



Shoreward Drive/Welwyn Road Concept Plans Presented

The Village of Great Neck Plaza Board of Trustees actively seeks numerous avenues to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Plaza and the greater Great Neck community. From transit-oriented development that encourages and enhances the downtown business



As part of the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) project at Shoreward Drive/Welwyn Road, a new public plaza will be created adjacent to the United States Post Office at 1 Welwyn Road. The above plan is just one concept design being considered for the public plaza.

district as a central hub for shopping and dining, while utilizing the area's transportation resources, measures that make the Village a more walkable community, and the creation and adoption of a Climate Action Plan that will work to reduce the carbon footprint of the community, the Plaza has embraced practices that will make the Great Neck Plaza of tomorrow a better place.

More than any measure, however, the desire to make the Plaza a safer and more walkable place for pedestrians and motorists has been one that the Board has put into action numerous times over the last decade and a half. From an improved roundabout at Barstow Road that controls and improves the flow of traffic, the elimination of a lane on Great Neck Road to reduce the speeds of motorists, bulb-out crosswalk extensions throughout the Village that cut down on the crosswalk length that pedestrians have to walk, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety enhancements at the Great Neck train station, the Village of Great Neck Plaza has been a leading proponent on traffic calming in the Long Island Region. These projects have been made possible through multiple

grants that the Village has been awarded through the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), with many of these projects being lauded by various organizations.

The next project of this nature that the Plaza will be undertaking is the Shoreward Drive/

Welwyn Road Pedestrian and Bicyclist Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) project. Secured through a \$838,000 grant awarded to the Village by NYSDOT in January of 2014, the TEP project will promote safer pedestrian, cycle and transit use in the Shoreward Drive/Welwyn Road area. On February 3rd, a public meeting was held at Village Hall regarding the proposed designs plans and to solicit input from the general public. At the public information meeting, engineers from Lockwood, Kessler & Bartlett, P.C. and The RBA Group, the Village's two engineering consultants, went over in detail the two concept plans that will be considered in regards to enhancements to the roadway and several improved plaza designs at the U.S. Post Office on Welwyn Road.

As part of the improvements to the area, pedestrian and motorist safety features were identified, such as an enhanced raised crosswalk from Shoreward Drive to Welwyn Road near Shop Delight, raised medians to prevent motorists from making illegal U-turns and crossing over into oncoming lanes of traffic, and curb bulb

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VILLAGE ELECTION NOTICE

Mark your calendar to come out and vote in the Village Election on Tuesday, March 15th from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Two Trustees positions and the position of the Mayor will be up for election for terms of two years each. The polling location: Great Neck Plaza Village Hall, 2 Gussack Plaza.

Free parking will be reserved in the surface lot across from Village Hall in spots designated for voters.

Message from the Mayor

Dear Friends,

As a village in New York State, we continue to face significant fiscal pressures from reduced state aid and unfunded mandates, the most significant being the adoption in June of 2011 of the state real property tax cap. For years prior to the tax cap being in effect, the Village Board and this administration have maintained budgets with a “zero” increase in your local village taxes. We are proud of a six-year consecutive record of no increases in the village tax rate in the fiscal budgets from 2008-09 to 2013-14. In the last three years’ budgets, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17, the Board has approved only minor tax increases, all under 2 percent, and staying within the state’s allowable tax levy limit. We have been able to stay within the tax cap, which many other Long Island villages have not been able to do, by being conservative fiscal managers, ensuring we project realistic revenues and balance our budgets. We have endeavored to find ways to make cost-saving measures; by implementing technology advances to deliver services more efficiently, consolidating staff across departments, and trimming expenses where possible, despite increasing costs. All the while, we have refrained from not cutting back on local services to balance our budget. We feel it’s important to maintain the quality of village services that our residents have come to enjoy and want. For example, residential garbage collection is still picked up three days a week.

What this means is that Plaza residents will be receiving a state refund check, which will arrive in the mail, because your local village government has complied, stayed within the tax cap, and submitted an efficiency plan to the state that outlines steps we have taken pursuant to the tax cap, such as partnering with other levels of government and implementing programs that are not duplicative at the local level. By doing so we have achieved, I believe, a level of efficiency that far exceeds that of the state and federal governments. We don’t know when you will be receiving the refund check since checks will be issued directly by New York State. We have no control over the timing of when these refund checks will be issued.

