

# Letters

To the editor:

In response to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order #203 issued in June, the Village of Croton-on-Hudson has taken several steps to satisfy the order's requirements.

The Executive Order requires all municipalities with their own police departments to undertake steps to review current police operations and activities and provide a report/plan to the governor by April 1, 2021 on their findings and recommendations for improvements.

Since then the village has conducted a community-wide written survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement in September and formed a Police Task Force of 22 members including local residents who responded to a request for volunteers, school district officials, Croton Police Department members, representatives from the Public Defender's Office and the Westchester County District Attorney's Office. Village Manager Janine King and Bryan Healy from the Village Office are on the task force as well. I have served as liaison from the Village Board.

At Monday night's Village Board work session, the Police Reform Task Force gave an update on their mission and accomplishments since its formation in mid-October. The overall mission of the Task Force, as required by the Executive Order, is generally as follows:

- Engage community stakeholders in a public process to receive comments on current policing strategies and tools.

- Present a draft plan to the public for comment.

- Based on comments, present a final plan to the Board of Trustees with recommendations for police reform for approval.

The failure of a municipality to certify such a plan and provide it to the governor's office by April 1 may result in a police department being denied eligibility for New York State police funding.

Since the task force's formation in October, they have conducted seven public forums for specific stakeholder groups, including seniors, youth, civic organizations, the interfaith community, black community, Spanish-speaking community and the community at large. The task force itself has met eight times. Additionally, the larger group has broken into multiple subcommittees focused on particular aspects of the required review.

At Monday's meeting, the task force's subcommittees provided preliminary reports on Communications, School/Police Relations, analysis of all comments received from the survey, forums and emails, Operating Procedures and Analysis of Survey results, suspicious person calls, arrest data and traffic stops.

Following input from the trustees at the meeting, these subcommittees will begin formalizing a plan for the future of policing in the village. The board hopes to have a draft plan for review in early 2021. Before adoption of any plan, the public will be invited to comment on the proposed plan.

Many thanks are due to the task force volunteers for the huge amount of work and effort they have already provided and, in advance, for the very large task ahead.

Ann Gallelli, Trustee,  
Village of Croton-on-Hudson

To the editor:

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson's Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee offers you another installment of informational tips for your consideration.

With colder weather upon us and the coming Winter Solstice there are things we can all be doing to stay active outdoors and make getting around the village enjoyable.

Before heading out you should check the current weather. It is important that you dress for the current temperature whether you will be walking or doing some other active exercise. Layers of clothing will keep you warmer since they will trap warm air near your body and protect you from the cold. A scarf may be the best accessory in your wardrobe, as it can add about ten degrees back for you, and it can be easily removed as you warm up. But note, most studies have shown that typical scarves are not good substitutes for masks in protecting you from viruses, like COVID-19.

Whether you are staying on the pavement, or heading for one of the village's many trails, pick the correct footwear. In winter you know that you want your toes warm and dry, so pick an appropriate shoe and sock combination. Be prepared for sidewalks and streets that may be slippery or even snow-covered at times. Local businesses and your neighbors will be out trying to keep their sidewalks clear, but you should play it safe.

Walks in the months when trees have no leaves will allow more chances to spot local wildlife. You can look for the places squirrels crouch on limbs. Watch for the birds that winter here. Some predatory birds will be easier to see when they swoop in towards the ground.

Many of us may say it's too cold for a bicycle ride, but with the right clothes and add-ons like bodywarmers you can keep those wheels turning. As with your car, you should recheck your tire pressure as cold weather will depress that pressure. You may also consider a seasonal tire change for your bicycle. Whenever you bicycle please be sure to wear your helmet.

Drivers should remain vigilant in watching for pedestrians, cyclists, and other active users of the streets and sidewalks. Once there is a significant snowfall there may be some mounds of cleared snow near corners and crosswalks. Pedestrians may be stepping out and be less visible to drivers. Please stay alert whenever there may also be pedestrians crossing the road.

Marc Albrecht, Member,  
Croton-on-Hudson Bicycle-Pedestrian  
Advisory Committee

To the editor:

Now that the Electoral College has made it doubly official, and even Mitch McConnell has deigned to recognize the outcome of the 2020 election (five weeks late), perhaps we can now all move on from the dangerous, destructive and un-American charade that the lame duck President and his followers have been playing since November 4<sup>th</sup> and get back to the business of governing. In that spirit, the Croton Democratic Committee would like to congratulate all the newly-elected public officials:

President-Elect Joe Biden,  
Vice-President-Elect Kamala Harris,  
Congressman-Elect Mondaire Jones,  
Senator Pete Harkham, Assemblywoman Sandy Galef, Westchester District Attorney-Elect Mimi Rocah, and especially Croton village trustees Ann Gallelli and Len Simon, who received over 3,600 votes each!

As we have all heard repeatedly, despite the pandemic and against multiple obstacles being erected in many states (thankfully, not New York), more people voted in the national election (as well as many state-wide elections) than ever before in U.S. history. The Croton Dems wish to thank every single person who turned out in our village and our town, regardless of for whom you voted in this historic

point-by-point refutation of his 1,000-plus word letter is not worthwhile. However, it is important to note that there was nothing secretive (as he claims) about the plan for a possible rental of the residence at Gouveia Park. Issues relating to Gouveia Park have repeatedly been discussed at public meetings. In no fewer than three televised meetings. In addition, if Mr. Steinberg and his friends from Croton United had a different vision for the park they certainly could have implemented it during the years that they were in the majority on the Village Board.

