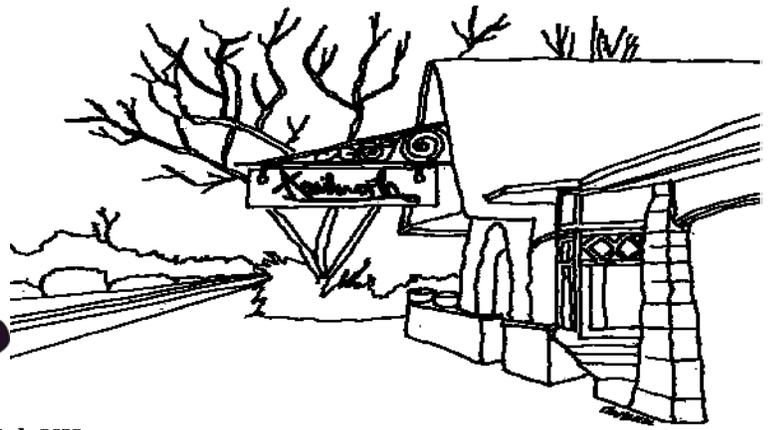


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Village President  
Fred G. Steingraber

## Village President's Message—Vol. XII

January 2012

Dear Fellow Residents,

Greetings to you as we enter the New Year. Northern Illinois winters on the shores of Lake Michigan are usually frigid indeed and the patient wait for warmer weather can be long and challenging. Thankfully, thus far we seem to have been spared the robust snowfall we experienced last year at this time. Regardless of the amount of snow, the companionship of friends and family during the winter always help to bridge the wait until spring.

As we begin 2012, the Village of Kenilworth continues to face, as all communities do, a number of financial stresses. These include little to no property tax revenue increases for our General Fund, adequately funding of our ongoing pension obligations, expected increases in healthcare costs, continued expectations for high quality services, and the growing needs associated with an outdated infrastructure.

The Village has continued to pursue and persevere, now in our third year of making productivity and cost containment improvements. At the same time, we have been stepping up the pace on initiatives that hold potential for the longer term health and well-being of Kenilworth. I will attempt to bring you up to date on these important areas.

### **Productivity and Cost Containment Improvement**

This is continuing to be addressed through a number of measures, including the following:

- Holding the line on wage and salary increases.
- Realizing a full year of cost savings due to the Water Department and Street Department being consolidated into a single Public Works Department. This eliminated a full-time supervisory position and resulted in savings of \$120,000.
- Outsourcing street sweeping operations to a private company. This not only saves money throughout the year on personnel and equipment maintenance costs, but allowed the Village to forego the purchase of a new street-sweeper, saving \$150,000 to \$200,000.
- Working with other communities on joint bid/joint contracting for: street resurfacing, curb/sidewalk replacement, pavement crack sealing, tree planting, and concrete removal and replacement. These joint programs have all achieved significant reduction in the cost of these services.



Fred G. Steingraber  
Village President

- Implementing an intergovernmental agreement between the Village and the Park District that now takes into account the cost of administrative staff support, facilities equipment the Village regularly provides to the Park District for their operations and integrates the deployment of Park District staff with the Village Public Works staff. This has also resulted in outsourcing routine park landscape maintenance for both the Village and the Park District, achieving a 70% cost reduction to the Village. In addition, this freed up Park District personnel for higher value added work.
- Careful monitoring and adjusting of our fees for services to ensure the user costs are fully covered.
- Through the joint pooling of health insurance with other municipalities, we are securing savings for providing medical and dental care.
- Participation in a jointly bid contract with other communities to secure more favorable pricing for tree trimming and tree removal services. As a result, a significant portion of the Village's parkway trees were trimmed to promote healthy growth this past year.
- Completing the update of the Kenilworth Village Code to codify all amendments since 1959 (the time of the last update).

As you may be aware, there is a growing movement across the U.S. for communities, like ours, to seek savings in electrical costs through aggregation purchases of electricity.

Historically, residents and small businesses have had little to no choice of their electric service providers. This changed when Illinois Governor Quinn amended the Illinois Power Agency Act to allow Village residents and business owners to shop around for electricity providers to seek more competitive rates. This change is the latest in a trend towards electricity deregulation.