Let me assure you that our fiscal austerity has not resulted in deferring critical needs and we are continuing to maintain and upgrade our infrastructure; rehabilitating our parking lots, repaving and enhancing our roadways, obtaining new equipment and repairing or enhancing other village facilities. We have been moving forward on implementing infrastructure projects through securing

grant monies from various state and county agencies, such as the New York State Department of Transportation, the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation and Nassau County Office of Community Development. This has enabled us to leverage local tax dollars and, thus, we have avoided increasing debt and not had to bond for these improvements.

Our financial outlook is strong and we remain one of the highest rated villages in Nassau County and not facing any fiscal stress warning, as determined by the New York State Comptroller’s Office. Our annual fiscal stress score, which is based on a 3-yr. trend analysis, has remained at a low, excellent score of 6.7% since 2012, which is a designation of “No Designation” or an indication that the Village is not experiencing fiscal stress conditions. A score of 45% or higher is the level that contains three fiscal stress warning categories—Susceptible, Moderate or Significant fiscal stress. We are proud of our rating, which is not even close to any of the warning levels developed to score New York State municipalities and school districts.

Other good news is a new supermarket, Best Market, has opened in the Gardens of Great Neck shopping center. The store premises were renovated after Waldbaum’s closed and now it has beautiful new floors, bright lighting and new ceiling tiles, and freshly painted bright walls. We welcomed Best Market to the community in a ribbon cutting ceremony on February 12 and we wish them nothing but much success. Best Market is a Long Island based supermarket chain owned by the Raitses family for more than 25 years, with more than 25 stores in operation and that number is growing. They are looking to service the needs of the community and with a local neighborhood approach and philosophy; we hope that will serve us well.

On Groundhog Day, Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow, which according to tradition, means that an early spring is predicted. Let’s hope so and we look forward to signs of spring coming our way soon.

Happy spring and we hope you are enjoying the longer daylight hours!



Jean Celender

VGNP Citizens Advisory Committee Update

In 2014, The Village of Great Neck Plaza formed a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to assist in the development of policies and projects for the Village's involvement in the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities. AARP has noted that Great Neck Plaza's residents are aging such that older adults aged 50 and above will become an increasingly larger percentage of the population over the next 20 to 25 years. Across the U.S., our aging "baby boomers" (people born during the post-war II demographic between the years 1946 and 1964) is the cohort of seniors aged between 51 and 70 as of 2016. The 2010 Census shows that 48.5% of the village's total population of 6,707 are age 50 or older; 30.5% are 65 or older; and 9.7% are 85 or older. As these senior groups want to remain active and healthy and age in place gracefully, the Village needs to plan for the aging of our seniors in the Village and to serve the needs of these adults, and residents of all ages, to sustain economic and social vitality.

Additionally, we are proud to have been the first village in the U.S. to join onto this AARP livability communities program, and pledge the Village Board's support for this initiative. The AARP Public Policy Institute recently released a finding that the Village of Great Neck Plaza is ranked the #1 most 'livable community' on Long Island. The

Plaza has a Livability Index of 70 (out of a total 100 points), which is the highest index rating of all LI communities. AARP ranks a livable community, as a place which is "safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers

all residents and especially to allow them to age and live more comfortably and with support efforts in their community. The Plaza's high Livability Index is an indication that the our policies and programs over the years have improved livability and quality of life.



Members of the Plaza's AARP Citizens Advisory Committee at a recent meeting discussing next steps for a Draft Age-Friendly Community Action Plan being prepared for the Village of Great Neck Plaza. Seated from L. to R.: Jack Kott, AARP Representative and North Hempstead Town Liaison, Gerry Morgan, Cindi Frank, Robyn Ferrari, and Bernie Natt.

supportive community features and services." AARP has its interactive feature online to analyze and measure different indicators that make up the Livability Index that scores every neighborhood and community in the U.S. The main categories analyzed to create the Livability Index include housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. So you can check out the Plaza's Livability Index, and other communities, at www.livabilityindex.aarp.org.

