



Tree initiative passes the 'Seventh Generation' principle

January 07, 2020

In 2006, Amherst went through a transformational change as the October Storm turned mature trees into roadblocks throughout the town. You can still see the evidence today.

As you drive any residential street, for every tall tree you pass, the next lot will have a new planting. That is why I was interested in Supervisor Brian Kulpa's vow to plant one million trees in the town over the next five years.

Prior to the October Storm, I lived on a street with a reasonably full canopy, and I do miss the shade on a summer walk. But the trees provide many more benefits. Mature trees add to the value of your home. Their shade provides energy savings for homeowners who don't need to run their air conditioners. Your lawns grow better under the tree-filtered sunlight (and also with less water).

But those would be personal benefits of the supervisor's tree planting plan. Trees benefit the environment by cleaning the air of pollutants. They sequester carbon dioxide and return oxygen to the atmosphere.

Living on the land of the Senecas, we would do well to remember the "Seventh Generation" principle codified in the laws of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. It says that in every decision, we must consider how it will affect our descendants seven generations into the future. I will not live long enough to benefit from a mature canopy of one million trees. But in a world

with rising temperatures, it will a create an oasis for my children's children.

With all of the planning initiatives that Supervisor Kulpa has started for the town, Amherst's million tree initiative may be seen as his crowning achievement if the region fulfills predictions from multiple media outlets and becomes a climate change haven for the rest of the United States.

John S. Szalasny

Teakwood Terrace

Williamsville