

Donna Conkling

From: timothy.d.foley@gmail.com on behalf of Timothy Foley <tim@commanderfoley.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 02, 2016 4:04 PM
To: Clerk's Department
Subject: Potential Discontinuation of Grass Clipping Pick-up

I write in disapproval of the Potential Discontinuation of Grass Clipping Pick-up at this time.

I am quite surprised to be in this position, as I am in favor of the Sustainability Committee's previous proposal to eliminate the vacuumed removal of leaves in autumn. However, many of the reasons I support the implementation of that proposal are absent from the grass clipping question.

In terms of leaf removal, there is a clear cost savings to the Village as a whole, in that an entire service would be eliminated, and the truck and equipment would no longer need to be operated or maintained. There would be an incremental carbon footprint benefit with one less gas-guzzling vehicle on our roads. The Village and the Sustainability Committee has already conducted an extensive public education campaign on the importance of mulching, including demonstrations on how to retrofit existing equipment to produce the desired effect. And finally, for those of us who tend our own lawns (and I fully recognize that I am in the minority!), the measure ultimately wouldn't be punitive -- even should I not immediately be able to change my own equipment or have the time to properly study and implement the new technique, I could always bag my leaves for pick-up. The removal of the vacuum trucks is the removal of a redundant perk, rather than an essential service.

None of these exist for the current proposal. There is not a clear cost savings and no incremental carbon footprint benefit from vehicle reduction because DPW would continue to operate the same equipment, use the same routes and, as I understand it, use the same routes as frequently to continue to pick up non-grass yard waste, including leaves. There has been no public education campaign before launching the proposal. I don't own a mulch mower and tend my lawn myself. So how can I retrofit? Or must I buy a new mower? There's been no education on this at all. Finally, this is the full elimination of an essential service that I use approximately 20 weeks out of the year. If I had a landscaper or gardener, perhaps negotiating a rate for removal would be no difficult thing. But now I'd be expected to either buy new equipment entirely or *add* to the vehicular traffic in Scarsdale by adding 20 or more trips to the recycling center. Surely, if the goal is sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint, this is a step backwards.

I would encourage you not to adopt this change at this time, until more civic dialogue and education has taken place, and until it's clearer what the economic and carbon footprint benefits would actually be, as that case has not yet been proven. In terms of best practices, I understand my lawn will be healthier with this change, but just about everything else will be worse.