

Donna Conkling

From: M Otten <otten@alumni.princeton.edu>
Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 7:49 PM
To: Mayor
Cc: Donna Conkling; Scarsdale Editor
Subject: Re: Freightway Project

CAUTION: External sender.

Marc, thanks for your rapid and constructive response. I do look forward to the next cycle in what is bound to be a difficult but necessarily inclusive and iterative process.

Best, Mike

On Monday, December 16, 2019, 07:10:11 PM EST, Mayor <mayor@scarsdale.com> wrote:

Michael,

Thank you for your thoughtful email, for sharing the benefit of your experience in Scarsdale, and for your kind words.

The Village Board understands the importance of parking in our Village Center - now and under any redevelopment scenario. The Village also shared the Forum's Village Center study with the recipients of the RFP. The Board is interested in challenging the finalists to reduce the unit count to better suit the Village and its priorities.

The Board is also very focused on potential school impacts and, while it is the School District's decision whether to redistrict, the Village Board has and will continue to work with the District to understand and try to mitigate potential school impacts.

The Village Board and staff are obligated under the Village Code to disclose conflicts of interest and the Board and staff have been reminded of these obligations on a number of occasions.

Thank you, again, for your email and we hope to hear from you again as the process moves forward to a point at which we are better informed and are seeking to make a decision about the future of the Freightway site.

Best regards,

Marc

On Dec 14, 2019, at 4:06 PM, M Otten <otten@alumni.princeton.edu<mailto:otten@alumni.princeton.edu>> wrote:

CAUTION: External sender.

I attended the meeting last week, and I think it was very well handled by the Mayor. Thank you! I do appreciate that we are still at an early stage of the process, although narrowing the field to one partner might be a bit premature, given the sentiments we heard at the meeting. I do agree with some of the residents' comments, and will provide my personal input, as was graciously requested from all of us by the mayor:

1. I don't recall the original village survey (the guy sitting next to me at the meeting said he is a Garth Road shop owner, but had not been surveyed), but assume I filled it out, if it was well distributed (was the participation good?). Having said that, I am reminded that a Forum Downtown Revitalization survey found that, "residents want family friendly restaurants, wine bars, pubs, and recreation facilities." I would add to that the possibility of space for satellite medical facilities from either WestMed, NY Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital, Scarsdale Medical Group and/or White Plains Hospital, etc., understanding that the complexity of inter-relationships these days makes healthcare even more chaotic than before. As a further point, as a frequent visitor to Garth Road barber, grocery store and even some of the restaurants,

parking remains a nuisance, and Freightway is currently not part of the solution. When I go to Ruffled Feathers to pick up a chicken, I don't want Valet Parking! I also dislike that Eastchester has chosen to have its meters in effect until 7:00 pm. Thank you for keeping our meters active only until 6.

2. While I do understand the profitability argument by builders to have a large component of residential units, the risks to our schools' capacity is very real. I moved to Scarsdale just after the very controversial redistricting that occurred between Fox Meadow and Edgewood. That should have been an easy one, but was not. Before you undertake any initiative that risks changing school boundaries or requiring expansion, recognize both the cost and the political furor that will result. Please talk to some of the residents who were here in 1970 to understand just how tricky that can be. I wish Mayor Beverly Cunningham hadn't moved out of the District (probably due to the high taxes), as she was a superb mayor, but had her hands full when redistricting became necessary. At minimum, you should seek a way to reduce the number of residential units, and recognize the risk that they might be used by NYC folks as a way to get their children into our schools, as well as to avoid NYC income tax.

3. Finally, the issue of potential Conflict of Interest was raised. While I fully trust the good intentions of all of our trustees, I strongly recommend that the couple who are closely tied to the industry recuse themselves from votes, although their knowledge and expertise are undoubtedly of great value. While I agree that Christie Place was a great enhancement to our community, I do think that the tax break was inordinately generous and we should negotiate any partnership so that the current Scarsdale residents' value is optimized.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Otten (Former School Board Member and 48 years resident)
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Scarsdale, NY