Several weeks ago I shared with you that a project is underway at our Department of Public Works Complex at 1607 Jackson Road. Diseased and dying trees were removed, and the red barn—which had surpassed its useful purpose—was demolished to make way for a new and more efficient structure. The site is prepared, the contract has been awarded, and construction should begin over the next two to four weeks. As you may recall, Senator Rich Funke secured a New York State grant on behalf of Penfield so that we could undertake this project.

Additionally, later this month you will see activity on our long-awaited solar photovoltaic farm to the south of the DPW facility. After years of planning, the project has recently cleared RG&E’s procedures and we are ready to begin installation.

The project is being managed by Larsen Engineers for funding through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority’s (NYSERDA) NY-Sun solar PV incentive program for grid-connected solar photovoltaic systems.

The Penfield Town Board, Energy and Environmental Energy Advisory Committee (EEAC), and staff have been working with Larsen Engineering to explore the concept and then design, fund, and implement the solar array. Like many municipal solar installations, this solar array will be financed through a solar power purchase agreement (PPA)—an agreement in which a developer is responsible for the design, permitting, financing and installation of a solar energy system on a customer’s property.

Cleanup, layout, and grading are nearly complete, and beginning around June 25 you will see installation of a perimeter fence around the solar array area. Following that, crews will install racks, panels, and wiring. RG&E will install five poles on the property to connect to transformers. We expect connection to the utility grid, commissioning, and testing in the early fall.

Once online, the system is expected to generate 1.2 million kilowatt hours of renewable energy annually, enough to offset approximately 75 percent of the Town of Penfield’s electrical usage at our three major facilities: the town hall, community center, and DPW campus. This is the equivalent of powering 120 households for a year.

This project will provide power for the Town of Penfield at a fixed rate for the next 20 years. I will continue to provide project updates in my weekly column and a forthcoming project page, both available at www.penfield.org.

Mark your calendars for the annual Independence Day celebration in Penfield to be held on Saturday, June 30. The parade starts at 10:00 AM; the route begins at Penfield high school, proceeds through the Four Corners, and ends at the community center on Baird Road. We are once again honored to have Mr. Don Alhart as the Parade Emcee, and this year’s Parade Marshal is retired Sheriff Patrick M. O’Flynn.

Later in the day, music, food, and fun will run from 5:00 to 10:30 PM at Harris Whalen Park with music by Black Rabbit and Dog House. Food trucks will be on hand to provide a variety of food and snacks, and the always popular fireworks will begin at 10:00 PM. I hope to see you all there!

On behalf of the Town Board, I would like to recognize all the Penfield students who will be moving from elementary to junior high, from junior high to high school, and also graduating seniors who are off to college or on to explore the next chapter of their lives. Congratulations and best wishes to all!

Until next week enjoy the summer weather!

Tony

supervisor@penfield.org