Mayor’s Column

February 8, 2016

Immediately following the upcoming winter break, the Bronxville School District, in cooperation with the Village and the Police Department, will have off duty police officers at the School’s Midland Avenue and Pondfield Road entrances at morning drop off and afternoon pick up times.

The goal is to provide a much smoother traffic flow for school parents as well as drivers using these two routes. Most importantly, the police presence will aid in the enforcement of vehicle and traffic laws that will contribute to the safety of all children near the school.

The officers will be in uniform. Their main function will be to direct fluid traffic flow and safe pedestrian passage. They are also able to discharge all of their duties if they observe other violations including illegal texting and cell phone usage and jay walking. Their presence will eliminate the double parking on Pondfield Road as well as the standing on Midland Avenue from Masterton Road to the Pondfield Road intersection.

In conjunction with the roll out of this new plan, Police Chief Satriale discussed a host of safety issues with Bronxville School parents at the February Elementary School Council Meeting.

As an attendee at the meeting, I took note of all of the questions asked as I am certain the concerns of the parents attending echo those of the community at large.

Topics included condition of sidewalks, snow removal procedures to increase sightlines, speed bumps as traffic calmers, improved pedestrian passage at the Midland/Pondfield intersection, and enforcement of speed, cell phone usage and texting while driving laws.

As to sidewalk maintenance, homeowners are responsible for all sidewalks that abut their property including snow removal and re-pavement to facilitate pedestrian passage. If you notice a sidewalk needing attention, contact the Village’s Building Department and staff will issue a “notice to cure.” No monetary penalties attach unless the notice is ignored.

On the subject of snow removal, the Village recently purchased a truck attachment that allows the operator to propel the snow via a chute off the right of way. The result is a wider clean road surface area and increased sight lines as banks of snow will be eliminated. The end result is an increase in visibility for drivers and pedestrians.

Speed bumps as a traffic calming devices are not designed for our narrow Village streets. Virtually every speed bump you see is improperly installed. Speed bumps that meet legal standards must be marked with a series of signs leading up to the bump itself and then the bump and adjacent lines must be painted in neon road paint – unsightly at best.

After sustained observation, the Police Chief has determined they will not have the desired effect on our roads, rather increased speed enforcement is the preferred solution.

Our most heavily traveled intersection, that at Pondfield and Midland, is currently under study by a traffic engineer hired by the Village. The goal is a plan/configuration that will increase pedestrian safety while crossing and with it hopefully encourage more walking to schools and the business district. We expect study recommendations to be delivered in early Spring.

During the approximately thirty days surrounding the recent holiday season, our police force added an extra officer and patrol car to increase enforcement of speeding, crossing double yellow lines, texting and cellular phone use laws with a focus on the business district.

Unfortunately, far too many tickets were issued for unsafe behaviors. This monthly enforcement concentration effort has been built into the Village budget and other neighborhoods will become the focus going forward.

In point of clarification, there were indeed three events involving pedestrian injury from December 9th to January 20th. Two residents sustained bumps and bruises, while a third sustained significant injuries requiring hospital care. All of the accidents were in daylight with drivers traveling at low speed and not related to double parking, traffic, inadequate signage, other street conditions or cell phone usage. Two accidents happened while the pedestrians were in marked cross walks.

That being said, one accident is one too many and we remind drivers to be conscious of the School Zones throughout the Village and the many pedestrians in our walking Village.