

Donna Conkling

From: Michele Braun <mxbraun@earthlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 11:19 AM
To: Mayor; Clerk's Department
Subject: Letter to the Mayor and Village Trustees

To the Mayor and Trustees of Scarsdale:

In light of the recent series of Nor'easter storms and the damage they caused and in light of recent initiatives to revise the Village tree code, I respectfully recommend that you take immediate steps to lead us in initiating a near-term, broad, and future focused program to improve reliability of our power grid. Recently, the Scarsdale community sustained significant damage to trees, infrastructure, houses, and power supply, as well as the high cost of emergency response. For better resource use and better service, I urge you to move quickly to develop and implement a sustainable long-term plan.

Given the waves of development in Scarsdale—mid-1930s, post-war, 1960s, and the present day—it is reasonable that many trees in the Village reach maturity and then decline in waves as well. We share a collective interest in preserving tree-lined yards and streets, in maintaining electricity through summer and winter storms, and in reducing the need for costly emergency repair work after a storm. Trees are a natural resource to be managed, and electric power is now core infrastructure from which we expect uninterrupted service.

Some contributing factors to balancing and achieving these goals are within Scarsdale's control. Other factors fall outside of the Village's purview and beyond our borders. And, of course, Scarsdale was not the only community to incur power outages (albeit ours appear to have been more pervasive). Accordingly, I call on you to initiate a joint, near-term initiative with Westchester County government, Con Ed, interested local communities, and forestry experts to develop a long-term plan to improve the reliability of our electrical infrastructure. This plan should include recommendations for tree management and replacement, burying powerlines (perhaps over a goodly number of years and in consort with other digging work), and other appropriate considerations.

For some actions, we will need to work closely with the other stakeholders and use our collective influence to improve service reliability for the broader community. Therefore, I will shortly write to the Westchester County Executive with this recommendation. This joint effort needs an immediate charter and near-term completion date, such as 6 months.

That said, Scarsdale can implement some actions on its own, such as devising reasonable recommendations to manage trees, sewers, and flood points, that do not interfere with property rights, preserve our green village, and ensure that back-up power generators are safe and safely used.

Sincerely,
Michele Braun
14 Wakefield Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
March 15, 2018