



Office of the Mayor



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# RENSSELAER CITY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2 EDITION 4 APRIL 2024

## Letter to DEC Permit Administrator

In solidarity, we are joined in a plea to DEC, together with the Rensselaer Environmental Coalition and the Sierra Club Hudson Mohawk Group, both of whom share our unwavering commitment to environmental preservation and community well-being.



MICHAEL STAMMEL  
MAYOR

### CITY OF RENSSELAER

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April 9, 2024

Kate Malcolm, Regional Permit Administrator  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
1130 North Westcott Road  
Schenectady, NY 12306

Re: Dunn Mine and C&D Landfill

Dear Ms. Malcolm:

We are writing to you to express continued concern about the Dunn mine and construction and demolition debris landfill in the City of Rensselaer. S.A. Dunn & Company recently published a letter dated February 27, 2024 on its website addressed to you at the Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC"). The letter offers certain changes to the facility's permit conditions for DEC's consideration, including changes to hours for waste received, reductions in number of daily truck loads, and a proposal to connect to the county sewer system for removal of leachate.

These proposals are an inadequate response to the harm presented by the facility. There are substantive reasons, presented to DEC in detail during the public comment period, why Dunn's operating permits should not be renewed.

We would appreciate a response explaining the next steps in the process and DEC's response to the recent Dunn letter. The Rensselaer Environmental Coalition and the Sierra Club Hudson Mohawk Group join in this request and comments. Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

Michael Stammel, Mayor

cc: Robert Welton / REC  
Monica Gray / Sierra Club

# Neighborhood Parks Set for Exciting Playgrounds

Excitement is brewing as the city gears up for the installation of brand-new playground equipment in four of its parks: Riverfront, Tracy Street, 1st Street and Plum Street. This eagerly anticipated project that we announced in the October/November issue of the City Newsletter, is part of the Neighborhood Safe Parks Improvement (NSP) Grant, funded through NYSHCR under a Community Development Block Grant. The project represents a significant stride towards enhancing the safety and enjoyment of our community spaces. By providing a safe and engaging environment, these upgrades aim to foster recreation, relaxation, and social interaction among residents, reinforcing the bonds that unite our vibrant community.

Although a clear timeline has been established for this construction project, installation is dependent on dry weather in order to complete the safety surfacing feature underneath the equipment. With the removal of the existing playgrounds, site preparations began over the winter. Many of the salvageable components of the existing equipment has been saved and will be used in alternative park spaces. Contractors and City Staff are diligently working towards a scheduled completion date of June 24, 2024 (weather permitting). This targeted date ensures that the upgraded playgrounds will be fully operational just in time for the commencement of the new summer park schedule. Residents can look forward to embracing the warm weather and seizing the outdoor play opportunities afforded by these revitalized spaces.

As progress continues on this ambitious endeavor, residents are encouraged to stay informed and engaged, eagerly anticipating the positive impact that awaits our city's parks. To stay up-to-date on this project please contact the Department of Public Works at 518-462-9617.



## USS Albany Association Memorial Service & Dedication

Join us as we honor the legacy of the USS Albany at the Memorial Service & Dedication hosted by the USS Albany Association. The event will take place on Saturday, May 11, 2024 @ 11:am at the Rensselaer Riverfront Park located at 5th Avenue and Broadway.

This Memorial Service is a solemn tribute to all those who have served aboard the USS Albany, spanning from 1846 to the present day. Join us as we pay homage to their dedication and sacrifice.

