



April 24, 2009

The Honorable David M. Scapicchio
Major, Mt. Olive Township
PO Box 450
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

Dear Mayor Scapicchio:

As you work on effectively addressing stray and feral cats in your jurisdiction, Alley Cat Allies can provide assistance. With best practices based on two decades of hands-on, real-world experience in a variety of locales, we know how to get to the root of the issue—humanely and effectively.

This probably isn't the first time your community has had to think about a program for feral cats. We know what it takes to make a program endure.

The program we have perfected has at its heart an understanding of both cat and human behavior. Our models can help cats and humans peacefully coexist by addressing concerns through mediation, as well as education about how to humanely deter cats from areas where they are not wanted.

Your program should take into account three considerations for success:

A solid program will focus on Trap-Neuter-Return as the lynchpin. Trap-Neuter-Return is the most cost-effective, long-term approach for stray and feral cats. Cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, and vaccinated. Cats not socialized to humans are returned to their colony site, and their population gradually reduces over time. The behaviors associated with mating, such as yowling and fighting, stop, and the cats become good neighbors.

Traditional approaches for feral cats—such as catch and kill or attempts to relocate—do not work. They are costly, inhumane, and endless. Removing cats from an area creates a vacuum, which more cats move into and breed to fill. Decades of these failed practices proves their futility.

Your community wants compassionate solutions. An overwhelming majority of Americans—81%—believe it is more humane to leave a stray cat outside to live out her life than have her caught and killed, according to a national survey conducted by Harris Interactive for Alley Cat Allies.

Alley Cat Allies' approach has been effective in communities around the country. Our website—www.alleycat.org—provides extensive online resources and educational materials to help you build a program that is based on years of research about what works and what balances the interests of residents, businesses, and cats. Contact us by visiting www.alleycat.org/response with further questions or to request specific information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Becky Robinson
President

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Councilmember Ray Perkins
The Honorable Councilmember Phil Tobey
The Honorable Councilmember Steven Rattner
The Honorable Councilmember Russ Tepper
The Honorable Councilmember Rob Greenbaum
The Honorable Councilmember Colleen Labow
The Honorable Councilmember Alex Roman