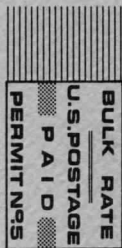


**here
is
your
town :**



**guilderland
n.y.**

**Town of Guilderland
Town Hall
Guilderland, N. Y. 12084**



HISTORY

The Town of Guilderland has had at least four names through recorded history. Most of it began as a portion of the Manor of Rensselaerswyck, granted by the Dutch West India Company to Killian Van Rensselaer in 1630.

Farmers who eventually settled on Rensselaerswyck land paid "quit rents" in the form of "fat fowl, wheat and labor"; those who were able, paid in cash. The rents permitted them to clear land, construct buildings and grow crops. It wasn't until 1846 that the State abolished payment of "quit rents".

In the 1700's the area became known as "Hellebergh" for the mountains in the southwest. The name (a legacy from the Dutch language) meant bright or clear mountains in English; the spelling eventually stabilized to the current: Helderberg.

The area became part of the town of Watervliet in 1778, and in 1803 it broke away to become the Town of Guilderland with the boundaries it has today. The name "Guilderland" honored the province of Gelderland in the Netherlands which was the homeland of the original settlers along the Normanskill.

The odd jog of land into Guilderland's northeastern border by the City of Albany also occurred in 1803; it was granted as a place for City residents to cut firewood.

A toll road, the Great Western Turnpike, (currently Route 20), funneled much traffic through Guilderland both east and west; the road connecting Albany and Cherry Valley, was completed in 1800.

Taverns, blacksmith and wagon makers' shops sprang up to serve throngs of settlers headed west, as well as the drovers of cattle who came from western areas headed for eastern markets.

In later years, over this and other toll roads, plank roads were laid. It was a vast improvement in muddy weather, however, they still demanded a payment of toll. Settlements within the Town in the 1800's included Hamilton (now Guilderland), Knowersville (now Altamont), West Brighton (now McKownville) and Guilderland Center which once went by the name of "Bang-all".

Some of the businesses in the area included a glass factory, an iron foundry, a hat factory, grist mills, saw mills and fabric mills.

In 1863 the Albany and Susquehanna railroad tracks were laid and turnpike traffic dropped off. The railroads (part of the former New York Central System) bypassed the centrally located hamlet of Hamilton (Guilderland). Altamont, Guilderland Center and Fuller's Station became centers of business activity because railway stations were built in those communities.

In the year 1950, the Town of Guilderland had an existing population of only 7500; today it is a well-planned community at the crossroads of the Capital District offering its residents gracious living in a suburban area of nearly 30,000 residents.

Truly, Guilderland is in step with the motto on its coat-of-arms: "PROSPICE GELRIA", or "Look Forward" Guilderland!

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The State constitution and State statutes give Guilderland its legal status. Guilderland is allowed some home rule and the Town Board has passed local laws governing activities strictly within its boundaries. The Town has developed the following structure:

Supervisor—Serves as the chief executive, administrative and fiscal officer and

chairman of the Town Board. Term of office — two years.

Councilmen (4)—Make up the Town Board, which is the local policy-making body, along with the Town supervisor. The Board approves the budget, levies taxes, enacts ordinances, administers services and special Town districts as well as appointing personnel. All serve four-year terms.

Town Clerk—Registers all legal transactions and vital statistics, issues licenses and permits, supervises elections and has custody of Town records and maps. Term of two years.

Town Justices (2)—Preside over weekly sessions of Town court which handles violations of Town laws and ordinances, civil matters, traffic violations and misdemeanors plus small claims. Four-year terms.

Superintendent of Highways—Responsible for supervision of Town highway maintenance and snow removal. A four-year term.

Receiver of Taxes and Assessments—Receives and records County, Town and school taxes. Four-year term.

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

The Town Board appoints Town government administrative employees including: assessor, comptroller, deputy supervisor, engineer, police chief, deputy town clerk, deputy tax receiver, superintendent of water and sanitation, park superintendent, director of recreation, director of youth commission, director of natural disaster and civil defense, building inspectors, clerk of the court, dog warden and landfill operator. The Town Board also appoints members of the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Environmental Advisory Council and necessary Citizen Advisory Committees.

