

MAYOR MARVIN'S COLUMN

Many of you have reached out to Village Hall alerting us that the Census forms have Yonkers 10708 as the address. In light of the fact that most State, Federal and school aid is predicated on the Census tally, we are very concerned about the accuracy of the numbers for our Village. We are under the impression that the bar code pinpoints our addresses as Bronxville and that the mailing or regional center for organizational purposes only is Yonkers.

However due to the importance of the count, we already have reached out to officials at the Census Bureau, Congresswoman Lowey and State Senator Klein to alert them to the issue. As of press time, we have not received confirmation that the bar code does indeed pinpoint the Village so I will be sending an e-mail alert as soon as we receive an explanation.

Over the past few years, many residents have expressed opinions about the lighting in our Village particularly concerning the level of illumination as it relates to safety and the energy efficiency of the lighting in the business district.

Given the broad based interest, we have been reviewing our entire lighting grid and learning about options and the associated costs.

The historical, ornamental globe lights throughout our downtown use incandescent bulbs with a wattage of 189 and currently all poles are at maximum illumination. To increase the intensity of light would require a reconfiguration of each fixture.

Though quite beautiful, the globe lights are the most inefficient in terms of both energy and maintenance. Under the best conditions, the bulbs can burn for up to 8,000 hours. However, since they contain a fragile filament, they are often burned out by wind, rain or snow conditions. As a result, a team of our Department of Public Works staff spends three days per week repairing fixtures and replacing bulbs.

Approximately two years ago, we retro-fitted the fixture base of one of the globes outside of the Post Office. It is a metal halide bulb that emits two times the illumination of the incandescent bulbs at half the wattage with a much longer life than 8,000 hours. Since it is also filament free, it has not needed to be replaced in two years, saving on maintenance as well. However, just in the two years since its installation, there is even more

advanced technology to re-fit our fixtures both in terms of energy savings and illumination quality.

As an additional experiment, just last month we fitted two of the standard telephone pole lights on Cedar Street near St. Joseph's with LED (light emitting diode) bulbs. They emit more illumination at 60 watts now than they did with 189 watt incandescent bulbs and have a life of 100,000 hours vs. the 8,000 of the incandescent bulb.

The LED lights have an added advantage because of the multitude of diodes - in our fixtures 30 - that will continue to illuminate even if several burn out. This provides a particularly important safety reason to use LED bulbs in traffic lights and pedestrian walk fixtures.

We are also testing a QL light – which is a system using the principles of induction and gas discharge in a lamp design - on a mounted fixture on a telephone pole on Northwestway. This variety of light is also filament free and energy efficient with a life of 100,000 hours.

We estimate that a change from incandescent bulbs to any energy efficient bulb from the gradient of possibilities would cut our energy costs by 60% yearly translating into a savings of over \$60,000 per year, close to a full tax point. This savings does not even factor in the additional costs of labor and material for repairs and replacement.

The downside is that in order to achieve this savings, we would need a capital outlay of approximately \$400,000 to retro fit all of our existing light sources. This number does not assume any additional fixtures or poles beyond the 420 existing in the Village.

Given the current economic climate, this capital expenditure is not on the immediate horizon but is a project that must be addressed given the current costs, safety concerns and the need to be prudent stewards of our energy use.

We will address the business district first but our residential lighting is also incandescent bulbs of 100 watts with the fragile filament subject to weather conditions. Our police officers on the night shift compile a written report of bulb outages that is delivered to our Department of Public Works crew daily. If you do not see a bulb replaced within a few days, it means there is an additional problem that requires a Con Edison crew because we are very diligent about bulb replacement due to the important safety factor.

We have applied for stimulus money through NYSERTA, the State energy agency and we have put in a project request with Congresswoman Lowey for the \$400,000 outlay.

I invite you to share your ideas/reactions to what we are currently testing as well as offer suggestions for lighting options going forward or direct us to communities that we may want to emulate. Just e-mail me at mayor@vobny.com. We are always looking for best practices and equipment especially in this ever evolving technology.