



## NEWS FROM THE TOWN OF PENFIELD

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### **Deputy Supervisor's Note: Town exploring construction of new DPW facility**

**April 17, 2023** - The Town of Penfield provides a variety of services to the Penfield community, but by far the largest and most critical services are those provided by the Department of Public Works. The DPW is truly the backbone of our operations.

Not only is the DPW the backbone of operational effectiveness, but it's also the area where the most taxpayer money is spent. In total, roughly 40% of the Town of Penfield budget is devoted to DPW operations annually.

With that said, the DPW facility needs serious upgrades. To address this, the Penfield Town Board began working with MRB Group to explore potential options for the DPW facility in 2017.

As of now, a general project proposal has been drafted, and we are taking the next step in the process to make sure we can continue to meet the needs of our community. Current plans call for a new facility to be built and located adjacent to the current facility on Jackson Road. The proposal would not require the acquisition of any additional land.

#### **Why a new facility?**

For those who may not have seen or been in the current DPW facility, it is showing its age and does not meet the needs of our staff or the community. The facility was originally constructed in 1957 when Penfield had roughly 13,000 residents (now just shy of 40,000). It also lacks modern safety systems to protect the valuable assets (equipment) that the facility houses.

In its current state, renovating the facility is not cost-effective, nor feasible, and does not address the inadequacies outlined below:

- Undersized
  - Insufficient space for the size of current equipment and department fleet
    - Some equipment must be parked outside in the elements, resulting in additional wear and tear, ultimately shortening its useful life
  - Mechanic shop lacks space and needs upgrades to maintain the current fleet size

*News from Penfield, page two of two*

- Staff areas such as offices, locker rooms, and the break room were designed to serve roughly half of the current staffing levels
  - Roughly 50 employees now work at DPW
  - Lack of locker room facility for female employees
- Structural deterioration
  - Ongoing repairs are needed to keep the building operational, costing taxpayers
- Lack of fire suppression system

Each issue presents a unique challenge to our DPW staff and our community. The construction of a new DPW facility protects our critical assets and greatly improves operating efficiency.

**Next steps**

In the coming months, we will continue moving the process forward. This will include further discussions by the Town Board, work with MRB, and the opportunity for the community to share input. We plan to provide virtual and in-person tours of the facility to allow residents to see firsthand why there is an urgent need for a new facility. We will also share more detailed information on the associated costs and how the project will be funded.

As a Town Board, no matter what we do, we will be fiscally responsible while ensuring we meet the needs of our community.

In the meantime, for information on the proposed DPW facility, [please visit our website](#).

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions you might have.

*Debbie Drawe, Deputy Supervisor*

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