The AARP hopes that the Livability Index will be a useful web-based tool to help communities see areas for improvement in order to benefit

Stated Mayor Jean Celender "We are pleased of the Plaza's high livability rating from the AARP. We have developed over the past decade a comprehensive plan to implement over \$4.5 million dollars of traffic calming improvements and other infrastructure enhancements to increase our walkability and address quality of life issues. Notwithstanding a present high index score, there's room for improvement and attaining an even higher rating. The Plaza's CAC is looking at these indices and providing ideas, suggestions and assisting the Village in the development of recommendations for projects to improve the livability of Great Neck Plaza."

If you are interested in serving on this CAC, or getting involved on one of the Village's Resident Committees, please contact Brian Hetey, Mayor's Assistant, at (516) 482-4500. Please include your contact information and a brief statement on why you want to serve.



Plaza Businesses Among the 'Best;' Bethpage Bank's 'Best of L.I.' Competition Announces the Winners

In any competition, whether it is sports, politics, or just about any contest that pits several entries against one another, the ultimate goal is always the same thing; taking home the top prize and being picked as the best option. While many of these tournaments can get quite intense and fiery, they can also be fun and exciting. One competition that falls into the latter description is one that is very close to home for Long Islanders; Bethpage Bank and Long Island Press' annual 'Best of Long Island' poll. All across Nassau and Suffolk Counties, people will undoubtedly tell you their unbiased opinion as to where you can find the best of any product across many different fields. And the best part about New Yorkers, everyone has their own opinion and won't be shy in telling that *they* know what qualifies as being the best of the best. Countless family dinners and gatherings of friends have undoubtedly led to animated conversations on the subject, hours on end, before conceding the best way to settle the debate is to agree to disagree.

For Bethpage Bank and Long Island Press, the only hope in ending the debates was to pose a simple question to the mass; 'Who is the best?' For the last 11 years, the two partners have been doing just that, polling millions across the Island to find out who is the best, and hopefully, put an end to a few debates in the process. After a lengthy nominating and voting process - more than 2,000,000 votes cast! - Bethpage Bank and Long Island Press have announced who is, according to Long Islanders, the 'Best of the Best.' And it brings us much joy to report that four Plaza businesses have been picked as the best! The four businesses are as follows:

- **Bareburger Great Neck Plaza** - Located at 32 Middle Neck Road, Bareburger was voted as having the best veggie burger on Long Island for the second year in a row! Carnivores and meat lovers flock to Bareburger as it is for their one of a kind burgers made with your choice of beef, ostrich, wild boar, lamb and elk, but vegetarians know there is something at the establishment for them as well. Besides their all-natural salads and sides, the appropriately named



'Barest Burger' is the dish that has been earning praise from our non-meat eating friends. Made from black beans, farmers quinoa, and your choice of a sweet potato or wild rice patty, not to mention all the toppings you can add, the 'Barest Burger' is rivaling some of Bareburger's meat-based burgers as the restaurant's most popular items. However, the only way to know how good the 'Barest Burger' is is to try it for yourself. Be sure to stop by Bareburger, located at 32 Middle Neck Road, Mondays through Fridays, between 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturdays, between 11 a.m. and 11 p.m., and Sundays, between 11 a.m. and 9 p.m. To view Bareburger's complete menu, please visit their website, 32-middle-neck-road.bareburger.com.

- **Dr. Itzhak Haimovic** - Reaffirming what many on the Great Neck Peninsula already know, Dr. Itzhak Haimovic was named the best neurologist on Long Island! Located at 170 Great Neck Road, this is the third year that Long Islanders have honored Dr. Haimovic with this praise. A nationally recognized board-certified neurologist, Dr. Haimovic has received many top honors for his work in the medical world. Specializing in epilepsy and musculoskeletal disease, it is not only his vast knowledge that has made him one of the most well-regarded doctors on Long Island, it is the personal connections and time that Dr. Haimovic makes for his patients. For more information on Dr. Itzhak Haimovic and his practice, please visit his website, www.neurolongisland.com.



