



VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

Open Letter to Scarsdale Community

COVID-19 Update: June 17, 2020

Dear Scarsdale community,

[New York Forward](#), Governor Cuomo's plan for reintroducing normalcy to our lives and economy, is continuing to unfold with every day that passes. Frankly, it is challenging to keep up with each of the changes announced. However, despite the observation that the Village is continuing to operate under a 50% staffing reduction mandate, we are navigating the dynamic regulatory and public health environment very well.

The Village Board and staff are pivoting into the transition from "Stay Home, Stay Safe" to reinvigorating our local social and economic vitality, all the while remaining vigilant in our efforts to continue helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19. On this point, please continue to practice social distancing, wear a face covering when in public and unable to maintain at least six feet separation from others, and routinely wash or sanitize your hands, particularly after touching high-contact surfaces. Because we have been successful in practicing these precautions, opportunities to return to normalcy continue to expand.

On behalf of the Village Board, I encourage each of you to be our partner in lifting our community spirit and boosting our local economy – safely. Play tennis. Join the Scarsdale pool at a discounted rate. Enjoy outdoor dining and shop locally. Or, simply help recognize the efforts that our Village staff are making to help us once again enjoy our Village in a Park.

With [Phase II](#) underway and [Phase III](#) on the horizon, we're *stepping-up* with a commitment to adhere to public health guidance and mandates while at the same time *stepping-out* to enjoy our public spaces.

Now, I direct your attention to some of the more notable recent developments and their import to you as a Scarsdale community member. First, I'll relate some exciting news about the Village Center.

Village Center: Exemplary Phase II Collaboration

In Scarsdale, we approach governance differently from many other communities.

We are entrepreneurial, not bureaucratic.

We are agile and responsive, not sluggish and indifferent.

We strive for continuous improvement and rise to challenges, seeking to exceed expectations.

In short, we hold ourselves accountable for maintaining and enhancing our community's bottom line: Quality of life. It's a multi-dimensional target requiring capable teams, creative solutions, and a steadfast commitment to community, through thick and thin . . . and the COVID-19 pandemic has positioned members of our local business community such that they need our help recovering from the financial impacts of having to close or severely restrict their businesses.

Recognizing the urgency of the challenge, a Village team working with the [Scarsdale Business Alliance](#) has undertaken an initiative to make our Village Center a safe and enjoyable outdoor dining and shopping experience for residents and visitors, alike. SBA Co-President and Board Member Marcy Berman-Goldstein collaborated with Deputy Mayor Jane Veron, Trustee Justin Arest, Assistant Village Manager Ingrid Richards, Village Planner Greg Cutler, and Village Engineer David Goessl to identify and rapidly deploy regulatory and physical changes to maximize the opportunity for Village Center businesses to quickly regain their financial footing, at the same time providing Scarsdale residents and visitors a physical place to enjoy our beautiful Village Center.

Key short-term strategies include:

- Creation of the Dine the 'Dale outdoor dining space, which is located on Spencer Place between Harwood Court and East Parkway. Under the comfort of a 3,000 square foot tent located on Spencer Place, or choosing seating in the adjacent uncovered area, visitors will enjoy their favorite Scarsdale restaurant's menu items by take-out or delivery, as well as some table service from select restaurants.

On a trial basis, Spencer Place will be closed through Labor Day Weekend to accommodate Dine the 'Dale, with the possibility of extending it through October based on its success and need.

- The Scarsdale Board of Trustees voted unanimously to amend Village Code to allow retailers to temporarily display and sell their wares outside their storefronts, providing for an enriched outdoor shopping experience.
- To maximize resident and visitor parking near retail and restaurant establishments, the Village is providing 42 free parking spaces for merchants on level 5B of the Freightway Garage through August 30.
- The Village is temporarily converting underutilized commuter permit parking spaces in the Christie Place Garage to public parking spaces. These spaces will be available to Pango (pay-by-app) users. The new zone number is #10599 and these spaces should be available for public use by the end of this week.

Watch for more exciting news involving the Village Center, and kudos to the team for efficiently and collaboratively transforming the way we do business, helping to establish forward momentum during a period that it is desperately needed.

Shop local and dine local . . . at Dine the 'Dale or any of the other outdoor dining opportunities now available – see you there, Scarsdale!

Scarsdale Municipal Pool Complex

In my [May 28 Community Update](#), I encouraged residents to complete a Scarsdale Pool Complex Survey – over 2,200 responses were received! Survey results indicated overwhelming support for the Village Board to authorize the pool to open in 2020, pending authority from the Governor’s Office to proceed.

The Village Board participated in a [work session](#) on June 09, which included presentation of the survey results, discussion of the financial implications and potential risks in connection with revenue estimates used in making a decision to open, and an overview of potential public health guidelines or mandates that would influence pool complex operations.

Taking into consideration the information Superintendent Gray provided, the Village Board authorized staff to continue preparing to open the Municipal Pool Complex on July 18.

Operating details are still being fleshed-out and will be informed by NYS and Westchester County public health mandates and guidance. We will also be reviewing and endeavoring to implement many of the resident suggestions we received through the survey. Importantly, the Municipal Pool Complex will operate in a manner that meets or exceeds all public health regulatory mandates and guidance so as to promote a safe and enjoyable 2020 Pool Season.

Watch for more details about the 2020 Pool Season as they become available. In the interim, please know that we have been and are continuing to work aggressively toward making this treasured community asset available to our residents as quickly as possible.

