

## **LWVS Statement on Tree Ordinance Study-Chap 281**

- **Pros**
  - Protect health, safety and general welfare of Scarsdale residents
  - Protect environment and ecosystems
  - Aid storm water management (water absorption, impede soil erosion)
  - Provide shade, green space and aesthetic appeal
  - Maintain value of real property and character of the community
- **Cons**
  - Infringement on individual property rights
  - Cost/feasibility to effectively enforce the law
  - May be at odds with proposed storm water management proposal
- Proposal - Chapter 281: Trees, Grass, Brush and Weeds [click here](#)
- Proposal Summary [click here](#)
- Quick Facts [click here](#)
- Tree Regulations in other Municipalities : [Bedford](#) [Cortlandt](#) [New Castle](#) [Rye](#) [Somers](#) [White Plains](#)
- Scarsdale Inquirer articles [6/27/08](#) [7/11/08](#) [8/15/08](#)
- Consensus Questions [click here](#)
- Letter to the Village dated September 23, 2008

The League of Women Voters of Scarsdale (The League) extends its gratitude to Mayor Noreen Fisher, Trustee Ken Rilander, and Village Manager Al Gatta for attending our membership meeting on September 15, 2008 and answering questions regarding the Proposed Tree Ordinance. We commend the Village for their active outreach to involve the community in this discussion by seeking public comment through meetings, conversation, and email. The preservation of the environment, ambience, and quality of life in Scarsdale is a very high priority for the community.

After careful study of the differences between the current and the proposed Tree Ordinances and discussion at a League consensus meeting, the League concluded that we do not support the proposed changes to the existing Tree Ordinance. Anticipated costs to the Village associated with the hiring of additional personnel to regulate and enforce the proposed law, and extra administrative work created by the proposal outweigh any anticipated benefits of the new law.

The League recommends that the Village redirect its time and finances towards facilitating the planting of more trees on both private and public property. We suggest exploring ways of offering incentives to increase planting. The Village should research the establishment of a tree fund to help with the costs of a more aggressive tree planting plan, especially in light of the fact that the tree planting plan for the Village public property is currently behind schedule. The League encourages further inquiry regarding cooperative tree purchasing, whereby a large number of trees can be purchased at a discount, and that discount can be enjoyed by the homeowners, developers, and the Village. We also propose enhancing the partnership with the Conservation Advisory Council and Friends of the Scarsdale Parks to promote education and help execute other aspects of a tree planting plan.

In addition, fines associated with violations of the current Tree Ordinance need to be increased substantially to dissuade homeowners and developers from indiscriminately breaking the existing law. Clarification is also needed regarding the replacement parameters in place when trees are removed. The responsibility of the homeowner needs to be clarified if a tree on private property needs to be removed for an involuntary or arbitrary reason.

Thank you again to those who participated on the panel, and to all of the Village Trustees and staff who have given their time and energy to assist the League of Women Voters in reaching a consensus on the Proposed Tree Ordinance.

We hope that you will consider our suggestions and recommendations as we all try to protect the environmental integrity of Scarsdale.

Sincerely,

Lauri Carey                      Adie Shore  
LWVS Environment Chair      LWVS President