- **Wild Ginger** - Located at 48 Great Neck Road, in the Gardens of Great Neck shopping center, Wild Ginger was named best fusion restaurant on Long Island! Walk into Wild Ginger and the first thing that greets you is the flavorful smells of the sweet and spicy dishes that keeps customers coming back for more. In addition to their traditional entrees, Wild Ginger's fusion dishes blend together the tastes of so many

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Four Plaza Businesses Bring Home the Gold

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delicious flavors, creating a dining experience you won't forget. For a complete view of Wild Ginger's menu, please visit their website, www.wildgingergreatneck.com, or stop by the restaurant, Mondays through Thursdays, between 12 Noon and 10 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays, between 12 Noon and 11 p.m., and Sundays, between 12 Noon and 10 p.m.



- **Tennis Junction** - Located at 43 Middle Neck Road, this is the second year in a row that Tennis Junction has been named Long Island's best tennis store! One of the Plaza's longtime mainstays of the community, Tennis Junction has been outfitting generations of families for all of their sporting needs. Whether it is tennis, baseball or soccer season, Tennis Junction has everything you could ask for and more. Even more than having all of the latest goods, Norman and

Rachel Lee, Tennis Junction's owners, treat customers like family, taking the time to make sure that the customer's needs are met and their experience is a pleasant one. The qualities and characteristics of the Lees and Tennis Junction is a testament as to why they were named the best tennis store on Long Island. Don't take our word for it, though. Be sure to stop at Tennis Junction, located at 43 Middle Neck Road, browse all the great sporting gear, and say hello to Norman and Rachel. For more information on Tennis Junction, please call (516) 487-1515.

The Plaza couldn't be happier for these businesses being named the 'Best of the Best.' Each business is a valued member of the Great Neck Plaza community, and we wish to congratulate them on their success. Make sure you visit these great businesses to see what the rest of Long Island already knows, and congratulate them yourselves.

For a full list of all the winners in over 450 different categories, visit Bethpage Bank and Long Island Press' 'Best of Long Island' website, bestof.longislandpress.com.

Purchase/Renew Your 2nd Quarter Parking Permit!

Don't forget, residential, commercial and commuter permit holders, the first day you can purchase your 2nd quarter parking permits is Friday, March 18th! The grace period for 1st quarter parking permits ends on April 10th. Permit holders who do not have a valid parking permit after the grace period risk receiving a parking violation.

For those interested in purchasing a residential, commercial or commuter permit in the Village's Plaza Centre or Maple garages for the 2nd quarter parking period, please visit the Village's Building Department between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 12 Noon and 1 p.m. Anyone applying for a permit must bring in their current driver's license and registration. Plaza residents whose driver license does not reflect a valid Plaza address must provide documented proof of

GREAT NECK PLAZA	
MAKE	
PERMIT NO.	
PLATE NO.	
EXP. DATE	

residency (utility bills or bank statements) and/or a letter from the co-op or apartment board president stating that you live at the Plaza address claimed. Those people applying for a commercial (business owner or employee) parking permit

must provide proof from their employer validating their employment. Currently, commercial and residential parking permits are \$90 per quarter.

For those applying for commuter parking permits, be aware these permits are limited and processed on a first-come, first-serve basis, and may be done so only in person at Village Hall. Once all commuter permits have been issued, people will be placed on a waiting list. The price for a commuter permit is \$250 per quarter.

Permits can be purchased via check or money order, payable to 'Village of Great Neck Plaza,' or credit card. Cash payments will not be accepted. For more information, please call Village Hall at (516) 482-4500.

April is Poetry Month; 6th Annual VGNP Poetry Contest Awards Reading Day, April 17th

In honor of Poetry Month, which takes place each April, the Village of Great Neck Plaza will once again be hosting our Annual Awards Reading Day on **Sunday, April 17th, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., at Village Hall**. The sixth reading day since the Village's poetry contest began, the event will be held in conjunction once again with Long Island Traditions and our Poetry Coordinator, Carolyn Raphael. The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.