New state regulations also make it possible for municipalities as a whole to purchase electricity for the entire community to realize economies of scale. By buying electricity in bulk community rates may be decreased even more aggressively than if individual residents shopped around on their own. Kenilworth is now moving forward with an option to arrange for the provision of electricity through alternative electric suppliers.

At the December 2011 Board meeting, with full support of the Finance Committee, the Village Trustees unanimously approved a resolution asking Kenilworth residents to authorize an "opt-out" program for the supply of electricity to residential and small commercial retail customers. During the March 20, 2012 local primary election, residents will have the chance to decide if the Village should continue to purchase electricity exclusively through ComEd or seek bids for alternative electric providers on the open market.

The March 20 ballot referendum will ask residents to adopt an "opt-out program", in which all residential and small commercial retail customers may be switched automatically to the least expensive alternative supplier, unless a customer affirmatively declines to opt out and prefers to continue obtaining service through ComEd or another provider. Residents and small businesses would have no obligation to participate and could choose to not participate in the opt-out program.

Communities across Illinois have been adopting electric aggregation to provide their citizens with lower electricity costs. In fact, over 75% of businesses in Illinois now purchase electricity from an alternative electric supplier.

Other communities have realized savings of 20% or more on annual residential electric bills, or an estimated \$120 to \$150. However, even if electricity is purchased from an alternative supplier, ComEd will remain the distributor of electricity in the Village. The selected alternative supplier merely generates electricity and delivers it to ComEd for distribution.

### **Village Infrastructure and Capital Improvements**

After several years of deferring infrastructure maintenance and repair projects in 2011 the Village has focused its attention on addressing much needed improvement in our infrastructure — pursuing improvements of our streets, water system, street lighting system, and urban forest by taking the following actions this past year:

- Complete reconstruction of portions of Ivy Court and Leicester Road. These projects included the complete removal and reconstruction of the roads, sidewalks, curb, and storm sewer system where needed. Both were completed on time and under budget.
- Resurfacing portions of Warwick Road, Essex Road, Cummings Avenue, Roger Avenue and Roslyn Road. This work was also completed on time and under budget.
- This was the second year of the Village Annual Water Valve Replacement Program to address the Village's aging water system. Under this plan, the Village allocates funds annually to address aging valves in the water distribution system which will help with long term maintenance needs.
- 2011 was the second year in the implementation of the Village's Street Light System Rewiring Program. Under this program, Village Public Works personnel are rewiring the Village's street light system to improve stability in the lighting system and reduce future repairs.
- The Village has undertaken the development of a 10-year infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan with a professional engineering consulting firm. A primary focus of this plan is to integrate the results of the Village's 2010 storm water study (nearly complete) and identified storm water management improvements into the long-term capital plan. This plan will provide an overall picture of how our streets, curbs, sidewalks, sewers, and water system needs fit together. Volumes of data have been analyzed to determine what the Village needs to upgrade and to create a comprehensive timeline and sequence of projects over the coming ten years. This plan will provide Village staff a clear picture of what needs to be systematically accomplished in the most economic way, and will allow the Village board to begin to discuss the funding requirements to address infrastructure needs. This is absolutely vital to avoid the growing potential of major problems.
- The Village undertook tree removal services to address the challenges presented by the Emerald Ash Bore. Under this program, a private contractor has removed over 100 trees on public property throughout the Village. To address this tree loss, the Village planted nearly 50 trees as part of its annual Parkway Tree Planting Program.
- The Village purchased new equipment and vehicles, which have been deferred in recent years. Included in this replacement were aging police vehicles and the purchase of needed public works equipment and machinery to improve the efficiency of maintenance operations.

### **Community Development Progress**

In 2011, we experienced further progress in our community development continuing to address items that grew out of the Kenilworth 2008 comprehensive plan.

