpose of making grants to the Edgemont School District in order to fund miscellaneous, but worthy, unbudgeted projects. This past year the Foundation made several large grants to the Edgemont School System. Any size gift is appreciated.



Check the Blue Book for civic association meeting dates and contact information. Please help support Council's efforts, and those of the local associations as well, by becoming a member of your local association in addition to Council.

Remember, membership in The Edgemont Community Council is available at two different levels. Regular Membership at \$15 and Supporting Membership at \$30.



REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SCHOOL BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

In accordance with the current School Board Nominating Committee By-Laws, Sections A.4(a&d), Designation of Members of the Committee "...The second announcement must include the dates and places of the meetings at which elections will be held and the names of all candidates previously submitted who will be considered for election. ... **If an organization does not comply with the foregoing requirements, its designees shall not serve as a member of the Committee**" Only the individuals named below from their sending organizations will be eligible for election and subsequent seating on the Committee.

Central Park Avenue

2 Year

1 Year

Alternate

Edgemont

May 18, 2009— 8:00 PM

Edgemont High School Faculty Lounge

2 Year Debbie Schenfeld

1 Year Tim Adler

Alternates Lisa Bucksler-Sholtz; Linda Lorch

Fort Hill

TBA

2 Year Kim Aslanian

1 Year James Gilmartin

Alternate Valerie Stone

Greenridge

TBA

Will be announced in the Association's mailing

2 Year

1 Year

Alternate

Longview

May 18, 2009 – 8:00 PM

Greenville School Library

1 Year Laura Cooperman

1 Year Elizabeth McAlpine

Alternate Marc Ackerman

Northern Greenville

TBA

2 Year

1 Year

Alternate

Southern Greenville

May 20, 2009 — 3:00 PM

Greenville Library

1 Year Calvin Chin - completing 2 year term

1 Year Gary Stern

Alternate

Cotswold

May 3, 2009 — 4:00 PM

Will be announced in the Association's mailing

2 Year Mark Romney

1 Year Wendy Amer Hirsch — completing 2 year term

Alternate Liz Kaufman

Edgemont Community Council

April 29, 2009— 8:00 PM

Greenville School Cafeteria

2 Year Catherine Woods

1 Year Amy Rothschild

Alternate Nancy Shifren

Annual Meeting
April 29, 2009
Greenville Cafeteria
8:00 PM

The Edgemont Community Council, Inc.
PO Box 1161
Scarsdale, NY 10583-9161

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The Edgemont Community Council, Inc.

P.O. Box 1161

Scarsdale, NY 10583-9161

I am interested in furthering the activities of the Edgemont Community Council and would like to become a member.
Enclosed are my family's dues for the year July 1, 2009—June 30, 2010.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

eMail Address: _____

Regular Membership \$15

Supporting Membership \$30

Your comments please: