

February 27, 2019

Dear Assemblywoman Paulin

Thank you for meeting with myself and Michelle Sterling regarding Food Scrap Recycling and the legislation currently in the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee (bill A3672, Senate bill S2995).

The proposed legislation would require food scrap generators that produce 2 tons per week or more to recycle or donate any food scraps. We believe the proposed legislation will be very impactful to support and further expand the many food scrap recycling initiatives happening in Westchester and throughout New York State.

There is one aspect of the proposed legislation however that we do strongly believe needs to be adjusted. The issue that we presented to you is that the legislation as proposed would only apply to food scrap generators within 15 miles of an organics recycling facility (e.g. composting facility, anaerobic digester, etc.). This carveout would essentially nullify the benefits of the legislation for large parts of the state, including Westchester County. For Westchester County, there is no food scrap recycling facility within a 15 mile range. There would be similar situations throughout the State. Even in Westchester where a local private facility is being constructed in Cortlandt, it would be outside the 15 mile range for most of the County. As a comparison, most of the trash within Westchester is typically trucked much farther than 15 miles.

As a result, in order for the proposed legislation to be effective for Westchester and most of New York State, we need the legislation to be changed to a 60 mile radius. This change would provide the impetus to get large generators to divert their food waste to an organics recycling facility. It would also spur the development of organics recycling facilities either within or closer to our county. As a comparison, Connecticut enacted a similar law in 2011 with a limited distance requirement of only 20 miles. The legislation has been slow to spur food scrap recycling programs and investment in part because facilities would only be guaranteed to receive material from this small 20 mile area.

Food Scrap Recycling legislation, with a realistic radius of 60 miles, is something that we very much need in order to support the food scrap recycling programs of our Westchester communities and businesses.

Thank you very much for your time and help with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Scarsdale Conservation Advisory Council
Ron Schulhof, Chair