

MAYOR'S COLUMN

This past week, the Village Board of Trustees met in special session to review our options concerning the WCI development contract for Kensington Road. We did not extend their agreement in June, nor agree to any modifications of terms in the original contract, but have continued a constructive dialog since then.

Counsel had advised us going forward that it was in the best interest of the Village to enter into a combined extension/termination agreement with WCI, which the Board ratified at the July 25th meeting. The agreement, on one hand, will provide WCI with one final opportunity to provide the Village with a 100% completion bond for construction of the entire project, while at the same time providing a clear and unequivocal termination of the contract. Counsel further advised that this agreement will provide the Village with maximum legal protection if WCI cannot withstand current market trends and accompanying financial conditions. WCI has given the Village a non-refundable \$25,000 payment for this combined extension/termination agreement which will expire automatically on August 29, 2008.

Our objective throughout was to place the Village in the strongest possible position by maximizing our protection whatever the ultimate financial state of WCI. We believe this agreement accomplishes that.

At the same meeting, the Board appointed James Murray as an alternate to the Planning Board to replace William Kelsey who is moving out of the Village. We thank them both for their commitment to serving Village government.

The Planning Board takes on an added role this summer as they embark on a review and revision of the Village Community Plan. The Plan, originally adopted in the late 1980's, is revisited every five years per Village directive. It encompasses a study of all aspects of Village life: zoning changes or updating; preservation or development of open space, transportation needs, and population and demographic changes, just to name a few. One issue that I know will be addressed is the need to codify regulations pertaining to the installation of residential generators, something that was not on our radar five years ago.

The Community Plan aids Village government in setting goals and prioritizing needs. It is an opportunity to review where we were, where we are and where we want to be as a Village – in essence an organized vision. Frank Fish, a Certified Planner, who wrote the original community plan, will assist us again this year. The Planning Board will begin its review the first week of August.

In our continuing efforts to “Go Green” in the Village, we have decided to initiate a pilot program providing free scooter parking for Bronxville residents near the train station. Thanks goes to two Village residents, John Knox and Joe Landy, who suggested the idea to encourage less auto traffic in the business district, while at the same time reducing fuel consumption. Bronxville residents who own scooters simply need to come to our parking office to receive a free Village decal entitling them to park in the Avalon lot adjacent to the southbound entrance of Metro North.

This is our second initiative following the repainting of all crosswalks to encourage more walking as well as the use of smaller vehicles, bicycles and scooters thereby decreasing congestion and pollution. Depending upon the response, we will consider adding new locations for increased convenience.

Village government wants to lead by example and we continue to be open to any suggestions from residents to make our Village more pedestrian friendly and energy efficient.

Sadly this past week Village government lost one of its finest members with the death of Kathy Studwell, Director of our Senior Citizens Program. Kathy held that post in the Village for almost 33 years. Under her leadership, membership expanded to over 400 members. Intellectual program offerings as well as community outreach were hallmarks of her tenure.

Kathy was a lady of grace and talent and she will be so very missed. The Senior Citizens Council will be dedicating benches in her memory on the Library grounds this Thursday, July 31st at 11:30AM. All are welcome to attend to honor this great lady.

This will be the last column until after Labor Day. With so many residents out of town, it makes sense to save important information until school reopens.

I wish you a safe and happy summer.