

January 4, 2021

To Mayor Samwick and the Trustees:

Asking Scarsdale's Conservation Advisory Council to study the use of gas leaf blowers and scheduling a Board Work Session on January 12, 2021 to consider the CAC's findings and recommendations were important steps towards improving quality of life and health in our community.

The CAC report (<https://www.scarsdale.com/828/2020-Gas-Leaf-Blower-Report>) offers the Board practical, reasonable, and enforceable options for amending the Village Code that are supported by recent scientific studies further documenting the harmful effects of gas leaf blower noise and emissions and by a comprehensive review of current electric leaf blower technology.

The CAC's technology review shows that electric blowers are adequate and cost-effective for use by commercial landscapers to remove leaves, clippings and other debris other than during the Fall leaf season. Our Village Code has banned gas blowers from June 1 to September 30 since 1994. Landscapers operating in Scarsdale already own and use electric blowers and everyone's lawns look great. Now is the time to extend the electric-only rule to the Spring. There is no longer a technology or cost argument to justify exposing residents to gas blower noise and emissions in the Spring.

The CAC found that while it was "cost prohibitive" for commercial landscapers to remove leaves in the Fall with electric blowers, it recommended in Option One that the Board mitigate the gas blowers' harmful effects on residents by designating three electric-only days per week during the three-month leaf season. On the remaining four days, landscapers can continue to start at 8 AM, use multiple gas blowers at the same time and blow without limit on small lots in our densely populated neighborhoods. But at least residents would know that they have three days, including weekends, to enjoy their homes and community free of harmful noise and emissions.

The CAC's Option One compromise is more than fair to the landscapers who operate in Scarsdale and to the residents who employ them. The harm caused by gas blower noise pollution and emissions documented in the CAC report would easily justify a total ban. I strongly urge the Board to schedule a hearing on a resolution amending the Village Code to implement Option One in time to protect residents this Spring.

Anne Hintermeister  
Chase Road