

Donna Conkling

From: ribick@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 07, 2018 10:48 AM
To: Mayor; Manager's Department; Clerk's Department
Subject: Leaf Collection Program

Mayor:

I'm always pleased to see the leaf collection truck come up to my property this time of year.

While by no means am I against leaf mulching programs, clearly aware of the seeming paradox that people buy fertilizer, made in large part from leaves, for its nitrogen content, that said falling leaves would provide, it also remains true that I, like many residents, simply have too many trees relative to my property to mulch, even with high degrees of granularization, without smothering the grass.

Cutting down those trees affects the ability for them to (albeit temporarily: 100 years) store carbon dioxide from the environment they turn into mass, (returning it back to the environment upon their ultimate decomposition, but not in totality if more trees are planted than die).

Still more, cutting down those trees whose benefit accrues to all, but whose maintenance is my bill to pay, would affect my shade, and might require Village approval under code restrictions that effect their removal. Still more, it's nice to know that if such leaf removal is necessary, that it's done, rather than out of pocket, through taxes that might offset other taxes, and through large scale programs like our Village's, that incorporate the efficiencies of economies of scale.

Speaking of such efficiencies, I can't help but notice that most, if not all the trucks that collect leaves under our Village's program appear to be leased (I might be wrong.) While I can clearly appreciate for several reasons why such truck rental programs might be attractive, for example in allowing the Village to better fix (if not optimize) the costs of such programs like leaf collection, the fact also remains that it might be more efficient for the Village to own some of the trucks allocated to this program, as they could not only be used year round to offset the costs of vehicles used by, say, the Engineering and Sanitation Departments, and represent more efficient use of vehicular assets across the Village, but reduce leaf program collection costs as well. As you must appreciate, use of an owned asset versus a leased one often proves cheaper, as a convenience and flexibility cost is assigned to the latter, particularly, in private ownership of vehicles where said cost can't be charged back (in part) to a business.

This idea particularly hits home for me when arguments are made to abolish leaf collection programs, due in part to the costs that the very powers that be who seek their cessation largely for financial reasons (back doored under green initiatives) may be able to better control.

The last idea I would want to leave you with is that I'm anything but green. I recognize the pollution such trucks cause, and was one of the first in the Village (and probably one of the few) to heat my home with a wood pellet stove, whose tons of bags get lifted on my shoulders to my fireplace. I seek no thanks for my choices, just recognition that like many of my fellow residents and government, environmental causes are very much on my mind and things I'm willing to assign money to.

Russ Kopp
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