

August 2013

### **Progress on the Clarence Bike Path continues...**

The bike path is the most heavily used park in the Town of Clarence, with people biking, rollerblading, running and walking from dawn to dusk. The Town Board and Planning Board are working together to update the master plan, and this blueprint for the town's development will be called Masterplan 2025. Increased emphasis on the bike path will be included in the Masterplan 2025, with additional access from new subdivisions to the bike path one of the many new priorities. If you can visualize the bike path (as it currently exists) as a wheel, the idea is to add 'spokes' to the wheel so that citizens can access the bike path from anywhere in Clarence...via the spokes. The Town of Clarence currently has over two million dollars in grant applications on file with the both the Federal Government and the State of New York that will improve both the size and the accessibility of the bike path. In addition, new sections of the bike path will be wider to accommodate the diverse traffic that flows on the bike path during any given day. My wife and I biked on the Amherst bike path last Sunday, and enjoyed it immensely. It is very different from the Clarence bike path. In Clarence, the bike path was constructed over the former railroad bed of the peanut line railroad, so it is straight as an arrow. In Amherst, the bike path does not follow the railroad bed, so it is longer, narrower and has a ton of curves. The upside of not following the railroad bed is that the Town of Amherst has been able to take the path over and under bridges, follow several small streams and connect it to the bike path in Tonawanda via some very clever transitions that make use of the local roads, colleges and parks. If you want to try the system, you can pick up the trail by going West on Maple Road and, at the intersection, North on North Forest. As you start to go North on North Forest you will see a large complex of tennis courts on your left. Park in the lot next to the tennis courts and you can pick up the main trail from there. If have done your homework, you can go all the way to downtown Buffalo from this starting point. If you opt to ride into Tonawanda (a twenty mile round trip+/-) you can connect with Niawanda Park in Tonawanda. The newer sections of the Clarence bike path will look like Niawanda Park, which is extremely well designed. It is thirteen feet wide (our bike path is ten feet wide) and has a striped lane for walkers/joggers. By keeping the walkers/joggers out of the bike traffic, the traffic flow is much smoother and safer for all parties. In addition to adding newer, wider sections to the Town of Clarence Bike Path, planning has begun on striping the existing intersections of bike path and roads in the Town of Clarence. Many intersections are unmarked, while several other major intersections have marking/striping that has worn off. The recent auto/pedestrian accident on Strickler Road only underscores the continued push to keep our citizens safe as they bike, run or rollerblade in the Town of Clarence.

Should you have any positive comments, please feel free to call me at 741-8930, email [dhartzell@clarence.ny.us](mailto:dhartzell@clarence.ny.us) or stop by for a visit. My door is always open!