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Virtuoso shares plans for Town of Niagara

Guest Editorial by Town of Niagara Supervisor Sylvia Virtuoso

Happy new year to all! I would like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts for 2024 and my four-year term. First and foremost, I ask for patience to get through the transition and see exactly where our priorities are.

I need to evaluate all the departments, meeting with them for their concerns, interests, etc. I can tell you, for certain, I will always take the time to listen, and try my best to guide and work on the concerns and suggestions.

I truly encourage all our town residents to attend the Town Board meetings. They usually are not long, but all town business will be approved, and you have the opportunity to be heard on any subject that concerns the town.

The largest project for us right now is Amazon. Their building permits are in and it appears as though they may begin work as early as February, weather-permitting. This will take quite some time and patience. I know the concerns - I also live off Packard Road and have my own concerns. We will address each and every one with JB2 Partners LLC, and later Amazon, as they arise. So far, they have been excellent to work with at adjusting where things can be adjusted.

There are a few more projects in the works, all in the planning stages still, some larger than others, but our departments treat each one individually as needed. We have two great attorneys that we count on, as well as engineers we look to for guidance and clarification as to do everything proper and protect the town, as well as the developers, contractors, etc.

There are some projects that have been stalled that I hope we can take another look at and, as long as we can all come to agree upon what is best for the town, they can come to fruition.

I would love to see more housing on the tax rolls, with that a subdivision, senior housing at the now-demolished Military Road School, perhaps some patio homes for another large parcel of vacant land, as well. We don't



Town of Niagara Supervisor Sylvia Virtuoso (Submitted photo)

have a lot of land available, so we have to consider the locations and designs carefully and properly.

Military Road, our main corridor of our border town, has so much potential. We have a tremendous advantage to having the Canadian border; the thruway, surrounding us with the City Niagara Falls, who draws millions of tourists; Lewiston, Wheatfield and beyond; the largest employer in Niagara County, the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station and Niagara Falls International Airport and U.S. Border Patrol Station - all right here. We need to promote and emphasize the great things

located directly in and surrounding our small town.

There is land on the corner of Military and Grauer roads that is 1.190 acres and holds a NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) certificate of completion. It has been with a broker whose contract expires Feb. 1. We are looking at a different broker and to be a little more aggressive with the sale advertising.

The Building Department will be working diligently on what I feel has been relaxed a bit since COVID with the housing regulations and compliance. Every neighborhood has some issues,

and those are being addressed, and violations will be issued. Remember: Permits are required for work on your home - that is for your safety. My goal is to bring all our neighborhoods to a better standard, as the residents all deserve a town they are proud to live in.

The Water/Sewer Department will be working on a plan for a better sewer situation with the City of Niagara Falls, as we cannot keep paying the outlandish rates they bill us with our contract that, unfortunately, have to be passed on to the residents and business owners. This issue has existed for many years, but I feel it's time to make the drastic correction once and for all, if possible.

The Highway Department is in need of some new equipment. We will be looking to Assemblyman Morinello and Sen. Ortt, as they are the ones who can submit to the NYS budget, where the funds are available for this. Road paving plan will continue as usual.

Recreation and senior programs will expand. The live yoga has already been a hit with great interest, and there are so many more ideas in the works. The mini-putt golf should be open this year, and bocce leagues, as well as cornhole leagues, are still in the plans - with much more being considered.

'Music Mania Mondays' will also continue. You can look forward to the schedule in late spring.

Sanitation that has been 'free' all these years is coming to an end. That is a major concern that needs to be addressed. A great priority that is supposed to happen in the next few years, but we must plan ahead.

As your town clerk/tax collector for 24 years, I thank you all for your support, and now I look forward to serving as your town supervisor, taking with me all the knowledge and experience of the previous years to work at the needs presented.

Please follow the Tribune for newsletter inserts and more information. Feel free to contact me at 716-297-2150, ext. 136, or email at svirtuoso@townofniagara.com.

State of the City address set in NT

North Tonawanda Mayor Austin J. Tylec announced he will present the State of the City address on Thursday, Feb. 1, at the Riviera Theatre & Performing Arts Center, 67 Webster St., North Tonawanda. Doors open at 9:15 a.m., and the

formal program will begin at 10 a.m.

'The State of the City Address is an opportunity for the public to hear all the accomplishments North Tonawanda has made in 2023 and what is to come in 2024,'

Tylec stated on his invitation. 'We continue to make incredible progress in many aspects of our city that make it one of the greatest places to live, work and thrive. I welcome everyone to join us on Feb. 1.'

The State of the City address is

open to all residents and business owners of North Tonawanda. RSVP to Joyce Santiago at the mayor's office before Jan. 29: JSantiago@northtonawanda.org or 716-695-8540.

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