



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella and Podiatrist Dr. Charles Lombardi Protest DPR's Tree Planting in front of Medical Practice

TONY AVELLA December 4, 2017

**Queens, NY** – Today, State Senator Tony Avella and Queens podiatrist Dr. Charles Lombardi stood outside of the Doctor's office to protest the Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) decision to plant two trees right in front of the large medical practice, hindering access for disabled patients.

Currently, tree pits have been dug to signal the future location of the trees that are already presenting hazards to elderly and disabled patients. When the trees are finally planted, they will create hardships for patients who are parking, being dropped off and picked up, or walking in front of the office for any reason.

Three weeks ago, Senator Avella wrote to the DPR Queens Borough Commissioner on behalf of Dr. Lombardi and alert her to the dangers the trees would present. Today, Senator Avella sent another letter to DPR's Citywide Commissioner to ask what criteria led DPR to choose this site, given that there are already several vacant tree pits along the Francis Lewis Boulevard median.

"In my estimation, there is no good reason why these trees are being planted here. It is totally inappropriate to needlessly block access to a medical facility serving disabled individuals. Additionally, there are currently numerous vacant tree pits that would look better with a

tree in them and would serve as a better location,” **said Senator Avella.**

“It’s not just a podiatry practice, we do limb salvage, people have one limb and they’re walking on crutches or are getting wheeled in. There is also a physical therapist here and an orthotist who does prosthetic work. This is where patients have access. Senator Avella talked about snow, before we would be able to easily clean the snow away from the office but now we will have a big area where snow will not be able to be cleared and patients will not be able to gain access to the office. This is regulation without common sense,” **said Dr. Charles Lombardi.**