

Inaugural Acceptance Speech

Mark A. Corigliano

3 January, 2023

The swearing in of Jill, Eric and myself, tonight is indeed a solemn and significant occasion. We have come to take the 'swearing in' tradition for granted as similar proceedings routinely occur on all levels of government. The orderly transfer of authority is a process directed by our Constitution and its significance should not be overlooked. It is an honorable tradition that has gone on for nearly 250 years. It is not common to all governments, democratic or otherwise, and demonstrates how civil, just and virtuous our society can be. It is indicative of the unique people that we, as Americans are and I hope you all appreciate the meaning of what just occurred as much as do I.

I am honored to have been selected by my fellow townspeople as your Mayor. It is a position I take most seriously and in which I shall strive to do my absolute best, serving a town I am truly passionate about. I commit to management of our local government with integrity, professionalism, and accountability. I am dedicated to continuing the work I did as a Councilperson and Council President, that is, to insure we continue to enjoy the safe, attractive, and affordable place we all call home. I fully appreciate how hard this work is and am up to the challenge. I am not daunted by the office and shall live up to its demands.

I can wholly assure you that the fine folks sitting here on the dais are fiercely committed to these same objectives as well. I have worked with the incumbent Councilmembers for years and know them well. I have also gotten to know Eric and Jill over the last ten months and believe we can expect the same from them. We have worked well together in a cooperative, civil and non-partisan way and expect that we will continue to do so. This interaction and reaching a democratic consensus when we do disagree is one of the highlights of my work as a Councilmember.

I am so very appreciative of the many people and groups that allow me the privilege of public service and with whom I serve, so please indulge me as I extend my gratitude.

First to Mayor Greg Skinner. Greg took our government to a new level, and I can unequivocally say that the most recent Council I served on under Greg was the best in my nine years as a Councilmember. Greg leaves big shoes for me to fill. Thank you, my colleague and friend.

Second to GianPaolo (or GP) Caminiti. GP and I formerly served on the Land Use Board, ran together in 2013 for Council, and then ran two subsequent times thereafter. We saw eye to eye on most issues, but when we did not, were able to rationally come to harmony. GP, I shall miss your insights and working with you very much.

My thanks to the incumbent Councilmembers sitting here. It has been an honor and privilege working with you and I look forward to doing so going forward. My thanks also to Tim Howes and Karen Sweeney who encouraged my running for Mayor and supported that effort.

A shout out to my coworkers, that is, our incredible administration and staff lead by Administrator Nancy Bretzger. From our stellar Police force to DPW to Finance and all the other departments that toil in the background, my heartfelt thanks.

Thanks to our Borough volunteers, especially those in the emergency services, Fire and First Aid. You all serve with excellence and save our residents not only from disasters but from a great financial burden should we have to pay for the services you so unselfishly provide. Thank you as well to our committee volunteers from the Land Use Board to Recreation to Historic Preservation and all those in between. Your efforts are so valued and appreciated.

Thank you to our Borough Professionals from our attorneys, John Bruder and Roger Thomas along with Bill Ryden, John Szabo and others. Your professional and sage guidance helps keep us on track and keeps P&G the very special town it is.

Thank you to our residents and taxpayers. Not one of us ever forgets that the taxes you pay, either directly or indirectly are earned, post-income tax dollars that you work hard to afford. Be assured that your Mayor, Council and Borough employees all work diligently to keep P&G affordable and manage costs pragmatically. Know that this task is not easy in spite of us being a small town

with its smaller tax base. We still are statutorily required to provide the same essential services, and oftentimes more, as our larger neighbors. We are constantly working to do more with less.

Lastly, my deepest thanks and love to my wife, Carolynne. Make no mistake that I could not nearly be as effective in my work here if it were not for the unconditional and unwavering support from this remarkable woman. Carolynne knows best how to support me in my Borough work, whether it be bringing dinner to my desk unasked as I work on timely Borough matters, or simply calming me when confronting a troubling issue. Indeed, like all of us in one way or another, I have my eccentricities (*ponytail*) and my love in life and best friend knows how to handle them with grace and give me balance. Thank you, Roni.

In closing, I would ask that everyone not lose sight of the significance of what we do here. Through our actions, we contribute to the political history of our great nation and change does indeed start on Main St. If we should see areas in higher government that could use improvement, know that the examples of good governance exhibited here in Peapack & Gladstone do indeed have an influence on how higher government operates. Have faith in America. Her best days are yet to come.

Thank you for your attendance this evening...residents, staff, volunteers, friends, and family. I speak for all my colleagues when I say that your presence here means so much to all of us.

So, to my colleagues on the dias: Onward and Forward. Let's get to work!