Winners of the 6th Annual Poetry Contest will be announced on the Village's website on March 31, 2016. The person tasked with picking this

year's winners is George Held, a prolific poet and popular reader of his work. He is a retired Queens College English professor and was a Fulbright lecturer in Czechoslovakia. Author of

poems, translations, stories, and book review, he has published in the *New York Quarterly*, *Commonweal*, *Confrontation*, *Review*, among others. He had poems included in over three dozen anthologies. His twentieth poetry collection, *Neighbors: The Water Critters*, was published by Filsinger & Co. in 2015.

So in celebration of Poetry Month, be sure to join us for an afternoon of award-winning poetry. For additional information regarding the Village's 6th Annual Poetry Contest Awards Reading Day, please contact Village Hall at (516) 482-4500.

2016 Spring Restaurant Week Dates Announced

Thinking about the upcoming spring season may be hard for Great Neckers to visualize considering some of us are still trying to shake off the memories of the snowstorms that have hit our area, but we have some great news that will help the tail end of the winter season go by faster. Along with the Plaza's Business Improvement District (BID), we are happy to announce the dates for the 2016 Spring Restaurant Week have been finalized! From Sunday, April 24th, through Sunday, May 1st, Great Neckers will be able to enjoy some of their favorite meals at their favorite restaurants, all for a special set price. Though the restaurants participating in this spring's Restaurant Week have not been settled, Great Neckers can check the BID's website, www.shopgreatneck.com, periodically for the list of Plaza restaurants that will take part in this weeklong ode to great food and their prix fixe menus.



If you are a Plaza restaurant who would like to participate in Restaurant Week, be sure to contact the Plaza's Business Improvement District office at (516) 829-1301.

Spring Ahead & Check Your Detectors; Daylight Savings Begins March 13th

It's that time of year again; Daylight Savings Time is right around the corner, Sunday, March 13th. At 2 a.m., on the 13th, people will be springing ahead to 3 a.m. While the thought of losing an hour of precious sleep won't go over so well with some people, Daylight Savings Time means we will also be enjoying an extra hour of sunlight and sunsets in the evening hours.



Another thing to keep in mind when adjusting your clocks is to also change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Whereas fire departments will tell folks to do this change each November when we turn our clocks back, people often do forget to actually check their detectors. It is very important to make sure your detectors are in working order, as more often than not, they are your first line of defense in the case of an emergency.

So this March 13th, spring ahead and change those batteries if you have not recently done so!

VGNP Honors Four at Star Performer Ceremony

Every so often, the Village has the honor of recognizing individuals who go above and beyond in giving back to their fellow members of the community and enhance the quality of life through our Star Performer program. On January 21, 2016, the Village highlighted four individuals who have exemplified what it means to be a 'Star.' From an ace technology expert at the Great Neck Library to one of the Village's own, the Village of Great Neck Plaza couldn't be prouder to acknowledge those who make Great Neck Plaza a better place to work, shop, visit and live. Those who were honored as Star Performers are as follows:

- **Alajandro Baires**, Building Superintendent, 21 Barstow Road.



The Village honored four individuals who have gone above and beyond in making the Great Neck Plaza community an even better place than it is. From left to right (front, holding proclamations), the four 'Stars' are; Ana Quinones, Sandra Gonzalez, Alajandro Baires, and Kashmira Shah.

- **Sandra Gonzalez**, Building Porter, 21 Barstow Road.

- **Kashmira Shah**, Audio, Visual and Electronic Manager, Great Neck Library, Station Branch.

- **Ana Quinones**, Deputy Clerk, Village of Great Neck Plaza.

We would like to thank our Star Performers for all that they do for the Great Neck Plaza community, and wish them nothing but continued good fortune and success.

If you know someone who is a 'Star Performer,' please contact Village Hall at (516) 482-4500. The Plaza will be holding the next Star Performer Ceremony on Thursday, May 19th, at 9:30 a.m.

Shoreward Drive/Welwyn Road TEP Grant Update

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outs at the crosswalk near Shop Delight, and at the crosswalks on Shoreward Drive and Welwyn Road located at the Post Office. Additionally, new lane markings and "sharrow" (shared lane markings) to promote bicycling will be installed on the roadway in several locations to indicate to pedestrians and motorists alike the flow of traffic. New LED ornamental street lighting will be added that is both environmentally friendly and provides for more light.

