NEWS FROM THE TOWN OF PENFIELD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dedication of the Richard H. “Dick” Vendel Memorial Rain Garden
May 16, 2019 at DPW complex 1607 Jackson Road

PENFIELD, N.Y., APRIL 30, 2019—The Town of Penfield will dedicate its Public Works facility rain garden in memory of Richard H. “Dick” Vendel (1953–2017) on Thursday, May 16 at 1:00 PM at 1607 Jackson Road. The community is welcome to join the Vendel family and town officials at the dedication ceremony.

The newly named Richard H. Vendel Memorial Rain Garden was installed in 2007. It was designed by Zaretsky and Associates, Inc. with engineering by Mark Valentine, Town Engineer. Dick Vendel, a valued town employee for nearly 30 years, was the construction manager for the innovative stormwater management project and was involved in every aspect of site preparation and installation.

Rain gardens are planted areas designed to capture and manage excess rainwater run-off and melted snow. They are usually placed in low-lying areas located near an impervious surface (like a parking lot or driveway) or structure. They are designed to reproduce natural water retention and filtration.

Native plant materials are selected for their water tolerance and ability to naturally filter substances like salt and solvents in rainwater. Plants are typically those you would find in a wetland setting including grasses, shrubs and trees. Rain gardens can be as simple as a few well-chosen plants placed near a home’s downspout or an elaborate large-scale design for a public or commercial setting.

The town’s now mature one-third acre rain garden has an extensive underground drainage system that directs stormwater from a high point at one end to a low point at the opposite end. As stormwater travels, it passes through plantings that filter and improve water quality before it becomes groundwater at that site, which is adjacent to the Thousand Acre Swamp.

“We periodically look at water samples from this garden. I’m pleased to share that the rain garden is working as designed,” said Town engineer Mark Valentine. “Stormwater is usually brown and murky as it enters the garden, and it’s visibly clear as it exits.”

Supervisor Tony LaFountain adds, “Dick Vendel brought the rain garden to life. His love of nature and connection to this sustainability project were key to its success. People who know about and appreciate this garden think of Dick Vendel when they pass by. It is fitting that we honor his memory with this dedication.”

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