BOARDS

A number of groups help the elected and appointed officials guide community growth. These include:

Planning Board—The seven-member Board advises the Town Board on matters of planning and zoning based on the Master Plan drawn up by professional consultants. It is guided by Local Law #1 of 1971 and its amendments, adopted by the Town Board. This law stipulates the growth pattern desired by the community. The Planning Board hears requests from citizens and landowners for proposed developments and zoning law changes; the latter requires approval by the Town Board.

Zoning Board of Appeals—This group administers the zoning law. It is also a seven-member Board and has power to grant variances and special use permits. The permits are required by all new businesses or, for certain changes in a present business and by property owners requiring a variance from provisions of the zoning law.

Advisory Groups—Members of these groups, which study and make recommendations to the Town Board and in certain instances to the Planning Board, serve without pay. Groups include: Youth Commission, Narcotics Guidance Council, Environmental Conservation Advisory Council, Historical Committee, Water Advisory Board, Guilderland Industrial Development Agency, Urban Renewal Agency and Boards for each water district.

FINANCING TOWN GOVERNMENT

Revenues to operate the Town government come from the property tax, state aid, revenue sharing, mortgage tax, Federal and State Anti-recession funds, county sales tax and fees. These income

items are incorporated in the annual budget, which cover a fiscal year corresponding to a calendar year. The town supervisor and comptroller administer the budget.

Major items of expense include administration, general, highways, town services, public health and safety. The budget is reviewed for the public at hearings in November and must be approved on or before November 20 each year.

Legal notices of the Town, including the budget, are published in the designated official newspaper: Altamont Enterprise.

TAXES AND ASSESSMENT

In January of each year you will receive a tax bill which includes Town, County and Special District taxes. School taxes are billed in September.

There is a Tax Exemption for Senior Citizens who are over 65, have owned their residence for 2 years, and have an income under \$7200. This income limit may be revised annually. Further information about this and other exemptions such as veterans exemptions is available from the Assessor's office.

Grievance Day is held each year on the third Tuesday in June for the purpose of hearing complaints from property owners who feel that their property is improperly assessed. If you feel there is a problem with your assessment, you do not have to wait for Grievance Day, you can discuss your assessment with the Assessor at any time during the year. However, revisions in tax assessments can only be made as permitted by controlling laws.

HOUSING

Local, County and State agencies divide responsibility for sanitation

codes. Guilderland's Water and Sanitation Department handles the public water and sewerage facilities; the Albany County Health Department checks private sewer and water systems. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation oversees those projects in which State and Federal monies are involved.

There are no local ordinances requiring repairs to private property unless a building is unsafe or otherwise hazardous. Local zoning laws stipulate the number of persons who may live in certain types of housing.

Town building codes, fire codes, plumbing and electrical codes adhere to State standards. Construction of new homes or improvements to any existing structures require a building permit, available from the Building Department.

If a person desires a change in the zoning classification of his property, he may apply to have his property rezoned by filing an application with the Town clerk. The application is heard by the Town Board, which generally refers the matter to the Planning Board for its recommendation before taking action on the request. Under certain circumstances rezoning may also require action by the County Planning Board. Affected neighbors receive notice of the public hearing and have an opportunity to be heard.

In the event you wish to make structural alteration or changes in the use of your property, contact the Building Department for assistance.

If a special-use permit or a variance-to-zoning requirement is needed, the request goes to the Zoning Board of Appeals which will consider the matter at public hearing. If the petition is denied, you can appeal to the State Supreme Court.

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Fire—When the fire whistle blows, any one of nine fire departments soon will respond. There is a sharing of equipment and personnel as needed. The firemen volunteer their time and participate in specialized training programs to improve their skills. Additionally, the Town has provided a fire training area, including a simulated five-story building at the Northeastern Industrial Park, located at Guilderland Center.