## Community Shares Ideas At “Rensselaer Rising” First Public Workshop

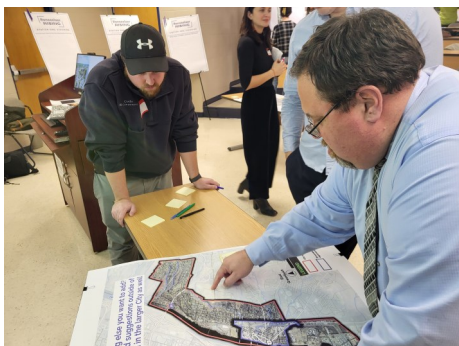
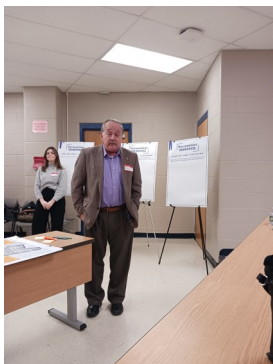
Members of the community came out for the first Public Workshop Meeting for “Rensselaer Rising” held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at the Rensselaer City School Campus. “Rensselaer Rising” is a year-long planning process to attract investment and funding opportunities to the City through a comprehensive vision for Rensselaer’s future.

The evening began with a welcome from Mayor Mike Stammel followed by a presentation led by Norabelle Greenberger and Mirren Galway of LaBella Associates. Attendees learned that “Rensselaer Rising” is being funded through an \$85,000 Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) grant from the New York State Department of State. While historically focused on brownfields, the program has evolved and now takes a more general look at opportunities for investment and revitalization of underutilized, abandoned, or vacant sites.

The Public Workshop was a follow up to a property inventory, market study and community survey that received 239 responses. The results of these planning efforts were also summarized for everyone pre-

sent. Following the presentation, attendees got to share their ideas on various maps and planning boards with topics and questions to generate ideas. Generally, people talked about improving the downtown area along Broadway, capitalizing on our access to the waterfront and hosting events to attract people to the community.

For more information about “Rensselaer Rising,” visit the Rensselaer Planning Department’s website: <https://www.renselaerplanning.com>. Community members are encouraged to check the site for future event dates, plan updates, and general information throughout the year. Interested parties can also contact Thomas Hulihan, City of Rensselaer Planning Director, at 518-462-4839 x 1527 or [thomas.hulihan@renselaer.ny.gov](mailto:thomas.hulihan@renselaer.ny.gov) or Norabelle Greenberger, AICP, Senior Planner at LaBella Associates at (518) 824-1922 or [ngreenberger@labellapc.com](mailto:ngreenberger@labellapc.com).



## Reimagining I-787 Planning and Environmental Linkage Study Open House

The New York State Department of Transportation is inviting the public to an open house on the first level of the Albany Capital Center in downtown Albany on Wednesday, May 1 from 4 to 7 p.m.. There, the Department will provide an update on the Planning and Environmental Linkage study to reimagine I-787 from the Port of Albany to State Route 7 in Albany County. The study team will be on hand to discuss draft concepts to improve community connections, while providing better access to the Hudson River waterfront. Information will be available to participants at various interactive stations throughout the open house.

NYS DOT is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders have ample opportunity to learn about and understand the study's purpose, needs and objectives. To learn more about the study, or to submit comments, please visit the study's website at: [787.dot.ny.gov](http://787.dot.ny.gov)

Follow New York State DOT on X (Formerly known as Twitter): @NYS DOT. Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/NYS DOT](https://www.facebook.com/NYS DOT). For tweets from New York State DOT Region I (covering the Capital Region), follow @NYS DOT Albany.

## RPI's ReDDoT Proposal Gains Support from City of Rensselaer

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) is receiving strong backing from the City of Rensselaer for its proposed project under the National Science Foundation's (NSF) "Responsible Design, Development, and Deployment of Technologies (ReDDoT)" program. Dr. Ruimin Ke, Assistant Professor at the Center for Infrastructure, Transportation, and the Environment at RPI, is leading the charge with a project titled "ReDDoT Phase I: Planning Grant: Responsible and Equitable Edge Artificial Intelligence to Enhance Transportation Infrastructure Resilience."

The City of Rensselaer is throwing its support behind Dr. Ke's proposal, emphasizing the importance of artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and disaster prevention in enhancing societal resilience. The integration of edge computing and multi-sector collaboration, as proposed by Dr. Ke, is seen as a crucial step toward advancing these initiatives.