I would further note that, as in the previous two elections, our Democratic candidates ran unopposed again this year because Mr. Steinberg and his Croton United friends have been unable, or unwilling, to field a single candidate in order to let the voters decide if their ideas have merit. Instead, they continue to snipe from the sidelines, making false accusations that achieve nothing other than to divide our community. As I said at the top, it's time to stop the charades and get on about the business of governing.

Richard Masur, Chair,  
Croton Democratic Village Committee

To the editor:

Last week, on the fifth anniversary of the historic 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, I joined some 4,000 other local leaders in a joint statement calling on the Biden-Harris administration to move aggressively to fight climate change by rejoining the Paris Agreement on Day 1 and taking necessary actions to achieve a 100% clean energy power sector as soon as feasible.

Sustained partnership between the federal, state, local governments, businesses and citizens is essential to taking on the problem of climate change.

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson has regularly advocated for environmental reforms in our annual legislative memo to our state and federal representatives. Earlier this year, one of the measures supported by the board, a state-wide ban on single-use plastic bags, went into effect. Last Wednesday, state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli announced that New York's pension fund will divest its \$226 billion pension fund from fossil fuel-producing companies by the end of the next decade--another measure the board called for in its memos to state leaders.

For the last several years, state and local governments have led the effort against climate change in the absence of federal leadership. For its part, the Village of Croton-on-Hudson has sought to do what it can on its own to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Since taking office in 2017, the Democratic majority on the Village Board has championed a number of environmental initiatives, including: adding electric vehicle charging stations at the Municipal Building and Croton-Harmon train station parking lot; installing a community solar array atop the Department of Public Works building; and joining the Sustainable Westchester Community Choice Aggregation program, Westchester Power.

These efforts have avoided or mitigated the equivalent of thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions. Consequently, they have earned Croton-on-Hudson the designation as a NY Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and a Climate Smart Community by the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

Our progress in this area is personal for me. In 2014, I took part in the People's Climate March, the largest climate-change demonstration in history, in response to the United Nations Climate Summit. In 2015, I joined many local residents (including half a dozen people from my block) along with many Westchester-based environmental organizations (Clearwater, the Dominican Sisters, WESPAC and more) for the "Peekskill to Paris" rally in support of the Paris Climate Agreement.

I'm so proud of what we've been able to accomplish as a village. The prospect of renewed concerted action on climate and real leadership from and partnership with



Donna Selwa-Selig, Cy Department R.N., Tuesday after becoming staff member at Nebyrian Hudson Valley Cortlandt Manor, to be against COVID-19.

## Baker-Collyearing up 105th Christmas distribution

The Baker-Collyear Fund, started by a merchant who witnessed picking through a garbage can 105 years ago, is continuing contributions for this year.

Over 350 local residents in the Ossining area were last year's generous contributors. Donations go solely to holiday baskets and, with food vouchers.

The administration is handled by volunteers and packed and delivered by the Ossining Volunteer Fire. Other community members food basket deliveries will be on Wednesday, December 23.

Tax-deductible can be sent to the Baker-Collyear Fund, c/o John Crawford, Post Office Box 508, 10562; by calling 438- using the fund's website thebakercollyearchristmasfund.org.

As of Tuesday, year's drive have been: Ann Parker Bale Post, Donna Bale, J. Botticelli, Mr. Ramon Clarke, Glenn F. Cruze & C. Bonnie Coe, Susan L. Collier, L. Collier, Michael V. Coe, N. Damato and Susan A. Mat. J. Darby and Lucille E. Darby, Davis and Eileen Davis, Michael and Staryl Desiderio, Lori Earle R. Ellefsen and Bart Gloria Fried and John W. F. Auto Repair of Briarcliff, In. Gallagher and Mary K. G. Sandra R. Galef.

Also, Jeneen Garo Golden, Jeffrey Goldstein House, Inc., Tamsen Herman Hickernell and Gary L. H. Holohan, Joseph P. Holohan, Holohan, Donald L. Hopper, H. Hopper, Robert C. Hooley, Holy Spirit Church, Horkans, Cornelius Houston Hose Co. No. 6, Alice Joseph Kane-Leach, Arthur Klamka, Klamka, Rachel Levine, Man and Design, LLC, Marie L. Peter V. McIntyre and Mary Franco Mesiti, Monitor Hos (OFD), George J. Morrison, N. Morrison, Shiela Muran Police Athletic League, In. Steamer Company, Inc., L. Charles Pencola, Brian J. Denise L. Perrigino, Mary Mary Ann Roberts, Patricia Rosen, Ruscon Tru Equipment Co., Inc., Scarborough Company, Howard Schnapp & Ladder Company No. 1 Sherwood and Linda Sherwood, St. Paul's

## The Gazette

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111 Grand Street  
Croton-on-Hudson, New York  
PO Box 819, Croton-on-Hudson, NY  
10520-0819

Tel. (914) 271-2088  
Fax (914) 271-4219  
E-mail: thegazetteusa@gmail.com

Gary J. Cahill, Publisher  
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