

MAYOR MARVIN'S COLUMN

The Village is quite fortunate to have a cadre of department heads who are extremely proactive and always looking for ways to improve and modernize their departments. For the past few years, some of their aspirations were stymied because our capital programs were reduced or put on hold in response to the stagnant economic climate.

I am pleased to report that the capital program will be funded this year though in a modest form.

As a result, Chief Satriale's Police Department will modernize on several levels. Officers will now be able to write tickets on a hand held computer in lieu of a paper tablet. Currently, tickets are handwritten, then manually entered in police department logs and then manually entered again at the Court level. As a result of the new equipment, the process will not only be more time efficient, but the chances of error, which automatically invalidates a ticket, are decreased significantly. By eliminating the three entry process, accuracy will increase and with it a better financial return.

A second patrol car will soon have a licensed plate reader thanks to the capital program coupled with a State grant. This will allow two patrol cars on duty to be equipped with this technological advance. Our current license plate reader records the plates of every car parked or moving that the patrol car passes. Not only has this technological advancement aided in identifying scofflaws and unregistered vehicles, its use has been directly responsible for the recovery of stolen cars, the capture of a sex offender and the arrest of an individual who called in a bomb threat.

As an additional upgrade in the Police Department, cameras will be installed in the jail cells and along route from cell to court. The installation of video surveillance will protect both our police officers and prisoners should there be a dispute as to treatment or proper procedure.

The New York State Department of Corrections encourages all of the above technological enhancements and we will be receiving some grant monies for our efforts.

In the same vein of further automating our operations, the Finance Department capably head by Bob Fels for the last 22 years, will be installing a new accounting program to replace software and hardware in use since 1988 and now no longer supported by the equipment provider. The new program will link our accounting systems with our property tax collection program, thereby promoting additional efficiencies in the department.

The most significant changes in 2012 will be under the umbrella of the Public Works Department and its leader, Rocco Circosta.

Both of our major Village-owned open spaces – Sagamore Park and Maltby Field – will have refurbishment plans go out to bid next week. Work will begin on Sagamore Park around Memorial Day with Maltby Field improvement to follow soon after. Sagamore Park will be made more handicap accessible. The park will also be enhanced with

landscape and play equipment. Walls and buffers will be repositioned to make the park as safe as possible and more toddler friendly.

As is the plan for Maltby Field, additional benches, plantings and trash/recycle receptacles will be added. The entire Maltby property will be regraded and top soil added. A manicured walking path will also be created.

Both park plans were designed to be created in segments, allowing for additional improvements as monies become available.

Engineers have been engaged to begin the Public Works Department's ambitious storm sewer project. Starting in flood prone areas, Village pipes will be inspected, cleaned and repaired where necessary. Our entire pipe system will finally be mapped, further increasing our opportunity for flood mitigation measures. For example, by mapping all our pipes we may find that changing a pipe alignment or "softening" a connection angle could increase pipe flow and capacity.

Our Department of Public Works will also be repairing the tennis facility's all weather courts, filling cracks and sealing and recoating surfaces.

The Public Works Department will increase the budget devoted to both the repaving of streets and the planting of street trees. In both cases, the department keeps a running list of locations pinpointed for improvement so we encourage you to call to add potential streets to the list. As an aside, given Con Edison's current "slash and burn" method of trimming Village street trees located under electrical wires, we have been asking residents to allow us to locate Village purchased trees away from the wires and on private property.

Finally, our Building Department, under the leadership of Vincent Pici for the past 24 years, will begin the process of digitizing all of the Building Department records with the ultimate goal of creating a virtual Village Hall of property documents on the computer. Currently, New York State law requires that all documents pertaining to an existing home or business must be maintained by the Village in perpetuity. The amount of storage to meet this requirement is enormous. By digitizing these documents, not only will accessibility immediately increase, but space concerns, preservation and document decomposition will be eliminated.

Net-net, in the not too distant future, every resident will be impacted positively by the changes constantly occurring at your Village Hall.