

The Honorable Jonathan Mark
Village of Scarsdale Board of Trustees
Village Hall
Scarsdale, NY 10583

February 2, 2016

Dear Mayor Mark and Members of the Board of Trustees:

We moved to Scarsdale 16 years ago seeking higher quality schools and fell in love with Scarsdale by finding a higher quality of life here. Scarsdale, however, is much more than a charming village with towering shade trees. Scarsdale is a sensibility. Volunteerism is alive and well as neighbors become friends and all work together to improve our community. In order to focus these positive energies in a world of increasing challenges, we urge you to look forward in your leadership.

We urge you to support the proposed pilot program in food waste composting. The benefits of a pilot program can be stated in one word, "data." The only method of gathering accurate data is to measure. A pilot program will enable measurement of how much food waste a family will take out to the curb each week, which equipment works best, and what the hard and soft costs of food waste collection for composting actually are. One of the essential and often unsung benefits of a pilot program is that it will also identify issues we cannot anticipate before the pilot. It will provide quantifiable metrics to aid planning and implementation of a larger program should you decide that it is appropriate. Merely providing a food waste collection bin at the dump, while providing a place for residents to bring waste, cannot provide useful data.

For better or worse, if something happens in Scarsdale it is newsworthy. Surrounding towns and the County will take note of a pilot here. Keep in mind that once Scarsdale decides to move forward, it will take at minimum 18 months to get the results of the pilot. In the meantime, more localities will have witnessed the successes enjoyed by the many places that have already adopted food waste collection: Boulder, Palo Alto, Charlotte, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Denver all enjoy curbside pickup of food waste for composting. Once our neighboring communities explore food waste pick-up there may be economies of scale created for all of us.

Young families are raising children in this era of climate change with an eye towards impacting their own destinies. Perhaps one of the most important lessons these children can learn is that one person, one school and one village *can* make a difference.

I recently visited the Greenacres School and watched at lunchtime as the children disposed of their food waste into bags destined for a commercial compost site. This was not a special Earth Day performance. Rather it was, and is, the daily lunchroom

routine. Fourth grade students explained the many benefits of food waste composting, including that composted food waste can become part of the soil in which to grow more food. These youngsters are connecting the dots between daily practices and global outcomes. The program that is now routine at all five elementary schools is the result of many lessons learned from a pilot program at Fox Meadow School.

Over 2,100 Scarsdale children have mastered food waste collection for composting and are ready to train their parents. How can it make sense to children to compost lunch food waste at school but not at home, where an entire family eats multiple meals? We have an opportunity to enable these children to take on a role as citizen leaders who know first-hand how to change the world. Please allow them to have at it.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia and Bill Roberts

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