

# Town Hall upgrades well underway

By PETE FONTAINE

Sometime during the end of May, the facelift at Johnston's historic Town Hall will be complete – "weather permitting," of course, as Mayor Joseph Polisena noted with a laugh.

Polisena and other town officials are excited, as the refurbishing the Johnston's precious and most notable landmark nears completion. The work was made possible through money the town was awarded after its settlement in the historic court case against Broadrock Gas Services.

The project began, Polisena noted, when the ageless facility – located at the bustling intersection of Hartford Avenue (Route 6) and Atwood Avenue – was covered with a protective coating known as Rhino Shield.

"The columns on the building were peeling," Polisena said. "It was a very painstaking process that took the company we hired four weeks to paint. In addition to the new facelift outside, we also had the beauti-



**GETTING AN UPGRADE:** This was the recent scene at the rear of Johnston Town Hall, as construction workers used a small backhoe to dig up and remove the concrete stairs and walkway that will soon featured a handicap-accessible ramp and lift. *(Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)*

ful dome painted."

Polisena said because the

town received money in its settlement, he "felt it was

time to spruce up Town Hall. After all, this is a

building that thousands and thousands of people pass on

a daily basis, and I wanted to make sure it is pleasant to the eye."

The mayor, who emphasized he's "very proud of this Town Hall," said he's been getting lots of compliments about the exterior of building, which now features new flag poles, a unique digital sign that non-profit groups in Johnston can use, and a new, more accessible front entrance.

Now, instead of residents having to walk up the front steps, people can simple drive into the parking lot and walk almost directly to the front door as the result of a new walkway.

The improvements will include the installation of a new ramp that will offer handicap accessibility. Polisena said in addition to the ramp, there will be a lift.

When asked for the estimated time of completion, Polisena said: "As I said before, everything depends on the weather. I'm looking at the end of May, but as everyone knows, weather has a lot do – and say – about any construction project."