



RENSSELAER CITY NEWSLETTER

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NOVEMBER 2024

Rensselaer Leaders Opposed to Sludge Incineration

Office of the Mayor



Mayor Mike Stammel
518-426-9511

mike.stammel@rensselaerny.gov

Highlights in this month's issue



New City Vehicles



Parks Ribbon Cutting



White Cane Event



A coalition of environmental activists and community leaders are raising concerns about a proposed sludge incinerator at the former BASF brownfield in the Port of Rensselaer, a 40-acre parcel with a history of industrial use. The \$100 million project, spearheaded by Harbor Rock, has faced opposition from local residents, environmental groups, and elected officials. At the forefront of the opposition are Mayor Mike Stammel, former EPA Region 4 Administrator, Judith Enck, and the Rensselaer Environmental Coalition. These individuals and organizations have expressed deep concerns about the potential environmental and health risks associated with the project. This latest proposal comes after a previous plan to build a \$25 million municipal solid waste processing facility on the same site faced significant public opposition in 2018. The proposed facility which was originally issued a negative declaration for a full environmental review by the Rensselaer Planning Board would have processed 150,000 tons of municipal waste annually. The waste would then be converted into a fuel source and burned in kilns to create energy for other states. However, concerns about the facility's proximity to residential areas, truck traffic, impacts to the Hudson River and disturbance of contaminated soil on the site led to its eventual rejection. At the time, prior approvals for the facility had lapsed and the State would not issue Air Quality permits due to comments made by city officials. The new proposal, which involves dredging contaminated sediments from the Hudson River and processing it into construction-grade aggregate, faces the same scrutiny especially since the Hudson River is contaminated with PCBs. The future of the BASF brownfield site remains uncertain, especially with new environmental policies in place.

Rensselaer Teachers Association Calls for Landfill Permit Denial

In a significant move, the Rensselaer Teachers Association (RTA) has formally called on the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to deny the permit renewal for the Dunn Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill. This marks a critical development in the ongoing efforts by the community to protect the health and safety of Rensselaer's residents, particularly its school children.

The Dunn C&D Landfill, located near the Rensselaer City School District, has long been a source of concern regarding air quality, odor, and potential health risks. With the RTA's firm stance, it's clear that local educators are prioritizing the well-being of students, staff, and the broader community.

"The time for action is now," says Mayor Mike Stammel. "DEC, this landfill must be closed immediately. We cannot afford to put our children and community at further risk."

The push to shut down the landfill has been building for years, and the RTA's involvement adds significant weight to the community's demands. All eyes are on the DEC as the permit decision approaches, with mounting pressure to prioritize the health and safety of Rensselaer's residents over the continuation of the landfill's operations.

This united stand highlights the urgency of the situation. The future of the city's environmental health and educational environment is at stake, and the community is calling for decisive action.

NYSOCFS & the City of Rensselaer Celebrate White Cane Awareness



White Cane Awareness Day was celebrated this month in Rensselaer through the historic unveiling of new Yield to the Blind signs at Washington St. and Third Ave.

Earlier this year Sarah Sardella, Outreach Coordinator for the New York State Commission for the Blind, reached out to City Engineer Bill Smart and DPW Commissioner Jim Brady to ask for Yield to the Blind signs at the intersection of Washington Street and 3rd Avenue near their offices.

Bill and Jim worked with Mayor Mike Stammel to bring the matter to the Rensselaer Common Council and the sign placement was approved unanimously. Soon after that, the signs were installed by City of Rensselaer Public Works staff.

City Engineer Bill Smart, DPW Commissioner Jim Brady and the DPW Staff, Mayor Mike Stammel and the Common Council are to be commended for their responsiveness to the needs of residents and visitors in the City of Rensselaer.

City Sidewalk Replacement

Through the month of November, contractors will be working on replacing sidewalks on the South side of Pine Street between Broadway and First Streets. Sidewalks will also be replaced on Washington St near City Hall.

News from the Assessment Office

Renewal applications for the Partial Tax Exemption for Real Property of Senior Citizens (RP-467-rnw) and Partial Tax Exemption for Real Property of Persons with Disabilities and Limited Incomes (RP-459-c-rnw) were mailed out in October 2024. Please return the signed application with a copy of your 2023 Federal Income Tax before March 1, 2025.

If you do not file income tax, please return the signed form, the Income Worksheet for the Senior Citizens Exemption (RP-467-Wkst) or the Income Worksheet for the Disability Exemption (RP-459-c-Wkst) with copies of your 2023-year end **1099** statements from Social Security, Banks, Pensions, etc.

Rensselaer County has increased the income limit for the above-mentioned exemptions to \$40,000 based on your 2023 household income. The income limit for the City of Rensselaer and the Rensselaer City School District remain at \$37,400.

