



Capital Project
2014

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Superintendent's Message

Dear New York Mills School District Community Member;
On Tuesday, November 18 from 12:00 to 9:00 p.m., we invite to you come to the polls and cast your vote on a district capital improvement project focusing on improving our district's safety & security. On the following pages, you will see photos of areas that need repairs or improvements, diagrams of our K-12 and Beekman Gym buildings with proposed improvements highlighted, Q & A's posed by staff and community members, and project financial information. Please consider the information provided in this special edition of our newsletter as you prepare for the upcoming capital project vote. For a more detailed look at the project's scope of work and financial impact, you may also wish to visit our website at www.newyorkmills.org, or find us on Facebook at New York Mills Union Free School District. If you have additional questions, feel free to contact me in the district office at 768-8127 or at koughton@newyorkmills.org. Then, on November 18, between the hours of 12:00 and 9:00 p.m., let your voice be heard on capital project propositions #1 and #2. As always, thank you for your continued involvement in our New York Mills Union Free School District Community.

Sincerely,
Kathy Houghton
Superintendent of Schools



Capital Project Q & A's:

Q. Why is the Board of Education planning a capital project now?

A. Our district is currently eligible to receive 74.1% State Aid on any building project that we pursue. Over the past several years changes in the State Aid formula, which would have a negative impact on our district, have been proposed but not enacted. If we lock in our State Aid percentage before the next State fiscal year, then we are assured to receive 74.1% reimbursement for eligible expenditures. The district is also pursuing this project to take advantage of historically low interest rates. Finally, we are in a favorable bidding climate and we anticipate construction bids to be more competitive, therefore, our constituents will get more value for their tax dollar.

Q. Why are there two propositions included in this project and how will they affect my school taxes?

A. Proposition #1 is the main portion of this proposed project. It includes site work such as an elementary drop-off/pick-up circle, refurbishing of our track, and widening of sidewalks from Burrstone Road; main building improvement to include technology upgrades (Smart Classrooms, a building access control system and other safety improvements, wireless networks in all buildings), energy-efficient improvements to lighting in classrooms, hallways, office, classrooms, and the auditorium; and Beekman Gymnasium improvements such as a roof recoating and exit door replacements.

The District currently has \$1 million in capital reserve funds approved by the voters in May. With a combination of State Building Aid, Capital Reserve funds and "old debt" from previous capital projects being paid down, the \$3,180,000 cost of Proposition #1 is projected to result in no tax increase for our taxpayers.

Proposition #2 is for the improvement and enlargement of our existing cafeteria and kitchen, which was built in 1957 as part of the original New York Mills Jr.-Sr. High School. In 1982, when the Main Street Elementary School was closed, our K-6 students joined grades 7-12 in this building. Currently, the elementary and secondary students share the cafeteria, with two Jr.-Sr. High School lunch periods beginning at 10:43 a.m. and three elementary lunch seatings ending at 1:30 p.m. Enlarging the cafeteria will provide space for more students to eat at the same time, thereby creating more efficiency and flexibility for the elementary lunch schedule.

The cost of these construction activities will be \$1,440,290. The District will receive State Building Aid on these as well. However, there will be a tax impact associated with Proposition #2. Over the 15-year bonding period, on a home assessed at \$100,000, the tax increase will amount to \$19/year, without a standard STAR Exemption or \$13/year with a standard STAR Exemption and \$7/year with a Senior STAR Exemption. Please note that if passed, Proposition #2 can only be accomplished if Proposition #1 also passes.

NEW YORK MILLS UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



The New York Mills Union Free School District has a proud history of providing the best programs and facilities for our children. This success is the result of thoughtful and measured facility improvement programs over the years that have made certain we protect our investments. Sometimes this means replacing items that succumb to normal wear and tear, such as roofs, running track surfaces and parking lots. Other projects are program-related, such as upgrades to classrooms and technology infrastructure. The key is staying current with the latest program and facilities trends, and taking the best advantage of economic conditions and the availability of state funding (the New York Mills district receives 74.1% building aid from the State).

A committee was formed to look at capital needs for the district. The Committee included Board of Education members, school administration, teachers and other staff members, our architects, parents and other community members. The Committee started with a review of the District's State-required 5-Year Building Condition Survey. From the review of that document, and looking at other

facility related issues in our district through touring "every square inch" of our buildings and site, the Committee developed a master list of needs.

Below is a list of building improvements that the Committee recommended to the Board and that the Board approved to be included in two propositions to go before the voters on November 18, 2014. The total estimated cost of improvements in Proposition #1 is \$3,180,000.

There is no tax impact associated with Proposition #1. The cost of proposition #2 is \$1,440,290. The Committee and Board feel that these improvements are also essential, so it is separate from the first proposition because there is a tax impact associated with Proposition #2.

