

Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

Next Steps for the Spiegel Community Center

Last October, Pittsford residents resolved one of the Town's longest-standing pieces of unfinished municipal business. The 69% vote in favor of a complete upgrade, remodeling and expansion of our Spiegel Community Center permits work on the project to move forward.

Initial orders of business were, first, to engage a construction manager and, secondly, to select an architecture and engineering firm for the project. These steps we have now completed. We'll be working with Peter Buckley of DGA Builders as Construction Manager. Mr. Buckley worked with the Town previously as Construction Manager of the Pittsford Community Library project. Following interviews with several architectural firms we've selected HBT Architects.

Now we begin with schematic design and design development. We expect this work to take until March. If the remaining design work is completed by then, we can expect to have the full set of construction documents in hand by the end of June. At that point the Town would issue a request for bids on the construction work. If this timeline holds as we move forward, we would expect to select a contractor by September, with construction likely to begin by October. Construction should take 12-14 months. Please understand that, at this point, the timing of each step I've described could change somewhat. Subject to this caution, we may reasonably expect to open the refurbished Spiegel Center by the fall of 2018.

Of course we must close the community center to permit the work to proceed. Right now we're obtaining temporary space for as many of our community programs as possible. The Town took this approach in 2004, when it relocated our library to temporary quarters for a year, pending opening of the new Pittsford Community Library in September 2005. So you can expect a certain amount of disruption and, yes, inconvenience, during that period. As we did in the case of the Library, we may consider it as a short-term sacrifice for a long-term gain.

The Town's year-long preparation and study to reach a recommendation to residents on the community center included working with a citizens' committee. It involved substantial solicitation of advice and comment from Pittsford residents. Incorporating so much of that advice into the Town Board's deliberation and recommendation, we believe, largely explains the public's endorsement of the project by such a resounding 2-1 margin in the recent referendum.

As the project now moves forward, participation by Pittsford residents becomes ever more important. We at Town Hall will keep you abreast of milestones in the planning process and will provide ample opportunity, through formal public sessions and otherwise, for continued participation by citizens.

At the risk of belaboring the point, we cannot emphasize strongly enough that, at this very early stage, the timeline we've sketched in rough outline almost certainly will be subject to variation and change. We'll keep you informed as matters proceed. Nevertheless we think it's both right and necessary to share with everyone our best understanding, at this point, of the steps ahead toward completion of this important civic project.

Finally, although we trust it goes without saying, our newly upgraded and modernized facility will continue proudly to bear the name "Spiegel Community Center" into the decades ahead, in honor of the career and accomplishments of Paul M. Spiegel, Pittsford Town Supervisor from 1966 to 1987. We look forward to Paul cutting the ribbon at the reopening!

If you have comments to share about the Town's Spiegel Community Center Renovation project, please contact us: Town Supervisor Bill Smith at 248-6220 or bsmith@townofpittsford.org, and Recreation Director Jessie Hollenbeck at 248-6284 or jhollenbeck@townofpittsford.org.