Police—In 1972 the Guilderland Community Police force was formed to serve our Town. It is augmented by a team of dispatchers who maintain an emergency center in Town Hall on a 24 hour basis. A Juvenile Aide division has been created to deal with delinquency problems and provides counseling service for young people. Persons arrested for serious crimes are detained at the Albany County jail.

Ambulance—Three volunteer services will provide emergency ambulance service on a 24-hour basis. A call to the Town's emergency center will put you in touch with the ambulance service covering your section of Town.

Because no fee is charged for these volunteer services, a once-a-year drive is needed to produce operating funds for each of the rescue or ambulance squads.

Civil Defense—Personnel are on duty 24 hours a day during natural disasters.

State Police—The State Police maintains a sub-station at the Old Town Hall on Willow Street in Guilderland. Troopers are assigned to the Town on a 24-hour basis and cooperate with community police; you may call either if you have a problem.

Courts—The Town Justices preside at Town Hall each Monday and Thursday evening. Their jurisdiction includes misdemeanors, traffic violations and civil

matters involving damages not exceeding \$3,000. Generally their civil jurisdiction involves matters within the Town boundaries. The Altamont village justices handle cases within that village.

DEVELOPMENT

In 1968 at the request of the Town Board, the NYS Legislature created an Urban Renewal Agency for Guilderland. The Board appoints members to that agency. Plans are in progress for housing for the aged, young families and low-income groups. The Town Board encouraged the agency to purchase the former Voorheesville Army Depot which is currently known as the Northeastern Industrial Park, largest facility of its type in the Northeastern United States.

Industrial Development Agency—The Town extends a helping hand to business seeking to expand or relocate their facilities to Guilderland. Through counseling, discussion of mortgage financing, site selection, zoning and building requirements, available labor and any other special needs of the businessman, the agency promotes progress.

Officials will acquaint and aid prospective businessmen with a wide variety of Federal, State and Local government programs designed to generate economic development through tax incentives and financial assistance.

Environmental Conservation Advisory Council—This council guides the Town Board and Planning Board on an advisory level, to assure the Town's overall development with the protection of our natural resources.

The Town Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals review plans formulated by the Urban Renewal Agency as well as plans by the Industrial Development Agency and the Environmental Conservation Advisory Council, if

such plans include changes subject to their review.

UTILITIES

In many areas of Guilderland, the Town provides water and sewage facilities. Expansion of both services is in process and ultimately about 80 per cent of the major population areas will be served by public sewer, water or both. The superintendent of water and sanitation and his staff are in charge of the planning for expansion of these services as well as maintenance of existing facilities. Altamont has its own water and sewer facilities and provides services on a limited basis to certain areas outside the village limits.

The Town provides fall and spring leaf collection. It also maintains a landfill at Guilderland Center. You can apply at the Town Hall for a free permit to use the Town landfill. If you wish to have garbage and refuse collection picked up at your home, it is necessary for you to arrange for such service, check with private refuse collectors. A list is available from the Town clerk.

TRANSPORTATION

Three different agencies handle road maintenance, improvement and snow removal within the Town: the Town, County and State highway departments. Individual developers establish access roads to Town specifications in developments and in many cases deed them over to the Town upon completion. Private roads must be maintained by their owner.

An inter-city bus service (Capital District Transportation Authority, CDTA) links Guilderland with Schenectady and Albany. Check with CDTA for its schedule in your neighborhood.

There is easy access to AMTRAK at either the Colonie or Rensselaer railway

stations. The Albany County airport connects the Capital District area with major American and Canadian cities. Both Conrail and the D & H Railway Company provide freight rail service to our Town.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Guilderland Central School District serves upwards of 5,000 students who are grouped by grade levels. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade attend one of three elementary schools. There is a centralized middle school, grades 5 to 8, which operates on a "house" plan. The centralized high school, grades 9 through 12, offers college entrance, vocational and business courses. It awards both local and New York State Regents diplomas.

The district's academic program is wide in scope, and includes learning workshops and Board of Cooperative Educational Services programs (BOCES) in vocational training and for exceptional children.

It offers summer school, an adult education program and the services of guidance counselors, nurses, speech therapists and psychologists.

