

# PORT CHESTER & RYE BROOK

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## Westmore NEWS

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## Rye Town downsizes

### ***Municipal garage to be sold to Rye Brook***

Claire K. Racine  
Reporter

After years of leasing the garage at 511 West William St., the Town of Rye has decided to sell it to the Village of Rye Brook for \$685,000.

As part of the town's plan to downsize, eliminating any surplus property and equipment to cut costs, selling the municipal garage was a logical first step as there was a potential buyer already lined up

"Since 1982 when Rye Brook became a village, we have been leasing the property to them for a dollar a year," said Town Attorney Paul Noto at the town meeting on Tuesday, June 18. "The Village of Rye Brook has been looking to purchase this property for a long time."

The property, which the town has owned since the 1930s, was zoned in the 1950s for a municipal garage, which is what Rye Brook has been using it as. Since then, however, the three-quarters of an acre property has been rezoned as two-family residential.

"We hired some real estate brokers to give us a sense of what the property might be worth on the open market," Noto said. If it were sold as residential acreage, which it would have to be as it is currently zoned R2F, the going value would be about \$600,000, less than the \$762,000 value for which Rye Town Assessor Mitchell Markowitz appraised the municipal garage.

"The advantage to the town, besides the fact that we are selling the property to one of our constituent villages, is the fact that the village is taking it as is, which means that any potential environmental issues relating to their use, the exposure will be born exclusively by the Village of Rye Brook," Noto said.

"We think this is a great deal, both for the town and the village," said Rye Brook Mayor Paul Rosenberg.

Rosenberg said the village plans to continue using the space as a highway garage but will likely replace the building.

"The structure is very old," he said. "We will probably end up demolishing it and rebuilding but keeping it as a garage."

The Rye Town Board, which voted unanimously to sell the West William Street garage to Rye Brook, expects to close on the sale with the Village of Rye Brook within two months.

The sale of surplus equipment was also approved by the town at its June 18 meeting at Rye Neck High School.

Because of outsourcing, the town does not need to retain excessive maintenance equipment and voted to offload about 20 items, including lawnmowers, pickup trucks and snow blowers. The list of items will be published soon in a public notice in the Westmore News so the public, particularly contractors, will know what is available. Once interest in the equipment is gauged, Supervisor Joe Carvin will identify the best way to sell it, possibly through a live auction.



The Town of Rye owned West William Street municipal garage has been approved for sale at \$685,000 to the Village of Rye Brook, which currently leases the property for \$1 a year.

Efforts to sell Rye Town Hall at 10 Pearl St. have also continued, with Councilwoman Christina Collins and Bishop Nowotnik, Rye Town facilities manager, spearheading the search for a new location for the town offices and court. Under consideration are 800 Westchester Ave. in Rye Brook, Gateway Plaza on South Main Street in Port Chester and the Port Chester Village Hall at 222 Grace Church St. The town estimates it would need 5,000 square feet or less for current operations, not including the court facilities. The town court, which uses the meeting room as a courtroom and has judicial offices and a prisoner holding pen on the third floor of 10 Pearl St., is the hardest part of the equation to solve.

Several potential landlords have balked at having the court in their buildings, Nowotnik said.

While the court will be the biggest hurdle, Collins, who is looking for a minimum five-year lease, said it is important to find the right space for the town.

"I want to make sure we're making an upward move," she said.