



**Scott Shanley**  
General Manager

# *Town of Manchester*

## **General Manager's Report**

February 2007

### **Town Hall Closings**

Municipal offices will be closed Monday, February 12 for Lincoln's Birthday and Monday, February 19 for President's Day.

### **General Manager's Office**

The tenth session of Manchester Government Academy will begin on Thursday, March 15 and conclude on Thursday, May 24. For more information, please go on-line to [www.ci.manchester.ct.us](http://www.ci.manchester.ct.us) or call Tricia Catania at 647-3102.

### **Public Works Department**

#### **Buckland Area Transportation Study**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDot), Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have initiated this study in cooperation with the towns of East Hartford, Manchester, and South Windsor to identify and address near and long term transportation needs within and around the Buckland area that impact these communities. This study, which began in June 2006, will evaluate the identified transportation needs and define a near and long term improvement implementation plan for the overall study area.

#### **Project Goals**

The general goals of the study are listed below.

\*To formulate plans of improvement that have the greatest potential to increase the operational efficiency and safety of the overall transportation system in the study area, including roadways and access drives, as well as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian services. Plans that have the greatest potential to improve safety, reduce congestion and improve air quality will be given the greatest consideration for advancement and ultimately, implementation.

\*To provide for future growth and development. It is understood that the Buckland commercial area has potential for additional growth. Every effort will be made to identify

and examine the feasibility of implementing state, local and regional plans of development for use in the identification of improvement alternatives.

\*To ensure transportation balance by identifying transportation improvement alternatives that promote use of all transportation modes.

There will be many opportunities for public comment on the study. For more information about the study and ways to get involved throughout the study process, visit the project website.

### **Winter Information Guide**

A Winter Information Guide was mailed to households and businesses in late December. The Guide can also be found on the Town website.

### **Winter Parking Ban**

Residents are reminded that overnight parking is not allowed on public streets or municipal parking lots between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. from December 1 – April 1.

### **Removal of Snow from Sidewalks**

Town ordinance requires that owners and occupants of buildings and vacant lots are responsible to remove snow, sleet and ice from the public sidewalk abutting their property within 24 hours after the conclusion of a storm. Failure to comply with this ordinance may result in a fine. Cooperation is needed so that school children and other pedestrians will be able to use the public sidewalks and avoid having to walk in the street.

### **Building Department**

#### **Activity for December 1 – December 31, 2006**

Building Permits	December 2006	November 2006
Total applications received	264	289
Total permits issued	251	308
Total revenue	\$112,690.43	\$59,380.08
Construction Value*	\$8,786,860.89	\$4,136,299
Inspections conducted	643	704
Code Enforcement		
Cases opened	43	37
Cases closed	38	44
Inspections conducted	81	82

**Comparison of the fiscal years July 1 – December 31**

Building permits	FY 2007	FY 2006
Total applications received	1811	2028
Total permits issued	1750	1870
Total revenue	\$486,183.06	\$431,702.80
Total construction value*	\$57,968,323.23**	\$30,419,468.22
Inspections conducted	4,293	5,225
Code Enforcement		
Cases opened	346	436
Cases closed	322	506
Inspections conducted	644	788

**Calendar year January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006**

Building Permits		Code Enforcement	
Total applications received	3,664	Cases opened	555
Total permits issued	3,624	Cases closed	619
Total revenue	\$973,668.91	Inspections conducted	1,146
Construction Value*	\$98,058,499.61		
Inspections conducted	8,086		

Notes:

\*Includes the value of Town projects where fees were waived

\*\*This value has yet to be adjusted for value added due to cost affidavits at Certificate of Occupancy issuance.

**Customer Service and Information Center**

**Tax Forms**

Income Tax Forms: Copies of state and federal tax forms and instructions are available for the public at the Town Libraries and the Town Hall Customer Service and Information Center. Forms and publications can also be downloaded from the state and federal websites: <http://www.ct.gov/drs> <http://irs/ustreas.gov/>

**Income Tax Services Offered for 2007**

**Weiss Center**

Free tax preparation and filing is being offered at the Weiss Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays through April 13, 2007, by Community Renewal Team staff and it is a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site. (Appointments are strongly encouraged) The focus is on low to middle income families and individuals in need of assistance with a specialization on the Child Care and Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Credit. For those married and

filing jointly, both spouses need to be present to sign the Income Tax Form. For an appointment, call 647-3095.

### **Manchester Community College**

VITA will again provide volunteers at MCC to help complete SIMPLE tax returns for persons who cannot otherwise afford to pay for tax assistance. The focus is on low to middle income families and individuals in need of assistance.

\*No appointment taken, walk-ins only – first-come, first served.

\*Hours of Operation are Fridays through mid April 2007 (closed on Good Friday, Apr. 6)

\*Location – Lowe Building at MCC, Room L-233

\*Hours – 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### **Claim all of the tax benefits earned in 2006**

If an individual earned less than \$38,348 in 2006 and had children living with them or if an individual earned less than \$14,230 and did not have children living with them, then they may qualify for federal tax credits and tax refunds of \$400 to 4,000. For more information, call United Way 2-1-1.

