

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Well, the leaves have finally fallen from the trees, the snowplows are again mounted on the DPW trucks and we face the long grip of another Wisconsin winter.

Through the year via this column I have attempted to keep you informed of some of our current issues. 2007 certainly has been a year filled with progress for Greendale. This year-end edition of this column will serve to provide you with a recap and update on some issues of interest.

**Southridge Mall:** The repositioning of Southridge Mall for Greendale's future has been one of my top priorities as it plays such an intricate role in this community's long-term economic vitality. While I spent most of 2006 doing research and trying to entice new ownership, 2007 was spent initiating communications and developing a productive relationship with the new owners. Simon Property Group is the world's largest owner of malls, owning some 324 around the globe. As such, they have a retail reach and influence that is second to none. At our encouragement, Simon traveled to meet with us in August. After a productive three-hour meeting, they carried our research back to their headquarters to continue their own internal review and analysis of the property. We have continued to communicate regularly to strengthen that relationship.

Here is what I can convey to you as of this writing: Simon has begun internal discussions regarding what concepts make retail sense for the future of Southridge. They are working to draft these concepts and strategies while also attempting to gain commitments from retail interests. They have informed me that they will soon offer some initial ideas for us to consider. Clearly, this is a significant step in the right direction. Thus far I am encouraged and optimistic about Simon's current Southridge focus. As plans begin to develop, we will keep you informed.

**Process Improvement:** Greendale Village government has continually strived to maintain high-quality and efficient processes and practices in our delivery of services. We are attempting to implement a more systematic and consistent approach to service efficiencies through implementation of Process Improvement (PI) initiatives. These initiatives have been tested and utilized successfully in the corporate world for many years. Through these initiatives we are able to provide our departments with the essential skills and necessary tools to seek a "continual improvement" mode of service delivery.

Because implementation of PI strategy's and concepts are an overall culture change to any organization, this change must occur slowly and deliberately. The implementation rule of thumb is "go slow to go fast". This year's efforts got off to a great start with the training of several key employees and a couple of successful "workout" sessions. These sessions demonstrated to us that PI can

and will be a very worthwhile effort. One such PI effort involved our dispatchers working with the firefighters to solve paid-on-call firefighter call-in procedures. Another effort addressed the most efficient use of our janitorial staff who services Village Hall and the Library. We encountered a small but temporary set-back when we lost a PI trained village manager this summer. Even though we hired a new village manager with PI training, his new role as manger would not allow him to continue serving as a facilitator. To correct this, we are training several new individuals to serve as PI facilitators. Allow me to reiterate that our employees are being trained at no cost to the Village by GE Healthcare, a world known leader in Process Improvement and Change Acceleration Process (CAP). This is GE Healthcare's first known PI partnership with a government entity. We are very fortunate and excited to have GE Healthcare partner with us in this government efficiency exercise.

**Village Manager:** As mentioned above, there was a change in the position of Village manager this summer. This role is critical as the individual serves as the administrator of daily operations. It is a position that also provides long-term vision and direction for our community. In July, nine-year veteran Village Manager Joseph Murray presented his resignation to the Village Board, having accepted a job offer in the private sector. The Board of Trustees quickly moved to appoint an acting Village Manager and promptly began a nationwide search to replace him. Todd Michaels (Village Clerk-Treasurer at the time) was appointed as temporary manager. Todd concurrently applied for the permanent manager position.

A total of thirty-one candidates applied. After careful review and consideration, the list was narrowed to the ten most qualified applicants; then to four. These four candidates were interviewed by two distinct panels. One panel consisted of our Village department heads; the other panel (an Executive Panel) consisted of School Superintendent Dr. Bill Hughes, Village Center Manager Anne Marie Pelkofer, former Village trustee's Bill Hegge and Stephanie Mares and Greendale Park & Recreation Director Jackie Schweitzer. Both panels provided very valuable feed-back to the Board for their consideration in making a final selection.

The Village Board then interviewed all four candidates. After the interviews were completed and final deliberations made, the position of Village Manager was offered to Greendale-raised Todd Michaels.

The Board, along with the assistance of the two panels, worked very hard for an extended amount of time making this important selection. We are very pleased knowing that we not only have the best and most qualified person for the job, but also the best fit for Greendale. Congratulations Todd!

**2008 Budget:** The issues of Village budgeting and taxes are never fun work for Village Board members. The voters in Greendale elected us to oversee the

Village government and to act as fiscally prudent spenders of your tax dollars. When you open your tax bill in December, please look at the Village of Greendale breakdown. This is the ONLY section of the tax bill for which the Village Board of Trustees is responsible. The School District, Milwaukee County, MATC, MMSD, etc are all separate taxing authorities who have their own boards that set their tax rates.

When you look at the Village portion of your tax bill, I'd like for you to consider these facts: the 2008 budget projects that the average home in Greendale has an assessed value of \$229,000. That average-valued home will pay \$130.32 a month in taxes for ALL Village service costs (except Water and Sewer Utilities). This includes police, fire, public works, library, health department, municipal court, inspection and Village Hall services. Please remember also that in some surrounding communities, the residents are special assessed when their streets and sidewalks are repaired. In Greendale, this cost is included in the budget.

Compare this per-month cost to other monthly service charges that you receive from commercial providers, such as cable and/or cell phone companies. When compared, you may come to the conclusion that the cost of ALL Village services is provided at a reasonable level.

That's all until the next edition. Please allow me to extend my very best wishes to all of you this Holiday Season and in the coming New Year.

Community regards,  
John R. Hermes