

May 1, 2021

**TO: Mayor Mary Marvin  
Bronxville, New York**

**Copy: Robert S. Underhill, Deputy Mayor**

**Trustees:**

**Helen Knapp**

**William C. Fredericks**

**Mary Taylor Behrens**

**From: [Larry Will](#)<sup>1</sup>**



Reference: <https://myhometownbronxville.com/index.php/sustainable-living/6978-bronxville-green-committee-leaf-blower-survey-response-next-steps>

Dear Mayor Marvin:

First let me congratulate you on the many years of service you have provided to your municipality. This has to be a testament to your conscientious and caring representation of your constituents.

I know you already have a partial ban on leaf blowers over the summer months, but I can see from the attached article that the code is being reviewed. You appear to be determined to do the right thing regarding the leaf blower issue, in as much as you are supporting the Bronxville Green Committee's recently circulated survey.

According to the referenced article, “The survey was conducted in response to the increased number of leaf blower complaints Village Hall has received from residents this past year. Grievances about leaf blowers include noise pollution, lower quality of life, and negative impacts on our health and environment.”

Further, “The committee will be working with Village Hall to study the issue and make recommendations that are representative of residents’ opinions, practical for landscapers, and protective of our health and environment.” I would like to caution you in that some of the arguments supporting a leaf blower ban may not be factual and should be carefully considered, in particular, one should be doubtful about those claims made regarding health and environmental impact.

Opinions are certainly important when it comes to what your constituents want, but important decisions should not be based on opinions alone. Many of the negative claims made about the leaf blower are nothing more than opinions, either that of the presenter or that of the person being quoted, that is, the source of the alleged facts.

Not being a resident of Bronxville, you are likely wondering, **who am I to tell you all this?** Well, this is not the first letter I have written you. My last letter was sent to you in May of 2016, but much has changed since then, which I would like to share with you and your staff.

You may recall, I am a former Vice President of Engineering for Echo Inc., a leading manufacturer of powered handheld lawn care products. I have been in the lawncare industry for 27 years, 19 of these years as an advisor to cities with leaf blower issues. I do not live or work in your community, but what I share with you in this document will not be heard from anyone else in your area. The reason is, I can provide information not commonly known to the average citizen. As a professional engineer, I deal in facts. The information herein is presented as a public service to you, to your city and to the people that own and use leaf blowers.

I can understand why leaf blowers can be an issue, for there is an organized movement on the east coast to ban leaf blowers. The unmistakable fact is, some leaf blowers are loud and can be very irritating if they are used often, near your residence, and for long periods of time. Never-the-less Mayor Marvin, I can see that you are already concerned with the impact a blower ban will have on your community.

In the back of your mind, you may be thinking that because there are other cities that have banned blowers, you can’t go too far wrong to follow their precedent. However, I’m sure you have questions:

- How will a ban be enforced?
- Will homeowners with leaf blowers be upset?

- How does this impact the elderly?
- What will be the cost impact to the homeowner and landscape contractor?
- Will current users comply with your ordinance?
- Will people use time consuming tools, or will they just leave the debris where it lies?

If you decide to check this out for yourself, you can talk to council members from cities that already have a ban, but don't overlook talking to the enforcers, local lawn care providers, and homeowners to learn the true impact.

The trend to ban gasoline-powered leaf blowers is troubling to me because except for noise, it is often based on distorted facts and lacks empathy for those that need them for their work or want them to reduce their workload at home.

I think you will agree that the driving force for a ban is that some people are irritated by leaf blower noise. In their zeal to ban blowers, what some people may tell you about blowers, other than noise, is erroneous. Perhaps this is because ban advocates are misled by the propaganda available on the Internet. As for them understanding the impact a ban will have on users, they likely have never used these blowers personally and therefore have no concept of how valuable they are to homeowners and lawn care professionals.

Here are some very important leaf blower facts to consider:

- The only true issue with any type of leaf blower is that some of them are noisy. But quiet ones (gasoline versions) at 65 dB(A), measured at 50 feet, are universally available from several manufacturers. These blowers are actually quieter than battery-powered units. Click [here](#) for a demonstration video.
- Quiet leaf blowers are only 85 dB(A) at the ear of the operator. Hearing protection is not required according to OSHA.
- Health hazard and environmental impact issues are overstated if not untrue.

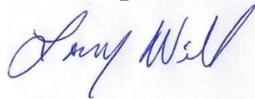
In time, when battery-powered units have sufficient power and performance to do the job at hand, they will replace gasoline power by their own merits. You need only visit your local outlet store to see how popular battery-powered leaf blowers are among those with light duty, consumer type applications. Unless their property is relatively large, many homeowners are already choosing to use battery-powered blowers.

Because the issue is only with gas-powered blowers, the best solution to your leaf blower issue is to allow, but not require, electric or battery-powered blowers throughout the year. Allow gasoline powered blowers that are quiet, at 65dB(A) per the ANSI B175.2 Standard, all year round as well. There is a [label](#)<sup>23</sup> on the unit that

tells you what the sound level is, making it easy to enforce your noise restriction, should you choose. Finally, allow larger and therefore noisier blowers, needed for a limited time in the spring and fall to handle seasonal cleanup.

The leaf blower issue can become quite complex. If you are being told about other negative traits attributed to the blower, such as emissions or particulate matter, read the appendix, with links to references, to learn the facts about the leaf blower and its use.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Will". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and contact information.

Larry Will. BSME, Leaf Blower Information Specialist, ECHO Inc.

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Click: [APPENDIX](#) for details and [links](#) to references