The City expressed its belief that Dr. Ke's proposal aligns closely with the city's vision for technological innovation and community resilience. By leveraging cutting-edge technologies and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, the project has the potential to bring about transformative changes in transportation infrastructure resilience.

Should Dr. Ke's proposal secure funding from the NSF, the City of Rensselaer eagerly anticipates the opportunity to participate in collaborative sessions and contribute to the project's success. This collaboration underscores the city's commitment to leveraging innovation for the benefit of its residents and the broader community.

As RPI moves forward with its proposal submission, the endorsement from the City of Rensselaer serves as a testament to the widespread recognition of the project's significance and potential impact. With strong support from both academic and municipal stakeholders, Dr. Ke's initiative is poised to make significant strides in advancing responsible and equitable technology development for transportation infrastructure resilience.

In addition to RPI, Florida State University is also involved in this project that will involve partners in three states. In New York State, additional partners are the Capital Region Transportation Council and New York City Department of Transportation. In Florida, the partners are Miami-Dade County, Big Bend Transit and the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. In the State of Washington partners are AIWayson, Inc., the NW Tribal Technical Assistance Program and the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation.

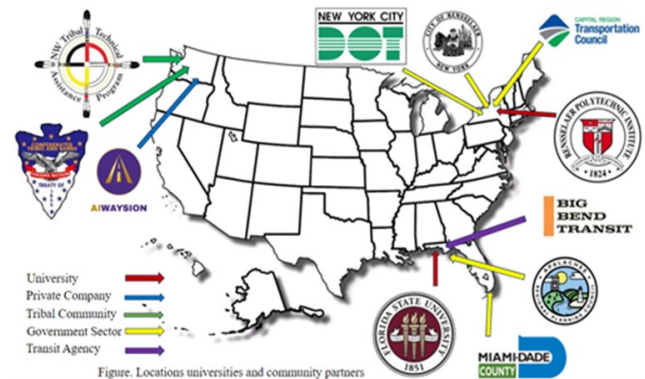


Figure. Locations universities and community partners

## Fire Department Leads Community Safety Initiative with Successful CPR Training

We're thrilled to share that our first group of dedicated city employees has successfully completed CPR training! This marks a crucial milestone in our ongoing commitment to building a safer and more resilient community. Plus, several city-owned buildings are equipped with Public Access Defibrillators (PAD) to enhance emergency response capabilities.

In times of crisis, every second counts, and having a team of CPR-trained individuals can be a game-changer. Our employees have undergone comprehensive training, ensuring they are well-prepared to respond effectively in critical situations. This initiative stems from Mayor Stammel's vision, who, as a life-long first responder, understands the significance of PAD and CPR in the crucial moments before emergency services arrive.

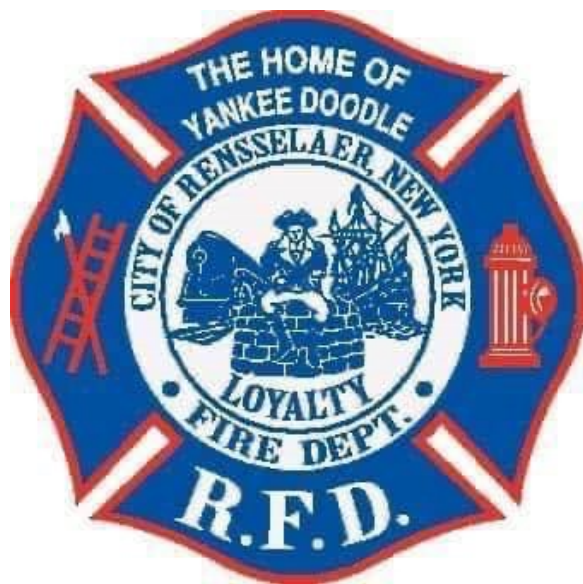
In 2023, Mayor Stammel tasked Chief Brooking Jr and his team with developing a plan to train city employees to the national standard for PAD facilities, aligning with Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommendations. Chief Brooking expressed gratitude to the dedicated firefighters from Rensselaer Professional Firefighters who volunteered for advanced training, becoming certified for this essential role. He also thanked the Board of Public Safety for their unwavering support in this endeavor. As we celebrate this achievement, we extend an invitation to community and civic organizations interested in CPR training.

