

Donna Conkling

From: Mayor
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 9:08 PM
To: Madelaine Eppenstein
Cc: Donna Conkling; Steve Pappalardo; Robert Cole; Ingrid Richards; Michelle Sterling; Jeff Coleman; Brian Gray; Christine Sciandra; friends-of-scarsdale-parks@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: Friends of the Scarsdale Parks, Inc. Written Communication to Village Board for Inclusion in January 12, 2021 Village Board Meeting Agenda

Hi Madelaine,

Thank you for your email and the work the FOSP put into evaluating the CAC's report on gas powered leaf blowers.

The Village Board will take the FOSP's views into serious consideration as we evaluate the CAC's report.

Wishing you a healthy and happy new year.

Best regards,

Marc

Sent from my iPad

On Jan 5, 2021, at 7:24 PM, Madelaine Eppenstein <meppenstein@eppenstein.com> wrote:

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Village Board,

Attached is a copy of the letter of Friends of the Scarsdale Parks, Inc. in support of the Conservation Advisory Council's Option-1 Recommendation on "Mitigating the Health, Environmental, and Quality of Life Impacts of Gas Leaf Blowers," and FOSP's request that a copy of this communication be included in the January 12, 2021 Village Board Meeting Agenda.

Sincerely,
Madelaine Eppenstein, Director
On Behalf of Friends of the Scarsdale Parks, Inc. Board of Directors:

Betsy Bush
Kay Eisenman
Madelaine Eppenstein
Bart Hamlin
Dorothy Kroenlein
Amy Laartz
Diane Morrison

Richard Reuter
Cynthia Roberts
Julia Zimbalist

<FOSP Letter to Village Board re Mitigating Impact of Gas Leaf Blowers 20201231.pdf>

Friends of the Scarsdale Parks, Inc.
PO Box 53, Scarsdale NY 10583

December 31, 2020

Via Email

Scarsdale Village Board
1001 Post Road
Scarsdale, NY 10383

RE: Friends of the Scarsdale Parks, Inc. Support for the Village of Scarsdale Conservation Advisory Council's Option-1 Recommendation on "Mitigating the Health, Environmental, and Quality of Life Impacts of Gas Leaf Blowers"

Dear Members of the Village Board:

The Friends of Scarsdale Parks, Inc. (FOSP) is a New York non-profit organization, dedicated since its incorporation in 1957 to the preservation, conservation, restoration, and maintenance of parkland and open space throughout the Village of Scarsdale. The undersigned members of the FOSP Board are writing in support of the Village-appointed Conservation Advisory Council's (CAC) Option-1 recommendation on "Mitigating the Health, Environmental, and Quality of Life Impacts of Gas Leaf Blowers."¹

FOSP has long supported environmental best practices in landscape maintenance that would effectively obviate the use of gas leaf blowers, even when not explicitly addressing the hazard they represent, as in this 2014 communication to the Village:

"The following statement is submitted on behalf of the board of directors of the Friends of the Scarsdale Parks for your consideration at the Village Board's Sustainability Committee meeting tomorrow evening, July 8, 2014:

'The Friends of the Scarsdale Parks supports an amendment to the fall leaf collection regulations of the Village of Scarsdale, to take effect immediately. The new regulations should require bagging of fall leaves on all residential properties, with the option for residents to use leaves on their property as mulch; to have leaves and grass clippings mower-shredded in place; to use leaves and grass clippings as a component for making compost; or to have leaves and grass clippings carted away by landscapers. At the same time the Village should establish an ongoing educational program to actively promote the methods and environmental benefits of leaf and grass recycling, and should establish an accelerated timetable for the discontinuation of Village collection of leaves and grass clippings.'

¹ CAC Report, accessed at <https://www.scarsdale.com/DocumentCenter/View/6644/Gas-Leaf-Report-to-Village-Board---Dec-2020> .

FOSP was an early advocate for a more sustainable environmental approach than the existing collection program of yard organics, and for the use rather than disposal of leaves and grass clippings by residents and the Village contractor and Staff. We vigorously supported the practice of mower shredding/mulching on site in the parks and other Village properties, which was implemented at the two Village center parks in 2012, Chase Park and de Lima Park. Thanks to the farsighted leadership of the Trustees and the Staff, since the beginning of 2013 this method has quickly become the norm throughout the more than two dozen Village properties, including recreation fields, parks and other open spaces.”²

FOSP urges the Village to adopt the Option-1 recommendation of its Advisory Council to mitigate the harmful impacts of gas leaf blowers, principally noise and air pollution among others, at a time when residents are concerned more than ever before about the respiratory health of their families. In the interests of the health, safety and welfare of residents, as well as landscape workers, and in furtherance of your commitment to environmental stewardship, the time has come to schedule public hearings and the appropriate steps needed to amend the Village Code to further limit gas blower use and strengthen enforcement of violations.

Respectfully submitted by the members³ of the FOSP Board of Directors, with a request to include a copy of this written communication in the January 12, 2021 Village Board Meeting Agenda:

Betsy Bush
Kay Eisenman
Madelaine Eppenstein
Bart Hamlin
Dorothy Kroenlein
Amy Laartz
Diane Morrison
Richard Reuter
Cynthia Roberts
Julia Zimbalist

Cc via email: Donna Conkling, Village Clerk; Stephen M. Pappalardo, Village Manager; Robert Cole, Deputy Village Manager; Ingrid Richards, Assistant Village Manager; Michelle Sterling, Chair, CAC; Jeff Coleman, Superintendent of Public Works; Brian Gray, Superintendent of Parks, Recreation, and Conservation; Christine Sciandra, Manager’s Office.

² Email from FOSP to Village Board, Manager and Staff (July 7, 2014). FOSP and the CAC are not alone in their advocacy to limit the harm that gas leaf blowers pose. Other Scarsdale civic organizations have also urged the Village to adopt safer landscape maintenance strategies and ramp up enforcement. See, e.g., Scarsdale Forum Municipal Services Committee, “Initial Report of the Municipal Services Committee on Quality of Life Village Code Violations” (September 19, 2017) (Attachment 3, endnotes, and citations address the harmful effects of gas blowers in more detail; report signed by two former Scarsdale Mayors and no fewer than five Trustees emeriti), accessed at <https://www.scarsdaleforum.com/Reports/Download/682>.

³ Credentials available on request.