

## **MAYOR MARVIN'S COLUMN**

Though the Affordable Housing Settlement Agreement has taken center stage for the past few weeks, many other initiatives at Village Hall are underway or have been completed in the last month.

This summer the maintenance of our Village infrastructure was our number one priority. To that end, we spent \$300,000 on paving and curbing projects throughout the Village including resurfacing the entire length of Sagamore Road, a much needed and long overdue repair. Unfortunately, the summer storms destroyed over 50 mature trees throughout the Village and a large section of a retaining wall along Sagamore Road necessitating unexpected expenses. In the coming months we will be replacing some of the trees and welcome any donations to our Village Tree Fund begun last year.

Our open spaces, though very few, are one of our greatest assets and must be preserved. Plans are well underway for refurbishment of both Sagamore Park and the Maltby field area, thanks to grants received from State Senator Jeffrey Klein and Assemblywoman Amy Paulin in addition to the funds reserved in the Village capital budget. Our goal for Sagamore Park, 20 years old this year, is to update, re-landscape, improve safety conditions and make the park completely handicapped accessible while maintaining the integrity of its location in a residential neighborhood. Our first step in the Maltby/Girl Scout Cabin open space will be to completely refurbish the field area to make it usable for recreational activity. Because the area was an ash dump, as well as a snow dumping site, the current conditions render

it unsuitable for play at this time. As part of stage one, we also plan to add a scenic pathway. The projects in both parks will be completed in segments as funds become available and weather permits.

The Trustees and I have also spent a great deal of time working with Village landlords, merchants and the Chamber of Commerce to help stimulate business for existing merchants and attract quality merchants to open in Bronxville. In the coming weeks, you will see some new businesses opening in the Village, but we still have a long way to go. As a reminder, please try to look locally first for your family shopping needs.

The BAMs gas station was torn down on schedule and now we are in the process of working with a traffic consultant, our two Village engineers and the police chief to maximize public parking while reconfiguring the very difficult intersection at Cedar Street and Kraft Avenue.

Metro North continues to offer road blocks instead of constructive solutions to partner with us in mitigating the increased noise and vibration along the rail corridor. In lieu of using funds for remedial measures, Metro North has now decided to hire their own vibration engineer with, I can only assume, the goal of refuting our results. I am more resolute than ever in seeking remedies for our residents along the rail corridor and will now use whatever legal and political means possible to achieve a fair outcome.

This Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, will be the Village's first meeting with the County Executive and the Federal Monitor to discuss the affordable housing agreement implementation plan. Hopefully I will have more information to share in next week's column.

Leaf season has begun and the ban on using gas powered leaf blowers expired on October 1<sup>st</sup>. We are not currently requiring residents to bag lawn waste but we encourage you to do so as it saves the Village considerable time and money. Please use biodegradable bags only.

Due to a very healthy level of interest, the Trustees have decided to reissue the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Kensington Road Project requiring the next developer to build the former project as approved by our Planning and Zoning boards, Metro North and the Department of Environmental Conservation.

We received some sobering information from the State Comptroller's Office that will have a significant budgetary impact going forward. Since the State's Common Retirement Fund lost an unprecedented 26% of its value, all local communities must cover the loss. For Bronxville, we will now have to send the State an 11% increase in our non-uniformed staff annual payroll retirement assessment and an 18% increase in our annual police payroll retirement assessment. Without a change in the current pension system, this kind of unfunded mandate is not sustainable in the long term.

Many of you have expressed dismay at the presence of the supporters of Lyndon LaRouche outside of the Post Office because of their disrespectful pictures of our President and elected officials. I share your distaste but after extensive research and advice of legal counsel, their presence is allowed under the First Amendment. It is a very analogous situation to the installation of the blue news boxes throughout the Village. We are very mindful of the First Amendment implications and do not want to be in the position of some of our neighboring communities who were forced to settle for tens of thousands of dollars for illegal removal or regulation of such activity.

And finally, I want to acknowledge the 97<sup>th</sup> birthday of our resident, Mildred McLearn. Mildred is one of the reasons why you should live in our Village. She is on top of every issue and reads everything with an eye on how it will affect her beloved Village. Her sustained love and concern for our Village is an inspiration to me. Some people want to “Be like Mike”, I want to be like Mildred – 97, smart, concerned and loving her hometown.