Discounted [Pool Memberships](#) will be available online starting Thursday, June 18. Please buy a Membership and encourage your Scarsdale friends and neighbors to do the same!

Playground Update

Governor Cuomo recently issued a press release indicating that playgrounds are authorized to open on a statewide basis, “subject to local discretion.” Village staff are preparing to open our playgrounds for public use this week, perhaps as early as tomorrow.

All parents should recognize that no reasonable disinfection protocol is available to make outdoor playground equipment safe from potential exposure to a variety of pathogens, such as COVID-19 and others. As such, parents choosing to allow their children to use playground equipment should help children follow these guidelines:

- **Don’t** visit the playground if it is crowded.
- **Don’t** visit if you are sick, have tested positive for COVID-19, or were recently (within 14 days) exposed to COVID-19.
- **Do** maintain a distance of at least six feet away from people you don’t live with.

- **Do** bring and use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Anyone unable to safely use hand sanitizer should not use the playground equipment.
- **Do** wear a cloth face covering, if you are able. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on children under age 2 or anyone with problems breathing.

The foregoing guidelines are advisory in nature. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in adhering to the guidelines, which are provided to help reduce exposure to potential pathogens, including COVID-19.

Parents may authorize their children to use playground equipment at their own discretion. New signage will be posted at each playground to encourage appropriate public health practices.

Doubles Tennis

Reopening tennis has been a smashing success!

Staff rapidly developed creative solutions to the operating constraints we are compelled to operate under and have nimbly navigated the few hiccups we've experienced in reopening the courts. It appears the tennis players are having a ball!

Now, I am pleased to announce that Doubles Tennis is being authorized this week, just in time for the weekend! The new reservation system (thanks to PRC staff member Sue Oricchio and others), will be updated accordingly.

School and Village Taxes

The Scarsdale Village Board and Board of Education are committed to collaborating on an intergovernmental basis to minimize the tax burden placed upon Scarsdale property owners.

Recognizing the financial impact that COVID-19 has had on the local, national, and global economies and the associated stress placed upon Scarsdale businesses, families, and other property owners, the Village and School Boards worked together to authorize property tax payments to be paid in two installments, with the [Village Board's resolution](#) having been passed at our meeting on June 09, 2020.

We are hopeful that splitting the property tax bill for both Village and School taxes will provide meaningful financial benefit to the Scarsdale community.

Village Taxes

Village taxes will be billed in July of each year with the first installment due on or before August 01 without penalty or interest, but for this year; the 2020 deadline for payment of property taxes otherwise due on or before August 01 is now August 22, 2020, as extended by Governor Cuomo's [Executive Order 202.36](#). The Village Taxes second installment will be due on or before December 31, 2020, without penalty or interest.

Please note that the Village Property Tax bill you receive in July will include two payment stubs – one for each installment. The property owner will not receive a mailed reminder or second billing when the second installment becomes due. A property owner may, at his or her discretion, choose to pay both installments when the first installment becomes due each year.

School Taxes

School property tax bills will be mailed on or about September 01, 2020. The first installment will be due on or before the last day of September, without penalty or interest. The second installment will be due on or before the end of January, without penalty or interest.

Please note that the School Property Tax bill you receive in September will include two payment stubs – one for each installment. The property owner will not receive a mailed reminder or second billing when the second installment becomes due. A property owner may, at his or her discretion, choose to pay both installments when the first installment becomes due each year.

Village Hall Reopening

Village Hall is scheduled to reopen on Tuesday, June 23, provided there is no intervening order issued by Governor Cuomo precluding that from occurring. A variety of measures to protect public and employee health are being implemented, including a building occupancy limitation, deployment of sanitization stations, provision of social distancing physical improvements, e.g., floor markings, etc., and others.

A press release with more information is anticipated on Friday.

June 23 Election: CORRECTED

Please be sure to vote in the June 23 election.

The early voting period for the June 23, 2020, Primary Elections is from Saturday, June 13, through Sunday, June 21, 2020. The early voting polling location for Scarsdale is the Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place, Eastchester, NY 10709.

Your Scarsdale polling location for the June 23 Primary Election may be determined by visiting the [Westchester County Board of Elections](#) website. Election hours are 6:00 am to 9:00 pm. Please contact the Board of Elections at 914-995-5700 with any questions.

Bear Visit

Before closing, I extend my thanks and appreciation to the bear that visited Scarsdale last week.

You might be reacting wryly, “Thanks to a bear – *seriously?*”

Well, yes.

The visit reminded me of how connected we are to nature and our obligation to act in ways that protect and enhance the environment.

It also reminded me that perceptions and fear can work together in harmful ways, an observation made all the more poignant by recent civil unrest.

So, to the bear I say thank you for reminding me to conscientiously honor my obligation to be environmentally responsible, as well as for unwittingly highlighting the urgent need for each of us to embrace diversity and support efforts to cultivate a more just and equitable society. More on both topics to come.

Closing Remarks

Throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency, reliable, accurate information has sometimes been difficult to come by. Changes in regulatory mandates and public health guidance have frequently occurred, often with little or no advance notice to the Village. Our Village staff have performed exceptionally under these conditions.

On behalf of the Village Board of Trustees, I applaud the Scarsdale community's understanding of the dynamic nature of the pandemic and am hopeful that each of you recognize and value the extraordinary commitment displayed by our capable and dedicated staff.

I hope to see many of you shopping and dining local, and don't forget to join the Scarsdale Pool!

Sincerely,



Marc Samwick
Mayor