## **Finance Department**

### **Assessment and Collection**

Work on the Grand List of October 1, 2006 was finalized in late January. The Office of Assessment and Collection will be sending out final assessment notices to all real estate and personal property owners. Owners who wish to appeal their assessments may file an application to appeal to the Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA). BAA applications may be obtained from the Office of Assessment and Collection, and must be filed by February 20, 2007. This deadline is set by the State of Connecticut and cannot be extended. Any property owner who files a BAA application after February 20, 2007 can not receive a BAA hearing for the 2006 Grand List. The BAA will begin their hearings in March 2007, and conclude their hearings in March or April 2007, after which the final Grand List will be established. Traditionally, the number of appeals filed at the BAA level is less than at the informal hearing level, however, since our informal hearing level was lower than expected, we believe that we should expect a minimum of 400 appeals to the BAA. The overwhelming majority of BAA applications are received within the final few days before the February 20th deadline.

Applications for the Senior Homeowner's Program, and Additional Veteran's Program were mailed in late January. These applications must be filed by May 15, 2007 in order for qualifying seniors to receive their property tax credits. In order to qualify, taxpayers must be over age 65 by December 2006, or be totally disabled. Taxpayers must own a home and must provide documentation listing their 2006 income to the Assessor's Office with a completed application. The maximum income for qualifying seniors (or disabled) taxpayers for this year is \$28,800 for unmarried, and \$35,300 for married.

## **Planning and Economic Development**

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**

Each year the Town of Manchester receives CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under an entitlement community grant formula. CDBG funds can be used to support a broad range of community projects and activities. The Town will enter its 17<sup>th</sup> CDBG program year on October 1, 2007 with an expected entitlement allocation of \$668,192, the same amount as the previous year. There will also be a limited amount of yet to be determined program income from repayments of loans previously provided under the program.

CDBG funds must be used to promote and support the achievement of one or more of the following national objectives: (i) to benefit low and moderate-income persons; or (ii) aid in the prevention and elimination of slum or blight; or (iii) meet other community development needs of particular urgency and for which other funding sources are not available.

The Town is required to develop an Annual Action Plan which identifies projects and activities that will be funded with each year's allocation. The Planning Department conducts the following series of neighborhood town hall meetings and other public forums to obtain community input into the development of funding priorities for the program:

Wednesday, February 7	7:00 p.m.	Nathan Hale School Cafeteria
Wednesday, February 14	7:00 p.m.	Washington School Cafeteria
Thursday, February 15	7:00 p.m.	Verplanck School Library
Tuesday, February 20	7:00 p.m.	Lincoln Center Hearing Room (Public Hearing)

For further information, please contact the Planning Department at 647-3106.

## **Human Services**

### **Health Department**

Pandemic Influenza Planning and Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) for Town Departments and Board of Education have been a focus of the Health Department, with the assistance of the recently hired Emergency Preparedness Coordinator under a CDC Bioterrorism Preparedness Grant. In an effort to prepare the Town of Manchester, should a Pandemic event occur, a two-part training initiative was held for Town Department Heads and supervisory staff to learn about the significant issues that can be anticipated during a Pandemic event. The second part of the training was organized as a Table Top Exercise designed to help Town and Board of Education staffs apply pandemic issues to their departments and to write department level COOP plans should a projected 40% absenteeism occur. Departmental COOP plans will identify essential personnel and services that will be needed to continue serving the people of Manchester, should a Pandemic occur. All Departmental COOP plans will be integrated into the Town's Emergency Operations Plan.

The Manchester Health Department participated in a Capitol Region Vaccination Team Deployment Drill at Buckland Hills Mall, on Saturday of the Martin Luther King weekend using a free flu clinic as the drill model. Since most local health Departments in the Capitol Region received shipments of flu vaccine later than scheduled flu clinics, there is an excess amount of unused flu vaccine in the region. Manchester Health Department and the Hartford Health Department organized Regional clinics in less than one week to utilize some of the excess vaccine in free flu clinics. Valuable lessons were learned during this exercise. It was learned that medical vaccination teams could be deployed to run vaccination clinics in a very short period of time. Medical and non-medical volunteers assisted from many towns in the region. Legal and insurance issues were the more time consuming components of organizing such an event. However, in an emergency setting, the legal and insurance issues are managed under a Public Health Emergency Response Act that effectively streamlines the more complicated matters that were required to address during a non-emergency. This effort also established a new relationship with Buckland Hills Mall corporate offices with the Town of Manchester now considered as a Vendor. The Manchester Health Department looks forward to opportunities to work with the Mall professional management staff for future public health promotion initiatives.

#### **Manchester Senior Center**

The Senior Center, in conjunction with AARP, is offering free federal and state income tax preparation assistance for low and middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those age 60 and older. The program will operate from February 5 – April 11, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. in the Senior Center Café. No appointment is necessary. Trained tax counselors will help individuals with their tax filing on a first-come, first-served basis, free of charge. For more information, call the Senior Center at 647-3211.

