

# CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**To:** Mayor, Board of Trustees and Village Manager

**From:** Conservation Advisory Council

**Re:** Freightway Development Project

**Date:** February 12, 2019

As Scarsdale considers the future of the Freightway parking garage and adjacent parcels of land, the Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) would like to offer a few thoughts on sustainability as it pertains to the new structures.

Scarsdale is well known as a leafy suburb with beautiful Tudor architecture, but we are also a community with a commitment to sustainability. Although many of the RFEI's submitted acknowledged the historic architecture of our village center, sustainability received less attention in the proposals submitted. So we, the CAC, would like to remind the Board and any potential developer of Scarsdale's commitment to sustainability and ask you to make sure that this commitment is reflected in the RFP for the Freightway project.

In Scarsdale, sustainability is part of our everyday life. We live it through municipal programs, in the schools, in many houses of worship and other local organizations. In the schools, sustainability is a cornerstone across educational disciplines. In turn, our children bring lessons of sustainability home to their parents and families. We have a dedicated group of volunteers who work tirelessly with the village trustees and staff to make sustainability more than just a talking point in our community. Furthermore, Scarsdale residents are acutely aware of the predictions presented in the most recent United Nations IPCC report on climate change. Residents have already experienced the adverse effects of climate change in our region and are likely to see many more of these in the coming years. As the Board moves to the RFP phase of the Freightway project, we encourage sustainability to be an integral part of the project to reflect this very important Scarsdale value.

Our village has already made great strides in adopting sustainability policies to benefit the community. We are proud of our community wide food scrap recycling program, the first program of its kind in Westchester county. Since launching, over 1,000 families in Scarsdale have recycled over 500,000 lbs. of food scraps! Following our lead, twelve other municipalities have adopted similar programs and several more are on the cusp. A joint resident-village committee is in the process of upgrading all Village streetlights to LEDs, which will reduce energy use by more than 50%. Other projects include updating the village tree code to preserve our "Village in a Park" landscape, educating village residents on recycling initiatives, enhancing recycling in public places such as our fields and parks, and continually expanding recycling programs such as furniture and other household items, for our residents. Scarsdale has one of the most expansive recycling programs in Westchester. The success of these initiatives is not

just that we have them, but that so many residents asked for them, and are now using them. The CAC recently began publishing a series of sustainability articles which receive on average over 2,000 hits. This is clearly a community that values sustainability.

In our schools, students at every level learn about the importance of sustainability. Each of our five elementary schools, middle school, and high school have active community gardens where students learn the importance of having a connection to their food. The K-12 curriculum includes learning about the “true cost” of consumer goods, forms of energy that don’t produce CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as conservation activities. Our teachers spend time learning about sustainability education through the STI courses and Summer Institutes. There are number of teacher-student initiatives including recycling clubs, nature park creation, water fountain project and video creation. Young Scarsdalian certainly recognize the effect that climate change will have on their futures and they are active in demanding their local community be engaged in addressing climate change whenever possible.

At this time, as the village will be issuing a formal RFP, the CAC encourages sustainability to be highlighted as a principle that is addressed with more detail. We need to make sure that the responses to the RFP clearly, specifically and adequately addresses sustainability as a core principle for any development.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scarsdale Conservation Advisory Council  
February 12, 2019