If you need assistance or have inquiries, please reach out to Chief Brooking at [Bill.Brooking@RensselaerNY.Gov](mailto:Bill.Brooking@RensselaerNY.Gov) or Assistant Chief Cherubino at [Randy.Cherubino@RensselaerNY.Gov](mailto:Randy.Cherubino@RensselaerNY.Gov). Together, let's keep our community safe and prepared!



American  
Heart  
Association®

**Heartsaver® First Aid CPR AED**



## Fire Department Celebrates Celestial Unity

During the rare eclipse event, Rensselaer School District hosted an unforgettable after-school celebration. Attendees from grades 3 to 12 enjoyed enriching activities exploring eclipses and astronomy, with support from the Rensselaer Public Library.

The Rensselaer Fire Department's generous provision of food added to the festivities, ensuring everyone's satisfaction. They thanked the school district for the opportunity. Special appreciation was extended to Chef (Capt) Sleasman, Chef (Mayor) Stammel, and Chef (FF/EMT) Carroll for their expert grill work, alongside the team's efforts as expeditors and sous-chefs.



## Notice: Fire Hydrant Operational Testing to begin April 22, 2024

The Rensselaer City Fire Department will commence operational testing on all fire hydrants across the city starting April 22, 2024. This testing is anticipated to continue until the end of September.

Operational testing will be conducted between 8:00am and 5:00pm on various days throughout the week. During this period, users may encounter temporary low water pressure and discoloration due to sediment disturbance in the system. Please note that this discoloration is not harmful.

Additionally, this testing will run alongside the Water Department's annual flushing schedule in May 2024. It is advised to refrain from washing clothes during flushing in your local area. To address discoloration, run cold water in all faucets for five minutes or until clear. This testing is crucial to ensuring fire hydrants are fully operational for emergency situations.

For any inquiries, please contact Chief William Brooking at 518-269-569. Stay informed and stay safe!



# Street Closures and Parking Restrictions in Rensselaer for Upcoming Events

Rensselaer residents are advised of street closures and parking restrictions for two significant events in the upcoming weeks.

On Sunday, April 28th, Cugino's Pizzeria Restaurant will host an outdoor fundraiser to support the Rensselaer High School Senior Class. The proceeds will go towards defraying costs for Prom and Graduation. Expect street closures and parking restrictions in the vicinity of the restaurant.

On Tuesday, May 7th, the City of Rensselaer will conduct and participate in the "Carry the Load Event." This event aims to benefit community building in the city while honoring military personnel, veterans, first responders, and their families. Similar to the fundraiser, street closures and parking restrictions will be in effect in the vicinity of Broadway between 2nd Avenue and Ferry Street.

Residents are encouraged to check the City's website at <https://rensselaerny.gov/news> for updates on street closures and parking restrictions. Stay informed to avoid inconvenience during these events.

## Summer Employment Opportunities Available for Rensselaer's Youth

Summer is right around the corner, and the City of Rensselaer Youth Bureau is actively seeking enthusiastic individuals to join our team for the upcoming season. We are currently conducting interviews for various positions that offer a unique opportunity to make a positive impact on the community while gaining valuable experience.

We are looking to fill positions for both adults and individuals aged 16-21 to supervise three recreational parks across the city. Additionally, the Boys & Girls Club summer program will require the assistance of 1-2 younger adults.

The employment period will span from July to August 2024, and applicants must be available to work all or parts of some weekends.