Monday, February 26 at 10:00 a.m., Mary Keenan, ECHN Social Worker will speak on managing a chronic condition as well as offer practical and supportive ways to help cope with chronic illness. To register for this program, call the Senior Center at 647-3211.

Thursday, February 8 at 1:00 p.m., Maggy Dione from Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Company will discuss reverse mortgages in detail. To register for this program, call the Senior Center at 647-3211.

Wednesday, February 7 at 12:30 p.m., Denise Romeo, RPh, will be at the Senior Center to discuss "A Dose for Your Healthy Heart". To register for this program, call the Senior Center at 647-3211.

## **Manchester Public Library**

### **Children's Programming**

In addition to regularly scheduled Library storytimes for preschoolers, special school vacation week children's programs will begin on Saturday, February 17 at 10:30 a.m. with librarian Hong Chen reading "Chinese New Year Stories" and will end with Okra Dance Company of New York performing "American Dance from Africa to Broadway" at 10:30 a.m. on the next Saturday, February 24 also at 10:30 a.m. Those programs as well as others will be held in the Howroyd Room in the Mary Cheney Library building. Another highlight of that week will be Master Magician Dan Bowen performing on February 20 at 11:00 a.m. at the Whiton building and again at 2:00 p.m. at the Cheney building.

### **Adult Programming**

On February 5 at 7:00 p.m., Glastonbury resident Sophia Danenberg will speak and show slides about her recent climbing experience from Katmandu to the summit of Mount Everest. The regular monthly book discussion group for adults, reviewing "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison, will be held on Monday evening, February 26, at 7:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon, February 24 at 2:00 p.m. will be a class on using the Internet and using Library catalogs and databases. Those events will all be held in the Howroyd Room at Mary Cheney.

### **Teen Programming**

Teen programs will include Thursday afternoon activities at 3:30 p.m. each week. Due to popular demand, the Wednesday evening Teen programs in the Howroyd Room are expanding hours to begin at 6:00 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m.

### **Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Library on-going book sale at the Whiton building marks its one year anniversary and has proven to be a successful way to even out the distribution of unwanted books donated to the library. The next Friends' monthly meeting will be at Whiton at 7:00 p.m. on February 28.

## **Manchester-Fire-Rescue-EMS**

### **Activity Report for December 2006**

### **Activity Report for Calendar year 2006**

Medical/rescue	502	5,623
Fire Related	14	166
Hazardous Conditions	37	314
Public Service	41	445
Good Intent	47	549
False	27	377
Mutual Aid	<u>7</u>	<u>32</u>
Total Calls	675	7,506

### **History Lesson**

The South Manchester Fire District organized on April 21, 1897. Hose Company No. 1 was the first fire company of the South Manchester Fire District to formally operate as a fire company and this occurred on May 28, 1898. A hose cart with 500 feet of hose and other firefighting equipment was stationed in an 8' x 12' lean-to built adjacent to the livery stables of Henry Forbes at the corner of Pine and Walnut Streets, where a horse and wagon would be available to pull the cart. When Hose Company No. 1 purchased a ladder truck (1899) the station was moved to Dr. Gillam's barn on Prospect Street, where a horse was available. In 1901, Hose Company No. 1 moved to an actual firehouse at the corner of Pine Street and Hartford Road. On April 24, 1966, Hose Company No. 1 moved to its present location on McKee Street. In 1979 the Fire Station at Pine Street and Hartford Road was leased to the Connecticut Firemen's Historical Society and was opened in October 1983 as their museum.

### **Training**

In-service training for December and January included familiarization with *Handling Natural Gas Emergencies*; *Rapid Intervention Procedural Overview* and *Foam Operations*. Training sessions for the immediate future will include *Vehicle Stabilization with Rescue Struts* (new equipment recently purchased) and *Standpipe Packs and Operations*. Additionally, Command Level Officers will soon train for NIMS (National Incident Management System) 300 and 400 certification. All Operational personnel have completed NIMS 100, 200, and 700 modules.

### **Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation Bowling Tournament**

Fire Chief Robert Bycholski will once again partner with Police Chief James Berry in the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Lions Club FENIX Memorial Bowling Tournament to benefit the FIDELCO Guide Dog Foundation. The tournament is scheduled for Saturday, February 24 between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Spare Time Vernon Lanes on Talcottville Road in Vernon. The Chiefs will bowl for the Public Safety Trophy against representatives of the Vernon Fire and Police Departments beginning at 4:30 p.m.

### **Town Clerk**

#### **Annual Statistics for 2006**

Land Recordings	13,080
Births	1,065
Deaths	538
Marriages	332
Civil Unions	19
Dog Licenses	3,536
Game Licenses	5,852
Passports	232

**Employee News**

**Newly Hired**

Ed Soper - Water and Sewer Department

Barbara King, Sarah Coyne - Library

Ray Marconi, Benjamin Dayton - Manchester Fire-Rescue-EMS

Ellen Moran, Ryan Zannotti - Health Department

Eliza Elmy - Senior Center

Donna Giorgetti - Customer Service and Information Center

**Recently Retired**

Fred Lachapelle - Public Works

Paul Lombardo - Police Department