

# Village Views

by Jeffrey Kaplan, Mayor, Village of Ellenville

## Rebuilding Ellenville

April 1<sup>st</sup> marked the end of the terms of two of our Village Trustees and the start of new terms for two new Trustees. It was a distinct honor and pleasure serving the last year on the Village Board with Erma Gil and Eartha Nixon. If we are to move forward in our efforts to rebuild Ellenville it is imperative that politics take a back seat to the best interest of our community. Although we were not always unanimous in our decisions during the last year, I can truly say that the sole motivating factor for all five board members throughout the year was simply what is in the best interest of our Village. I can only hope that the new board will act from the same motivation as the old one. I am confident that our community will be proud of the efforts of the two new board members Steven Krulick and John Gavaris, as well as Efrain Lopez, who is returning to serve a full two-year term as Trustee.

The road ahead for us is clear. If we are to continue our efforts to create interest in living and working in the Ellenville/Wawarsing Area we cannot simply sit back and hope that good things will happen. A true partnership between municipal government and private enterprise (both business and residential) is necessary to rebuild Ellenville.

Notwithstanding the fact that I have been involved in various segments of municipal government for over twenty-five years, it did take me a period of time after taking office as Village Mayor to get my feet wet. I now believe my feet are sufficiently drenched and hope to aggressively move forward with the new Village Board in rebuilding our community. I would like to start by focusing on three areas of concern.

### 1. "I Love Living in Ellenville, and There Is Nowhere Else I Would Rather Live."

This may seem more of a mind set than an area of concern; however, in speaking with many of our residents, I continually find this an area of concern. Though there are many who find fault with our Village and Town there are few who are willing to do something about it. I personally believe that the geographical location of our Village is second to none in terms of natural beauty, yet in a relatively short driving distance from a major urban center... allowing us the benefit of both rural living and the unique cultural opportunities that only New York City has to offer. Unfortunately, if there is enough of a negative mindset believing that we live in a second-class community, Ellenville will be one. I personally believe that Ellenville can, and should, be a first-class community and refuse to allow the negative mindset of others to cloud this belief.

### 2. It Is Imperative That We Rebuild Center Street.

The most frequent complaint and question I have heard since becoming Mayor is buildings on **Center Street**, that were purchased by the Village several years ago, are deplorable, and what do we intend to do about it. As previously stated, I firmly believe that the key to rebuilding Ellenville is a partnership between both private enterprise and municipal government. Building a new municipal hall on **Center Street** will not only resolve space problems both the Village and Town are currently experiencing in their current locations, but will also create an environment and impetus for private enterprise to invest in our Village's downtown area and throughout the →



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