Several new businesses opened in the business district on Green Bay Road and Park Drive:

- i2i Eyecare – 521 Park Drive — Offering quality family eye care and fashionable eyewear frames.
- Sherwin-Williams Paint Store -614 Green Bay Road — Retail establishment offering quality paints, wallpaper and decorating consultation and expert advice.
- The Daily Method – 410 Green Bay Road — A new exercise concept offering a combination of ballet barre work, core conditioning, stretching, and orthopedic exercises. Due to the early success of this business, the owners have recently applied for and received approval for an expansion in the class size.
- The Last Detail – 624 Green Bay Road — Antique and Collectible Cars and Car Related Art Galleria – Anticipated opening is for early this year.
- One of the very exciting projects is an ambitious improvement of the Green Bay Road business district corridor. The Village staff has recently received approval from the Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) for a 2012 Community Planning Program Grant. This grant will allow us to assemble a plan for streetscape improvements that would enhance pedestrian access to the Kenilworth Train Station, business district, parking areas, and the Green Bay Road Trail. This is a prime opportunity for Kenilworth to start to deliver on the vision of the 2008 Village Comprehensive Plan.

There are many possibilities available and careful consideration will be given with significant public involvement along the way. For example, some possibilities that are being discussed include:

- Larger sidewalks with common areas for residents to shop, gather, and visit.
- Implementing pedestrian amenities and streetscape enhancements such as foliage, benches, and attractive lighting.
- Improving and aligning the Green Bay Road Trail pedestrian path as it passes through Kenilworth from Wilmette to Winnetka so people are not forced to maneuver through Village streets to travel down the path.
- Designating bicycle lanes down Green Bay Road.
- A widening of Green Bay Road with the implementation of a median down the center.
- An evaluation of available parking to ensure it is sufficient for the business district corridor.

These projects will take time to plan and implement and will take more than a year to complete. The first step is to use the recent RTA grant to develop an action plan, which will be assembled this summer. Residents can expect Village officials to reach out for their participation through community surveys, participatory workshops, and direct interviews and meetings with property owners and developers. Village staff will also be conducting research into various funding opportunities for the recommended improvements.

The ultimate goal of such improvements is to increase the overall appearance and attractiveness of the business district; attract shoppers and guests to the businesses in this area of the Village; and generate additional revenue through additional business activity. This would help the Village offset its dependence on residential property taxes. Kenilworth needs a more diversified revenue stream to stay financially healthy and capable of investing in the well-being of our residents.

### **Work in Process**

There are several projects which are still a work-in-process, including:

- The Long Range Police Plan which contemplates a potential consolidation of dispatch services and focusing on the staffing needs associated with patrol operations.
- A study of zoning amendments for alternative energy devices and installations.
- A study of alternative water delivery systems.
- A study of our building demolition review process and the property maintenance regulations in the Village.

We expect completion of most of these studies during the first half of this year.

### **Conclusion**

Finally, I hope you can see from this message, while we continue to focus on costs and productivity improvement, we are also ratcheting up the focus on improvements to our infrastructure and community development. This is where the “more saving helps in the more doing”. And, to assist in confirming the wisdom of our strategy, I am most pleased to be able to tell you we are now well into the third year of generating a General Fund surplus, which is helping the “more doing”, but as importantly it is vital to replenishing our reserves which were drawn down for several years.

I am most grateful to our Village team, which includes our staff, the Trustees, and all the individuals serving on our boards and commissions for their dedication and perseverance. This is what makes possible the reality of a more ambitious vision for Kenilworth.

And, finally, I thank all of you for your patience, your constructive inquiry, and critique. Without all of the constituencies functioning, we will not be able to preserve our cherished traditions and reputation. So, I thank you for doing your part, including reading this message to assist in bringing you up to date.

While I am writing this newsletter in the midst of an intensive day of snowfall, I urge you to stay warm, but remember the days are already getting longer. The promise of spring beckons, as do the Village's projects, and their hopeful impact on the future growth and prosperity for Kenilworth.

Sincerely yours,



Fred G. Steingraber  
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Village of Kenilworth



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## **Village President' Message Enclosed**

# **Upcoming Meetings**

**For more information, see the Village's website,  
[www.villageofkenilworth.org](http://www.villageofkenilworth.org)**

- **Thursday, February 2—Park District—5:00 p.m.**
- **Thursday, February 2—Building Review Commission—7:30 p.m.**
- **Monday, February 6—Plan Commission—7:30 p.m.**
- **Tuesday February 7—Finance Committee—6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, February 15—Architectural Review Board—7:30 p.m.**
- **Tuesday, February 21—Village Board—7:30 p.m.**