

# Pierce emphasizes 'community' in solutions to Thorne Building issues

by Mary Keelan

The energy, openness and enthusiasm for the Thorne Building Planning Committee conveyed by its Chair, Charles E. Pierce Jr., in a brief telephone interview this past weekend augurs well for the success of the project.

His dedication to the cause was manifest. He had just returned home after a long drive down from Maine in order to prepare for the first meeting of the Thorne Building Planning Committee, scheduled for Monday, July 24.

No question seemed to daunt him. Reflecting the consensus of many involved with the project, Pierce said that "this is a project whose time has come for this community." It was obvious he knows the challenges are many and the solutions not yet articulated.

Chairman Pierce believes the process is well launched and the "approximate six months" timeline realistic. Much was achieved in the three or four preliminary

workshops last winter and spring, as well as with smaller brainstorming meetings. He mentioned that he and Oakleigh Thorne had been talking about the Thorne Building problems for a couple of years. When the new Mayor, Rodney Brown, was installed in January 2017, he also announced that solving the issues with the Thorne Building was a priority of his term in office.

The first meeting at the beginning of this week was devoted to "reviewing what we have done" with the newly appointed 15 members of the committee, the diverse makeup of which Pierce lauded. At least 10 different local constituencies are represented.

"Some participated in the workshops and others will need to be briefed on where we are to date," he said.

Pierce will announce the formation and preliminary approval of a 501.c3 not for profit organization to be called the Thorne Building Community Center. One reason for the creation of this separate legal entity was "that (at least) two earlier entities under

the auspices of the Village had failed" in their attempts to resolve issues with the Thorne Memorial Building. It also positions the group with a mechanism for purchase of the building if such is warranted.

Throughout the interview, Pierce referred to the role of the community, emphasizing the efforts planned to secure their opinions.

"We will be holding well-announced public hearings to learn of the public's views," he said. "What does the area want? What will enrich the Village and surrounding community? How do they respond to the broad stroke presentation of a proposal?"

The Planning Committee has already contracted with a consultant, who will conduct community-wide interviews and with the John C. Waite Associates, an architectural firm which evaluated the Thorne Memorial Building needs and cost estimates in 2003. The Planning Committee will build on that earlier feasibility report to develop a plan on "how to use the building, how to

restore it, how to adapt it to new uses."

When asked how the Committee planned to finance all of this, given that the estimate in 2003 was between \$3-5 million, Pierce did not hesitate, again emphasizing the role of the entire community in the process and solutions.

"Let's actually find out what it is going to cost, and when that is known, appeal to the entire community," he said.

He speculated that "some can make modest contributions and other monies will come from the wealthier." At the same time, Pierce did not ignore the need to plan for sustainability.

If one word dominated the interview it was "the community," a presence Pierce is extremely conscious of attending to, constantly keeping up to date with progress, "the broad strokes."

Characterizing the Planning Committee, he almost affectionately quipped, "Once more with feeling a group will do something." And the sense was that this time they would succeed.

## Cricket Valley unveils transmission upgrade schedule

### Pre-construction activities could begin Aug. 3

DOVER—Cricket Valley Energy LLC announced last week that construction on the Cricket Valley Transmission Upgrade Project, which will connect Cricket Valley Energy Center in Dover to the Con Edison substation in Pleasant Valley, is scheduled to begin Oct. 2, with additional pre-construction activities scheduled to begin on or about Aug. 3, pending approval from the New York State Public Service Commission (NYSPSC).

Preliminary work is being completed on temporary laydown areas in preparation for the construction of the transmission line system upgrade project. The transmission line upgrade, as required by the New York Independent Systems Operator (NYISO),

will be co-located with the existing 345 kV Line in the Con Edison right-of-way, which traverses Dover, Union Valley, LaGrange and Pleasant Valley in Dutchess County; it will increase transmission capacity, redundancy and operational capacities for the New York State electrical grid.

The upgrade project is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2019.

Cricket Valley Energy Center, now under construction in the Town of Dover, is a \$1.58 billion energy-generation center that will revitalize a dormant industrial site and create jobs and tax revenue. The fully permitted state-of-the-art, combined-cycle energy generation plant has been designed to be among the cleanest energy producers in New York—generating electricity for nearly one million homes.

The project's Environmental

Management and Construction Plan (EM&CP) was filed on April 28 and is available for public inspection at LaGrange Library, 488 Freedom Plains Road (Route 55) Suite 109, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603; Dover Plains Library, 1797 Route 22, Wingdale, NY 12594; and Pleasant Valley Free Library, 1584 Main Street PO Box 633, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569.

The NYSPSC is responsible for enforcing compliance with environmental and

construction conditions. It may be contacted by mail or in person at Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 3, Albany, NY 12223; or by calling (518) 474-6530. For questions or additional information about the project, Cricket Valley Energy Construction Project Manager Scott Curry, P.E., can be reached at the Cricket Valley Energy Outreach office, (845) 877-0596; by cell phone (617) 416-9931; or e-mail at [scurry@cricketvalley.com](mailto:scurry@cricketvalley.com).

### Wanted: Rhinebeck and Poughkeepsie-area Home Delivered Meals volunteers

As the Office for the Aging (OFA) expands its Home Delivered Meals program to include Friday deliveries countywide, we're in need of volunteers who can deliver those meals on Fridays, along with the other four weekdays, as needed.

OFA is adding Friday delivery to its Home Delivered Meals program in Rhinebeck, so if you're available to help the Home Delivered Meals program in Rhinebeck on Fridays, call (845) 486-2555.

If you can volunteer on any weekday elsewhere in the county, especially if you're familiar with its rural areas, contact the

office. OFA aims to cover the entire county as quickly as it can find volunteers, and would like to have the entire county covered, five days a week, by August.

The OFA's Home Delivered Meals program serves nutritious midday meals to hundreds of homebound seniors every weekday, and provides frozen and/or shelf-stable meals for weekends, holidays and emergencies. If you or a homebound senior you know in Dutchess County could benefit from the program, call the Office for the Aging to find out about eligibility and other meal options.

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