Each school hosts "open house" every year and presents music concerts, physical education demonstrations and art festivals. Most children ride school buses to school because of the distances involved. There is also an option of participating in a hot lunch program.

A School Board guides long-range planning for the District. A school superintendent administers the District with the aid of a professional staff while each school has its own principal and staff; parent participation is encouraged in school activities. The district budget goes to the voters each year.

As long as you fulfill general voter's requirements, you may vote in the School Board elections held usually during May or June of each year. Of the nine-member School Board serving without pay, 3 are elected each year to serve for a three-year term. The School District's budget goes before the voters at the same time that Board members are elected.

If you need further assistance about the School Board elections, please contact the School District administration.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Three private schools are located in the Town. These are the Hebrew Academy of the Capital District, Christ the King, and St. Madeleine Sophie elementary schools.

Nurseries for preschool children are conducted at the following churches: Capital Area Baptist, Christ the King, Christ Lutheran, Hamilton Union Presbyterian, Lynnwood Reformed, McKownville Methodist, Pineview Community, St. Boniface Episcopal.

HEALTH

Guilderland residents receive certain health services from the Albany County Health Department as a benefit from their county tax monies. That agency is responsible for personal health services, environmental health, communicable diseases, nursing services, vital statistics, medical direction of the Medicaid program and inspection of health facilities covered by Medicare.

There are some testing programs and inoculation clinics operated in Guilderland, as well as a monthly blood pressure clinic, but you'll have to watch the papers as to time and place, or call Town Hall.

In the Guilderland school district, nurse-teachers conduct health educa-

tion; they test for eye and ear problems, administer state-required health exams, provide exams for those participating in interscholastic sports, and arrange for a school doctor for those who cannot afford a private exam or TB testing.

SOCIAL SERVICES

To get help or public assistance from the Albany County Department of Social Services, you can call 471-5300.

Guilderland offers services and programs for its residents and especially for senior citizens. For details call the Town Senior Citizen coordinator at Town Hall.

The Town also sponsors a Youth Employment service for persons seeking full or part-time work, and New York State maintains a satellite office at the Town Hall to provide employment services to anyone seeking help.

LIBRARIES

The services of two public libraries are available: one in Guilderland and one in Altamont. They both participate in the Upper Hudson Library Federation, a cooperative organization consisting of 24 libraries in Albany and Rensselaer Counties, which shares services and provides consultants as needed.

The Guilderland Free Library, 1900 Western Avenue, has upwards of 20,000 volumes, is open Monday through Thursday 1-8 P.M. and Friday from 9 A.M.-8 P.M., on Saturday from 10 A.M.-5 P.M.

The Altamont Free Library, 105 Park St., lists hours on Monday of 2-5 P.M. and 7-9 P.M.; Wednesday 10 A.M.-12 noon, 2-5 P.M. and 7-9 P.M.; Friday 2-9 P.M.; Saturday 10 A.M.-12 noon. It has more than 10,000 volumes on hand.

Besides books, both libraries provide magazines, records, large-type books for children and films for both children and

senior citizens. Through the Upper Hudson Library Federation and the Association for the Blind in Albany, you can obtain books in braille for the blind.

Your Town government provides the bulk of funds for both libraries.

RECREATION

The Guilderland Youth Commission sponsors a variety of summer activities. Free bus service is provided and schedules are distributed through the schools or may be obtained at Town Hall. Youngsters will find Red Cross swimming programs available from 8:30-11:30 A.M. These include "learn to swim" for grades K-2 and grades 3 and up; junior and senior life saving as well as classes for handicapped children. The whole family can enjoy recreational swimming in the afternoons and evenings. A senior citizen swim program is also available.

Tawasentha Park facilities are free to Town residents with the exception of the swimming pool. A nominal charge is made for its use. You need to get a car sticker from the park office or Town Hall. The park pavilion may be reserved for group outings.

Summer playground activities at the park and at local schools include instruction in archery, art, baseball, canoeing, gymnastics, tennis, track, soccer and other sports.

