

Mayor's Column
October 2, 2017

Our village to-do list, though well crossed out, has many more items to address. Some are small quality of life improvements while others are multi-million dollar initiatives.

Long in need of maintenance and regretfully on the back burner for decades, our Public Works Garage is truly crumbling. Not renovated since its construction in 1942, the roof now leaks, bathrooms subpar and the work bays no longer hold modern equipment.

Though neither sexy nor noticeable, a revamping of our entire Public Works operation on Palumbo Place is long overdue. Currently our equipment is stored outdoors, effectively cutting its life expectancy in half. In addition, our staff is often trying to repair vehicles or wash trucks while cars are whizzing by. The respect for our employees requires us to provide them with the safest workplace possible. A new building, whatever permutation it may take, will be a model of green initiatives appropriate to the functions required. In doing so, we hope to be eligible for New York State grants we have researched relating to solar/LED innovations. Also with an eye towards eco-stewardship, our Library Board has undertaken a feasibility study to determine the potential benefits/cost savings to retrofitting the heating and cooling system to geo-thermal.

Two of our open spaces need our attention this fall. Due to its intensive use, Sagamore Play Park needs new matting materials in many play spaces, new fencing and constant upgrades of potential safety hazards and border landscaping. Again, the materials used will be environmentally friendly and most importantly child safe.

A true oasis of almost two acres of open space, straddling Kensington and Sagamore Roads, Bacon Woods is currently a diamond in the rough and needs a deserved “make-over.” Our arborist will be fertilizing and aerating the open field nearest Beechtree Lane in the coming week as well as pruning the majestic beech tree, that so names the street. We are reviewing a bid for resurfacing the pathways with a porous environmentally friendly surface. We also seek to irrigate the area so any new plantings can realistically thrive. I invite you to visit this Zen park as it is truly the hidden gem of the Village.

Also on the fall docket is a technological overall of our Village website to make it more user friendly, informative and comprehensive with links to more Village agencies and services.

In response to residents’ requests, in the next few days the Village will be placing portable digital speed signs in three locations: Midland Avenue southbound near Vine Street; Pondfield Road westbound near the Gramatan Avenue intersection and Tanglewylde Avenue in the vicinity of Summit Avenue.

Solar powered and easily transportable, the devices can be programmed to display other traffic messages as well.

Certainly smaller in scope, but incredibly important to the Village character, are aesthetic improvements including the landscaping near our JFK Memorial and Giving Garden, power washing of our receptacles and even a polishing of our commemorative plaques and benches to remember the history and generosity of those who gave us those lasting gifts.

In the same vein, you may have seen an incredibly odd machine recently on Park Place. So named the “Gum Buster” it can clean the thousands of dark gum spots that mar our sidewalks and create a very

unattractive urban look. We plan on cleaning all the business district sidewalks and then loaning the machine to merchants to help maintain a cleaner look as the small things do matter.

We are again trying to forge an agreement with Metro North about what is exactly the Village's property/responsibility, and if not under our domain, how we can still accomplish the needed repairs and updating. We have some money in our budget to improve the environs around the station but issues of liability and union job territories weigh in the mix. Truly one of the most unattractive links to the two sides of our Village - a view shared by every planner and small business consultant - we will continue to negotiate needed upgrades.

And finally, the new tear drop lights purchased to better illuminate the West Side near the train station and the traffic circle will be installed just in time to mitigate the affect of the day lights savings time switch.