If you have questions, please email sharon.martin@rensselaerny.gov or call the Assessment office at (518) 462-5421.

City Newsletter - Subscription & Article Submission

The Rensselaer Newsletter began its first launch this past January. Since then it has become the place City Residents look to for news and facts about what's going on in the City. The Newsletter is produced and designed by volunteers Dave Ellis and Madeline Rizzo with content provided by City Hall employees and residents.

Inquires regarding articles, submission of articles or to be added to the Newsletter distribution list please send an email to Info@rensselaerny.gov

We look forward to hearing from you!

Common Council Workshops & Meetings

Are you interested in what's happening in Rensselaer? Then please consider attending the Common Council Workshops & Meetings to get the real scoop on what's happening in your City. The Workshops are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month and the Council Meeting are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays both at 6:30 PM at City Hall (see attached Calendar for dates for this month at the end of this Newsletter).

Agendas are posted on the City's website at <https://rensselaerny.gov/meeting-agendas-and-minutes> each Monday prior to the Workshops. Your attendance and input are important and your community needs your support. We hope to see you there!

Water Notice to City Residents

We are pleased to inform you that the Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) is now available on the Water Department's webpage. This inventory will provide important information on lead service lines throughout the city and will be updated on a monthly basis.

Please visit the following link to access the inventory:

<https://rensselaerny.gov/City-Departments/water-and-sewer-department/lead-and-drinking-water>

We encourage all residents to regularly check the inventory for updates. For more information or assistance, please contact the Water Department.

Thank you for your attention.

City Water Department

Job Opportunity - Engineering Aide

The City of Rensselaer is hiring for a full-time Engineering Aide position (Mon-Fri, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM) with a salary range of \$60,000-\$65,000 and excellent benefits.

Key Responsibilities:

- Assist in engineering projects (office/fieldwork)
- Perform project research and oversee grants/contracts
- Coordinate with city departments, contractors, and property owners
- Attend community meetings
- Handle clerical tasks related to engineering

Requirements:

- Two years of college in a related field or two years of experience in engineering, construction, or mechanical work
- Must take a NYS Civil Service exam

Apply now! The City of Rensselaer is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity employer. Minorities encouraged to apply.

Go to <https://rensselaerny.gov/news> for more information and how to apply. Applications for employment can also be found at <https://rensselaerny.gov/forms>

Rensselaer Makes Strides in Public Service with New Vehicle Acquisitions

The City of Rensselaer is excited to announce recent additions to its fleet of vehicles, designed to enhance public safety and improve overall city services. These new acquisitions will significantly bolster the capabilities of the Department of Public Works, Fire Department, and Police Department.

The Department of Public Works has welcomed a 2024 Chevrolet Silverado 3500 HD to its fleet. This powerful truck will be instrumental in maintaining city infrastructure, from road repairs to snow removal.

Additionally, the department has acquired a 2005 Chevrolet 3500 Utility Truck, which will provide versatile support for various city operations.

The Rensselaer Fire Department has expanded its fleet with a 2024 Chevrolet Tahoe. This new vehicle will enhance the department's response capabilities to emergencies, ensuring firefighters can reach incidents promptly and efficiently.

The Rensselaer Police Department has also made a significant addition to its fleet with a 2024 Dodge Durango. This state-of-the-art vehicle will aid officers in patrolling the city, responding to calls for service, and maintaining public safety.

By replacing older, less reliable vehicles, the City of Rensselaer is committed to providing efficient and effective public services. These new acquisitions will not only improve response times but also contribute to the overall well-being of the community.



Fall Cleanup & Preparation of Yard Waste

BRUSH: LEAVES / GRASS CLIPPINGS MUST BE IN PAPER BIODEGRADABLE BAGS. WE WILL NOT PICK UP LEAVES / CLIPPINGS IN PLASTIC BAGS. ALL BRUSH / BRACHES, TWIGS SHALL BE NO LONGER THAN 4 FT (NOT OVER 40 LBS) AND MUST BE TIED TOGETHER. CUT DOWN TREES / LIMBS OR EXTREME LARGE PILES WILL BE CHARGED BASED ON SIZE.