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Proposition #1

Main Building Improvements

- Safety improvements for classrooms, auditorium & gym
- Wireless network upgrades in main building, Beekman gym & bus garage
- Smart technology classroom upgrades & new installations
- Upgrades to the stage lighting & house lighting in the auditorium
- Lighting upgrades for second-floor bathrooms, stairways and 8 classrooms
- Lighting upgrades for first-floor offices, bathrooms & 4 classrooms
- Data room & access control system upgrades
- Installation of security film in main entrance

Beekman Gym Improvements

- Recoat gym roof
- Replace exit doors

Site Improvements

- Refurbishing of the track
- Elementary parent drop-off/pick-up circle
- Widening & replacement of sidewalks from Burrstone Road

Proposition #2

Main Building Improvements

- Renovate & enlarge the cafeteria & the kitchen
- Replace outdated kitchen equipment

*Data room
in HS library*



FINANCIAL IMPACT

Proposition #1: The District receives 74.1% building aid on eligible building activities from the State of New York. The District also currently has \$1 million in capital reserve funds. So with a combination of State Building Aid, Capital Reserve funds and "old debt" from previous capital projects being paid down, **the \$3,180,000 cost of Proposition #1 is projected to result in no tax increase for our taxpayers.**

Proposition #2: The cost of these construction activities will be \$1,440,290. The District will receive State Building Aid on these as well. However, there will be a tax impact associated with Proposition #2. Over the 15-year bonding period, on a home assessed at \$100,000, the tax increase will amount to \$19/year, without a standard STAR Exemption or \$13/year with a standard STAR Exemption and \$7/year with a Senior STAR Exemption. Please note that if passed, Proposition #2 can only be accomplished if Proposition #1 also passes.



PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

The school district hosted two community-wide presentations on the proposed project. The first was held on October 29 and the second on November 3. Both were held at 6:30 p.m. in the High School library.

If you could not attend either of the presentations and would like the district to provide information to your group or organization prior to the November 18 capital project vote, please call the district office at 768-8127 or e-mail the superintendent at khoughton@newyorkmills.org.

Visuals for the project and other project-related information are posted on our website at www.newyorkmills.org or find us on Facebook at New York Mills Union Free School District.

VOTER INFORMATION

Vote Date: Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Voting Times: Noon to 9 p.m.

Voting Place: Beekman Gymnasium

For project related questions please contact Superintendent Kathy Houghton
New York Mills District Office at 315.768.8127
1 Marauder Blvd. New York Mills, NY 13417

Voter Eligibility:

Citizen of U.S.

At least 18 years of age

Legal resident at least 30 days prior to vote

You do not need to be a registered voter



Capital Project Q & A's:

Q. What is the timeline if the proposed project is approved?

A. If the Bond Issue is approved on November 18, the district and our architects plan to complete the design of the building additions and renovations, and submit the plans to the State Education Department (SED) next spring. The SED review process is anticipated to be completed within six to seven months. Then bidding would take place in the winter of 2015-16 and construction would begin in the spring of 2016.

Q. Do you expect operating costs to increase as a result of the proposed building project?

A. It is anticipated that the combination of improvements to district buildings (lighting in main building, bathroom fixtures at Beekman, access control at main building, reflective/security film on main entrance/media center windows, and new equipment in the renovated cafeteria) will off-set future costs to the district associated with this project.

Q. If I have no children in the district, why should I approve these propositions?

A. Children attending the New York Mills Union Free School District are not the only users of our gymnasium, track, cafeteria, library, and auditorium facilities. We are currently unable to fill all of the building usage requests we receive from community members. Community athletic program such as Biddy Basketball, area dance academies, and the Army Reserve Center request our facilities regularly. Also, many community members walk on our track and attend events at our gymnasiums, athletic fields, track, and auditorium. It is important that our facilities are safety maintained and updated when appropriate.

Also, according to real estate experts, the positive reputation of a community's schools plays a major role in the enhancement of long-term real estate values. Maintaining and securing our facilities for the next 100 years is an investment in the future of our school community.



Current track condition



Current track condition close up

Q. If this Bond Issue passes, do you anticipate another bond issue anytime soon?

A. It is always difficult to predict the future over a long period of time. We are beginning a Capital Outlay Project cycle in the spring, which involves the completion of a small \$100,000 project, to be aided at our current building aid ratio. The aid generated helps to offset a yearly expenditure of \$100,000 that will be used to address some of the smaller capital needs that arise on a cyclical basis, such as lighting, electrical work, paving, and other grounds repairs and/or updates. However, it is also important to keep in mind that our buildings and grounds may need more extensive repairs or improvements than can be accomplished with \$100,000 in future years. At that time, the district may decide to place another bond issue before the voters for your consideration.