Responsibilities for these positions include, but are not limited to:

- Initiating and participating in activities with the city's youth
- Maintaining cleanliness and organization of work areas
- Inventorying and monitoring playground supplies
- Locking and unlocking sheds as needed
- Reporting any issues or concerns promptly
- Serving as positive role models for our youth and representing the City of Rensselaer with pride.

If you're interested in joining our team and making a difference in the lives of our community's youth, we encourage you to apply! To submit your application or inquire further, please contact Jim Konstantakis, Youth Bureau Director, at [jim.konstantakis@rensselaerny.gov](mailto:jim.konstantakis@rensselaerny.gov).

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to be a part of something meaningful this summer. Join us in creating memorable experiences for the youth of Rensselaer!

# Buying or Selling Property In The City Of Rensselaer?

When navigating the world of real estate transactions within our city, we want to emphasize the paramount importance of reaching out to the City's Building and Planning departments before finalizing any property deals. Whether you're a seasoned investor, a budding entrepreneur, or a homeowner looking to make a move, engaging with these departments can provide invaluable insights and ensure smoother transactions for all involved parties.

Here are several compelling reasons why contacting the building or planning departments should be a top priority:

**Understanding Zoning Regulations:** Municipalities have zoning regulations in place to dictate land use, development standards, and building codes. These regulations can significantly impact your property's potential use and value. By consulting with the Planning and Building departments, you can gain clarity on zoning requirements, potential restrictions, and any upcoming developments that may affect your investment decisions.

**Navigating Permitting Processes:** Planning to renovate, expand, or build on a property? Navigating the permitting process can be complex and time-consuming without the proper guidance. Planning and Building departments can provide guidance on obtaining the necessary permits, complying with building codes, and adhering to local regulations, helping you avoid costly delays or legal issues down the line.

**Accessing Economic Development Opportunities:** Municipalities often offer various economic development incentives, grants, or programs to encourage business growth and investment. By engaging with the Planning Department, you can learn about available incentives, tax abatements, or infrastructure improvements that could enhance the value of your property or business venture.

**Staying Informed About Future Plans:** Cities are dynamic entities, constantly evolving and undergoing changes. Planning and Building departments play a pivotal role in shaping the future development of the city through comprehensive planning initiatives and strategic projects. By staying informed about future plans and developments, you can make informed decisions about property investments, anticipate market trends, and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

**Fostering Collaboration and Community Engagement:** Engaging with your municipality's Planning Department fosters collaboration and community engagement. By actively participating in the planning process, you can contribute valuable input, voice concerns, and advocate for initiatives that align with your interests and aspirations. Building positive relationships with local government officials and stakeholders can also create opportunities for partnerships and collective action in advancing shared goals.

In conclusion, contacting your municipality's building or planning departments before buying or selling property is not just a recommendation—it's a strategic imperative. By leveraging their expertise, resources, and guidance, you can navigate the complexities of real estate transactions with confidence, mitigate risks, and maximize the potential of your investments. Informed decisions are empowered decisions. Take the initiative to connect with your municipality's building or planning departments today and pave the way for a prosperous future in our vibrant city.

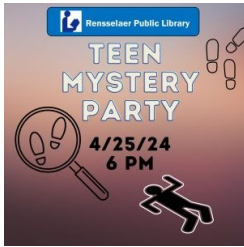
More information about the requirements for building owners may be found on the Building and Zoning Department page of the city website at: <https://rensselaer.ny.gov/City-Departments/planning-building-and-zoning/building-department>

Planning information may be found at: <http://rensselaerplanning.com>



# Library Corner

For any of our events requiring sign-up, please call the Library at 518-462-1193.



**Teen Murder Mystery Party** Thursday April 25 at 6 PM Play a character and examine clues and suspects to solve a mystery. Please sign up! For ages 12-18  
Please visit the library's website or contact the library for more information.