YARD WASTE PICK UP SCHEDULE: MONDAY MORNINGS (EXCLUDING HOLIDAYS)

BRUSH / TWIGS, LEAVES, GRASS CLIPPINGS, CHRISTMAS TREES (PLACE CURBSIDE SUNDAY NIGHT)

HOLIDAY PICK UP SCHEDULE CHANGE:

VETERAN'S DAY	MONDAY	11/11/24	NO BRUSH PICK UP
THANKSGIVING DAY	THURSDAY	11/28/24	CHANGE OF PICK UP DAY

Normal Tuesday Pick Up is Monday, Normal Wednesday Pick Up is Tuesday, Normal Thursday & Friday Pick Up is Wednesday

DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING	FRIDAY	11/29/24	CHANGE OF PICK UP DAY
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Normal Tuesday Pick Up is Monday, Normal Wednesday Pick Up is Tuesday, Normal Thursday & Friday Pick Up is Wednesday

CHRISTMAS DAY	WEDNESDAY	12/25/24	CHANGE OF PICK UP DAY
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Normal Tuesday Pick Up is Monday, Normal Wednesday Pick Up is Tuesday, Normal Thursday Pick Up is Thursday and Normal Friday Pick Up is Friday





MEDIA RELEASE - SAVE THE DATE - PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Contact: Thomas Hulihan, Planning Director, City of Rensselaer
518-462-4839 x 1527 or thomas.hulihan@rensselaer.ny.gov

Rensselaer Parks Ribbon Cutting



- WHO:** The Media and the Public are invited to join with City and State Officials, Contractors, Local Businesses, Community Agencies and, of course, Children as we acknowledge the completion of work at four city parks.
- WHAT:** The Official Ribbon Cutting celebrating significant upgrades made to four city parks (Riverfront Park, Tracy Street Park, Plum Street Park and 1st Street Park).
- WHEN:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 3:30PM
- WHERE:** Riverfront Park, Rensselaer, New York 12144 - at Broadway and 5th Avenue (Signs will be posted on Broadway from the Dunn Memorial Bridge Rail Station Ramp)
- WHY:** New Playgrounds, Picnic Tables, Park Benches, Water Bottle Filling Stations, Hand Washing Stations as well as Basketball and Walkway Resurfacing has recently been completed. Children have been enjoying these amenities and as we close out this project, we want to show our appreciation to our funding agency, contractors and other partners.
- HOW:** The City of Rensselaer Neighborhood Safe Parks Improvements Project was funded by a \$1,927,000.00 grant from New York State Homes and Community Renewal's Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) and the Office of Community Renewal (OCR). Playground equipment was purchased from Miracle Recreation, Gallo Construction oversaw the playground installation that was primarily performed by Pettinelli Recreation, Callanan Industries provided the resurfacing, Luizzi Brothers installed the water features, and City of Rensselaer Public Works Staff performed numerous functions and City Planning Staff assisted by C.T. Male Associates administered the project.
- MORE:** Children are encouraged to attend to demonstrate of how to use the playground equipment.



Parks Get a Facelift, Safety Remains a Top Priority

The City of Rensselaer is thrilled to announce the recent completion of significant upgrades to our city parks. These enhancements aim to create more inviting and accessible spaces for our community to enjoy.

As we celebrate these improvements, the City remains steadfast in its commitment to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all. We will not tolerate any acts of criminal mischief or destructive behavior that could compromise the safety and enjoyment of our parks.

To ensure the security of these public spaces, the City will utilize all available resources, including our dedicated Police Department, to proactively prevent and address any incidents. We urge residents to play an active role in safeguarding our parks by promptly reporting any suspicious activity to the Police Department.

Your cooperation in maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone is greatly appreciated.



RENSSELAER COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT
61 STATE STREET, TROY, NEW YORK 12180 TELEPHONE: (518) 266-7100
FAX: (518) 266-7127

STEVEN F. MCLAUGHLIN County Executive

LINDA MCMAHON Probation Director III

City of Rensselaer
62 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Re: Case FCF-2024-96283

October 16, 2024

The Rensselaer County Probation Department has accepted a case regarding a complaint filed by the Rensselaer Police Department identifying you as the victim in an incident dated 7/21/2024. At that time a juvenile was charged with Criminal Mischief 2, Making Graffiti, and was referred to the Rensselaer County Probation Department for appropriate action. As a result, the juvenile was required to compose an apology letter to you, as the victim, which is enclosed.

If you have any questions regarding this case, please contact me at 518-266-7100

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda McMahon", is written over a horizontal line.

Sr. Probation Officer

Dear City of Rensselaer, 10/01/2024

I am a 15-year-old student at Rensselaer High School. This summer I made some really bad-choice's . I was at the park with some people I had called friends and we engaged in some very destructive and offensive vandalism at the Tracy Street Park. At the time I did not realize how my actions would affect others and cost the city a lot of money and time to fix. I have had some time to reflect on my actions and next time I will decide to make better choices even if others are doing the wrong thing.

I have learned that I need to think for myself and stand up to peers if something sounds like a bad idea even if it sounds like it could be fun now. I have learned the hard way that there are consequences for my actions. I have a family who loves me and does not condone those behaviors. I am being punished at home for my crimes. I did complete my 15 hours of community service. I completed 4 hours at the regional food bank of American and 12 hours at the boys and girls club here in the city of Rensselaer.