Q. Will there be any schematic floor plans available to the public in a brochure, flier, newspaper articles, etc.?

A. Yes, preliminary floor plans and site plans are now available for public viewing. Information including a fact sheet and project newsletter will be distributed to the public between now and the Referendum date of November 18. Additionally, community-wide and individual organization presentations on the proposed project are already taking place. Information is also available on the district's website at www.newyorkmills.org. Should you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the district office at 768-8127 or e-mail Superintendent Kathy Houghton at khoughton@newyorkmills.org.



K-12 Building

- NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES
- SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS
- RESURFACE TRACK SURFACE
- IMPROVE LIGHTING FIXTURE EFFICIENCIES
- UPGRADE AUDITORIUM STAGE LIGHTING
- IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY WITH ADDITION OF PARENT DROP OFF
- PROVIDE SMART TECHNOLOGY IN CLASSROOMS



Q. Why is the district proposing an elementary student drop-off/pick-up circle for parents that transport their children to or from school?

A. If we are able to provide separate paths for buses and cars at the beginning and end of the school day, students and their parents will enjoy safe and streamlined drop-offs and pick-ups. Currently, parents are caught behind our buses; with students walking between vehicles in the morning and afternoon. This creates a hazard because our drivers cannot always see pedestrians that walk just in front of or behind the buses. Parents' only other option in the afternoon is to wait at the top of Marauder Boulevard until all buses have loaded and departed; then drive down to the elementary entrance to pick up their child. This is time-consuming and often leaves our parents (and grandparents) frustrated and late to their next appointment or activity.

The Jr.-Sr. High School has the “boiler room” entrance on the other side of the building that is used for student drop-off/pick-up each day. The proposed elementary drop-off/pick-up circle serves the same purpose and allows our transportation department to continue using the front drive and entrance for all buses; without the safety issue of cars and pedestrians sharing this area each morning and afternoon.



Boiler room door



Sidewalk to Burrstone Road

Cafeteria Q & A



Q. I've heard that if the cafeteria and kitchen are enlarged, the district will move some important legacy items that are located between the cafeteria windows and the sidewalk. Why would the district want to do that ?

A. There are three legacy items that would need to be moved if the present plans to expand and renovate our cafeteria and kitchen are approved by voters:

1. A 20 year-old oak tree planted on July 8, 1995 as a gift from the Class of 1940
2. A stone placed by the class of 1988 in memory of New York Mills student, Tracey A. Ouimette
3. A 30 year-old maple tree planted by the class of 1981 in memory of New York Mills student Julie Baron

The district is looking at every available option for the cafeteria/kitchen expansion; particularly those that will allow us to leave the legacy items in their current locations. However, the other options are more costly and involved:

1. If the district expands into the building towards the auditorium, we will lose the hallway between the cafeteria and auditorium. This hallway leads to a building exit and currently allows students and staff to enter and exit the stage from both sides.
2. If we expand into our parking area, we will lose the current maintenance room, loading dock, and a portion of our parking. The maintenance/loading dock area would need to be rebuilt elsewhere and we are already short on parking; particularly during school-wide events such as concerts, plays, and athletic contests.

The district has already consulted with an arborist to find out if the trees are healthy enough to be safely moved. Unfortunately, the arborist does not recommend moving either tree. A copy of his report and recommendations are available on our website at www.newyorkmills.org

We have also talked with members of the class of 1940, as well as the families of both students for whom legacy items have been placed. In all cases, those personally affected would prefer to leave their legacy items in the current location but will work with us to respectfully relocate or replant their items if this is necessary.