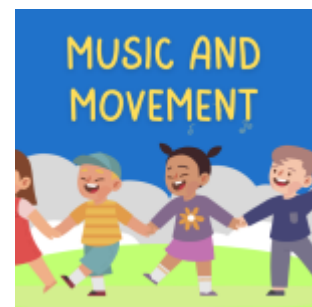
**Drop-in Tech Help: Wednesday May 1st from 2pm to 3pm.** Cornell Cooperative Extension Digital Literacy educator is here to help with your technology questions. No sign up needed, bring your device. You can also make an appointment with library staff.



**Gardening Advice-** Thursday April 11 at 6 PM. Master Gardeners Marie and Bob will provide a helpful presentation on gardening, from planning a small plot to saving seeds for the next year. For adults, teens welcome. Please sign up.

## Preschool Music and Movement

Saturday April 20 at 11 AM. Bring your little one to learn the fun way, with music and play. Educator Ms. Lisa will lead an interactive music play time for ages 3-6 and their caregivers, using her knowledge of child development. Please sign up.



**Notary services and computer help are available with appointment, contact the Library directly for details. (Please make appointment to ensure someone is available.)**

**(518) 462-1193**

## 2024 Annual Spring Bulk Pick Up Schedule

**For Bill Paying City Residents Only:**

<b><u>If your Trash is picked up on</u></b>	<b><u>Your Bulk Day is</u></b>
TUESDAY mornings	Monday April 29, 2024
WEDNESDAY mornings	Monday May 6, 2024
THURSDAY mornings	Monday,, May 13, 2024
FRIDAY mornings	Monday, May 20, 2024

The bulk size must not exceed a measurable size of 4 feet wide, 4 feet high and 8 feet long!

Check the City's website for more detailed information at:

[https://rensselaer.ny.gov/application/files/5217/0870/6673/MARCH\\_2024\\_BILLING\\_INSERTS.pdf](https://rensselaer.ny.gov/application/files/5217/0870/6673/MARCH_2024_BILLING_INSERTS.pdf)

## City Newsletter - Subscription & Article Submission

The Rensselaer Newsletter began its first launch this past January. Since then it has become the place City Residents look to for news and facts about what's going on in the City. The Newsletter is produced and designed by volunteers Dave Ellis and Madeline Rizzo with content provided by City Hall employees and residents.

Inquires regarding articles, submission of articles or to be added to the Newsletter distribution list please send an email to [Info@rensselaer.ny.gov](mailto:Info@rensselaer.ny.gov)

We look forward to hearing from you!

## Common Council Workshops & Meetings

Are you interested in what's happening in Rensselaer? Then please consider attending the Common Council Workshops & Meetings to get the real scoop on what's happening in your City. The Workshops are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month and the Council Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays both at 6:30 PM at City Hall (see attached Calendar for dates for this month at the end of this Newsletter).

Agendas are posted on the City's website at

<https://rensselaer.ny.gov/meeting-agendas-and-minutes>

each Monday prior to the Workshops. Your attendance and input are important and your community needs your support. We hope to see you there!

# City of Rensselaer Events and Meetings

## APRIL 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall ZBA Apps Due	<b>2</b>	3 Common Council Meeting 6:30 @ City Hall	4	5	6
7	8 Planning Commission Meeting 6:30 pm @ City Hall	9	10	11	12 Planning Apps Due	13
14	15 Common Council Workshop @ 6:30 City Hall	16	17 Common Council Meeting 6:30 @ City Hall	18	19	20
21	22 ZBA Meeting 6:00 PM @ City Hall IDA Meeting 4:15 pm @ City Hall	23	24	25	26 Planning Revisions Due	27
28	29	30				

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<b>CITY CLERK</b>	518-462-4266	nancy.hardt@rensselaer.ny.gov	NANCY HARDT
<b>DIR. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	518-462-4839		
<b>ENGINEER</b>	518-694-3968	bill.smart@rensselaer.ny.gov	BILL SMART
<b>FIRE HOUSE, NORTH</b>	518-463-2883		
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