VOTER INFORMATION

Can you vote? Yes, if you are a U.S. citizen and 18 or older on or before election day. However, you need to have lived in Guilderland at the same place for 30 days before the election and, must have registered to vote.

ALL ABOUT REGISTERING

You may register in person at your

local polling place in Guilderland on Registration Day in October, or at the Board of Elections in the Albany County Courthouse during central registration. Central registration stretches from 30 days after a general election to 30 days before the first day of local registration. There is one exception: there is no central registration within 10 days before and, 5 days after any other election, such as a primary or special election.

You may register by mail; forms are available at the Town Clerk's office or at the County Board of Elections. Completed forms when received by the County Board of Elections not later than the thirtieth day before the next primary, general or special election, will entitle the applicant to vote in such an election if he is otherwise qualified. *

It is in the primaries that political parties select their candidates when several people want to run for a particular office. In New York State you must be enrolled in a political party to vote in a primary or, you may enroll as an independent if you prefer, however, you cannot vote in the primary.

Once registered, you do not have to register again unless:

1. You fail to vote in general elections for two consecutive years.
2. You move to another address.
3. You change your legal name.

ABSENTEE VOTING

If you know in advance that you will be unable to get to the polls to vote, you may apply for an absentee ballot. Applications are available at the Town Clerk's office and the County Board of

*You can change party enrollment by appearing in person during central registration or local registration or, using the mail registration form.

Elections. All applications to the Board of Elections must be mailed or delivered to the Board not later than the seventh day before the election. If you are hospitalized however, within seven days of the election, you may apply for an absentee ballot up to 10:00 A.M. of the day before the election; the ballot has to be returned by noon of the day before election.

Applying for the ballot is just the first step—after filling out the application and sending it back, you get a ballot. This needs to be filled out and returned no later than noon of the day before the election. You may cast absentee ballots in primary elections as well.

WHERE TO VOTE

Guilderland has 18 election districts. If you are not certain where your polling place is, call the Town Clerk's office for assistance.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

You can join numerous groups in Guilderland, all of which welcome any interested person. Joining a group is a great way to get to know people as well as to participate in worthwhile programs.

Among the organizations are: League of Women Voters, Historical Society, TORCH, Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Business and Professional Women, American Association of Retired Persons, PTA-PTO, Chamber of Commerce, League of Arts.

NEWSPAPERS

Five newspapers now serve the Guilderland area. Two morning dailies, Times-Union and Schenectady Gazette and one afternoon paper, Knickerbocker News-Union Star, brings the day's happenings. One weekly has served the

Town for many years, the Altamont Enterprise, where official notices of Town activities appear. A second weekly, the Helderberg Sun, began publishing in the summer of 1974.

PLACES OF WORSHIP WITHIN THE TOWN

Sunday Services

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Altamont Reformed Church
129 Lincoln Ave., Altamont
861-8711 | 10:00 A.M. |
| B'Nai Sholom-New Reformed
1215 Western Ave., Albany
482-5283 | Friday
8:00 P.M. |
| Carman Rd. Alliance Church
3313 Carman Rd.
Ft. Hunter
356-1571 | 11:00 A.M.
7:00 P.M. |
| Capital Area Baptist Church
2919 Lydius St.
Ft. Hunter
356-1310 | 10:00 A.M.
6:00 P.M. |
| Christ Lutheran Church
1500 Western Ave.
McKownville
456-1530 or 456-5309 | 8:30 A.M.
11:00 A.M. |
| Christ The King R.C. Church
20 Sumpter Ave.
Westmere
456-1644 | Every hour
7:00 A.M.-Noon & 5:00 |
| Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church
2291 Western Ave., Guilderland
456-5410 | 10:00 A.M. |
| Helderberg Reformed Church
Main St., Rte. 146
Guilderland Center
861-8031 | 9:45 A.M. |
| Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall
State Farm Rd., Guilderland
456-6543 | 9:30 A.M. |
| Lynnwood Reformed Church
3700 Carman Rd., Ft. Hunter
355-1515 | 11:00 A.M. |