I have lost the privilege of having a cell phone, a video game system, and going out to hangout with my friends for a while after school and on the weekends. I have put a lot of energy into schoolwork and have received a letter of recognition for my efforts in school.

This experience has taught me a valuable lesson in empathy and maturity, and I will not make the same mistake again. Please except my deepest apologies.

Sincerely,

Name has been redacted due to the age of the student



Library Corner

For any of our events requiring sign-up, please call the Library at 518-462-1193.



Beginning Embroidery:

Thursday November 14, 6 PM.

Make an adorable fall fox and learn basic embroidery stitches. Sign up is required, space is limited. Ages 13-100.

Fuse Bead Craft:

Wednesday November 27 2 PM.

Craft time during the school break. Please sign up. For ages 5-12 (no younger siblings, please).



Thanksgiving Week Schedule:

The Library will close at 5 PM on Wednesday November 27, and be CLOSED November 28-29. For any of our events requiring sign-up, call the Library at 518-462-1193

Mobile Hotspot:

Residents of the City of Rensselaer with a valid library card can borrow a mobile hotspot for wifi for a month. Call us at 462-1193 for more information. Priority will be given to students of Rensselaer City School District.



Notary services and computer help are available with appointment, contact the Library directly for details. (Please make appointment to ensure someone is available.)

(518) 462-1193

City of Rensselaer Events and Meetings

NOVEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 ZBA Applications Due Common Council Workshop 6:30 @ City Hall	5 City Hall Offices Closed Election Day	6 Common Council Meeting AND PUBLIC HEARING 6:30 @ City Hall	7 Parks Ribbon Cutting @ 3:30 Riverfront Park	8	9
10	11 City Hall Closed Veteran's Day	12 Planning Commis- sion Meeting @ 6:30 City Hall	13 Planning Applica- tions Due	14	15	16
17	18 Common Council Workshop 6:30 @ City Hall	19	20 Common Council Meeting AND PUBLIC HEARING 6:30 @ City Hall	21	22	23
24	25 ZBA Meeting 6:00 @ City Hall	26	27	28 	29 City Hall Offices Closed	30

D I R E C T O R Y

ASSESSOR	518-462-5421	sharon.martin@rensselaer.ny.gov	SHARON MARTIN
BUILDING & ZONING ADMINISTRATOR	518-465-1693	tim.lippert@rensselaer.ny.gov	TIM LIPPERT
CITY COURT CLERK	518-453-4680		
CITY CLERK	518-462-4266	nancy.hardt@rensselaer.ny.gov	NANCY HARDT
DIR. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	518-462-4839	jack.bonesteel@rensselaer.ny.gov	Jack Bonesteel
ENGINEER	518-694-3968	bill.smart@rensselaer.ny.gov	BILL SMART
FIRE HOUSE, NORTH	518-463-2883		
FIRE HOUSE, BROADWAY	518-465-3243	bill.brooking@rensselaer.ny.gov	BILL BROOKING JR. FIRE CHIEF
HISTORIAN	518-694-3126	victor.batorsky@rensselaer.ny.gov	VICTOR BATORSKY
HUMAN RESOURCES	518-462-0419	irene.sorriento@rensselaer.ny.gov	IRENE SORRIENTO
LIBRARIAN	518-462-1193	jane.chirgwin@rensselaer.ny.gov	JANE CHIRGWIN
MAYOR	518-462-9511	mike.stammel@rensselaer.ny.gov	MIKE STAMMEL
PLANNING DIRECTOR	518-462-4839	thomas.hulihan@rensselaer.ny.gov	THOMAS HULIHAN
POLICE DISPATCHER	518-462-7453		
POLICE CHIEF	518-462-7453	warren.famiglietti@rensselaerpolice.org	WARREN FAMIGLIETTI
PROCESS SERVER	518-720-7106	steve.smith@rensselaer.ny.gov	STEVE SMITH
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSIONER	518-462-9617	jim.brady@rensselaer.ny.gov	JIM BRADY
CITY GARAGE / DPW	518-462-5512	gene.hilstro@rensselaer.ny.gov	GENE HILSTRO
PURCHASING AGENT	518-462-2251	rich.berhaupt@rensselaer.ny.gov	RICH BERHAUPT
TREASURER	518-462-6424	michael.mizener@rensselaer.ny.gov	MIKE MIZENER
WATER / SEWER DEPUTY COMMISS.	518-462-6466	fran.welsh@rensselaer.ny.gov	FRAN WELSH
YOUTH DIRECTOR	518-462-5488	youth@rensselaer.ny.gov	JIM KONSTANTAKIS