K-12 cafeteria photos

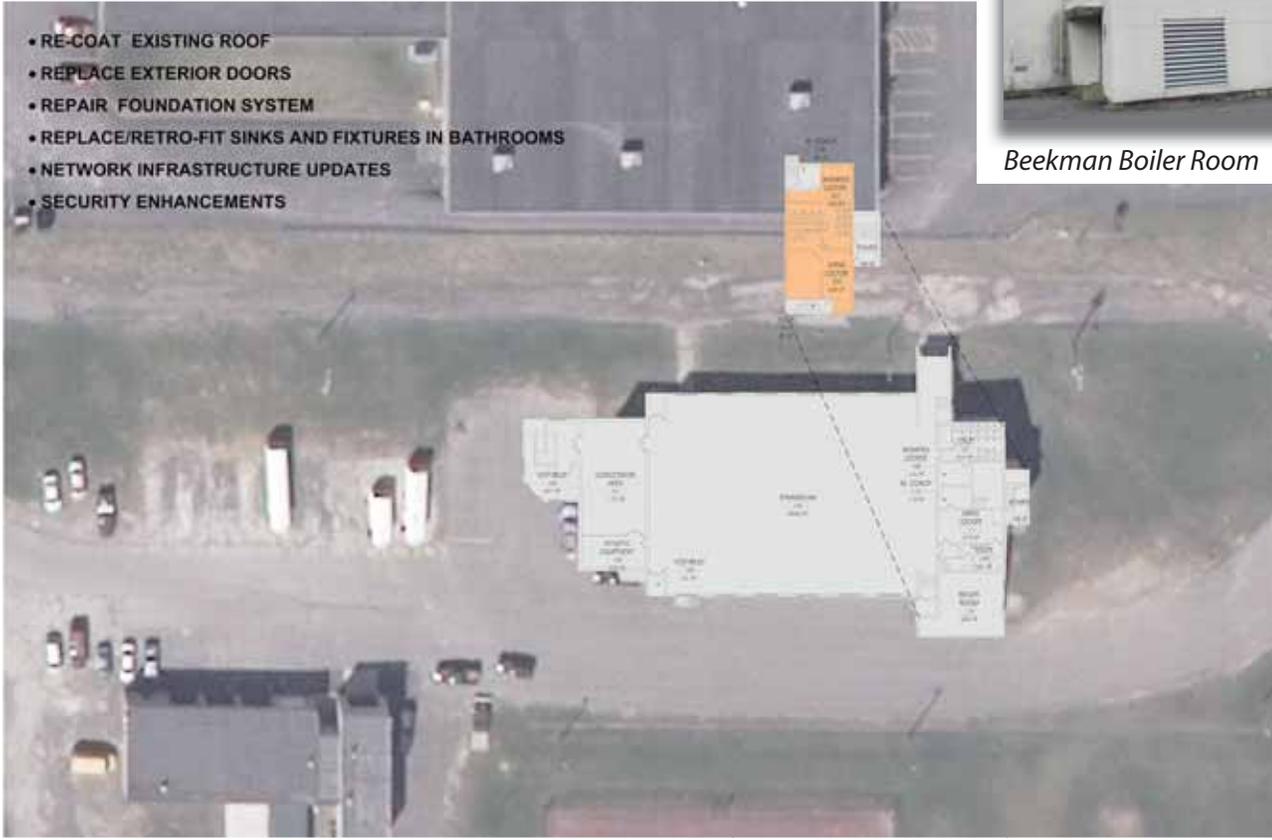


Beekman Gymnasium

- RE-COAT EXISTING ROOF
- REPLACE EXTERIOR DOORS
- REPAIR FOUNDATION SYSTEM
- REPLACE/RETRO-FIT SINKS AND FIXTURES IN BATHROOMS
- NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES
- SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS



Beekman Boiler Room



Foundation conditions



Old entrance



Bathroom sink

Capital Project Q & A's:

Q. What are the requirements to be eligible to vote on this bond issue and where will the vote be held?

A. Voters must be a citizen of the U.S., at least 18 years of age and a resident of the district at least 30 days prior to the day of the vote. **The vote will be held on Tuesday, November 18 at Beekman Gymnasium on Marauder Boulevard, from 12:00 – 9:00 p.m.** Absentee ballots will be available in the District office.

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To see this newsletter in color, please visit our website at www.newyorkmills.org.





UNION FREE SCHOOL
 District Office New York Mills, NY 13417

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Board of Education

- Jacqueline Edwards, President
- Dr. Gary W. Porcelli, Vice President
- Jonathan Fiore
- Steven King
- Richard Ross
- Richard Surprenant
- Traci Welch

Administration

- Kathy Houghton, Superintendent of Schools
- Michael Spost, Jr.-Sr. High School Principal
- René Wilson, Elementary School Principal

Visit us on the Web

<http://www.newyorkmills.org>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Average Cost to Tax Payer
16 Year Maturity Schedule for \$4,620,290 Capital Project

	<u>SENIOR/STAR</u>		<u>WITH STAR</u>		<u>NO STAR</u>	
	\$64,200 Equalized		\$30,000 Equalized		<u>Non-Primary</u>	
	Value Exemption		Value Exemption			
	<u>Income Restrictions</u>		<u>Primary Residence</u>		<u>Residence</u>	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
<u>Full Value</u>						
\$70,000	\$1	\$.08	\$7	\$.58	\$13	\$1.08
80,000	3	.25	9	.75	15	1.25
90,000	5	.42	11	.92	17	1.42
100,000	7	.58	13	1.08	19	1.58
110,000	8	.67	15	1.25	20	1.67
120,000	10	.83	17	1.42	22	1.83
130,000	12	1.00	19	1.58	24	2.00

Maintaining & Securing Our Facilities For The Next 100 Years