Besides the pedestrian safety features that will be included in this project, several beautification enhancements will be made throughout the area. The sidewalks and curbing will be improved, with the sidewalk spanning from Barstow Road to the Post Office on Welwyn Road being upgraded with a brick walkway that will connect the area to the Plaza's brick sidewalks of the downtown business district. Furthermore, new trees and low-maintenance landscaping will adorn the improved crosswalks.

The focal point of the beautification aspect of this project calls for a new plaza space adjacent to the Post Office. The Plaza's engineers presented two concept plans for the area that will create upwards of 3,600 square feet of public space and seating. Concept one calls for new benches,

bistro tables and chairs, and an inner plaza with banded pavers. Additionally, up to six new trees will be planted at the plaza, along with decorative stone blocks and planters for flowers. In concept two, the plaza will have a mix of traditional benches and escofet 'flor' type seating, colored concrete designs, upwards of six trees, and a custom artistic fence at the roundabout that connects Welwyn Road and Shoreward Drive.

Addressing calls for more parking, concept one, the preferred concept plan, would add five additional parking stalls in this area, as well as a 36-foot dedicated truck loading zone for deliveries to local businesses.

The project is still in its design phase, with final designs expected to be submitted by November of 2016. After the construction bidding and award process is announced in February of 2017, work is expected to begin in April of 2017. It is estimated that construction will be completed by November of 2017. Members of the public can view the full presentation discussed at the February 3rd public information meeting by visiting the Village's website, www.greatneckplaza.net, and clicking on 'Traffic Calming Initiatives' on the right hand side of your screen. For more information about this project, please contact Village Hall at (516) 482-4500.

VILLAGE OF GREAT NECK PLAZA

2 Gussack Plaza, P.O. Box 440

Great Neck, NY 11022-0440

Phone: (516) 482-4500

FAX: (516) 482-3503

E-mail: info@greatneckplaza.net

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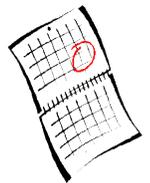
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We're on the web...
www.greatneckplaza.net

Dates to Remember:

- March 13 - Daylight Saving Time Begins, 2 a.m., Be sure to turn your clocks an hour ahead.
- March 15 - VGNP Election Day, Village Hall, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. (Free parking will be designated for voters)
- March 18 - 2nd Quarter Parking Permit Renewal Date, Village Hall, Doors open at 7:30 a.m.
- March 31 - Sixth Annual Poetry Contest winners announcement. Winners will be announced on the Village's website, www.greatneckplaza.net.
- April 17 - Sixth Annual Poetry Contest Awards Reading Day, Village Hall, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
- May 19 - VGNP Star Performer Ceremony, Village Hall, 9:30 a.m.



The Plaza Welcomes New Merchants

The Village is happy to welcome new businesses that are coming, have opened or have recently expanded their business within the Plaza. Stop in and greet these merchants and say "hello." They bring vitality, diversity and new services to our community. If you are a new storeowner in town, new management, or are celebrating a milestone anniversary, the Plaza would be happy to provide a free Ribbon Cutting Ceremony or help you celebrate your event. Just call the Mayor's Office at 482-4500. Some recent additions are:

- **Best Market** - 40 Great Neck Road, (516) 684-4020 ****Now Open**** For more information, visit their website, bestmarket.com.
- **Katerina Ristorante** - 20 South Station Plaza ****Coming Soon**** For more information, visit their website, www.katerinany.com.
- **Taeree's Gift Shop** - 7 North Station Plaza, (516) 778-2600 ****Now Open**** For more information, visit their website, taerees.com.
- **T-Swirl Crepe** - 71 Middle Neck Road ****Coming Soon**** For more information, visit their website, t-swirlcrepe.com.



Opening their doors for the first time on February 10th, the Village of Great Neck Plaza had the pleasure of officially welcoming Best Market to the Plaza community on February 12th. A family-owned company based in Bethpage, Long Island, the Raitses family operates 25 stores across New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.