

Debra Thompson

From: Mary Ellen Anderson <matikataco@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 8, 2021 7:58 AM
To: Assembly
Subject: Masking ordinance

Dear Borough Assembly Members,

I'm writing to support the continuation of the masking ordinance we have in place.

What we are doing is obviously working well, thanks to our strong leadership in the city, hospital and schools, AND a large dose of luck. We are so close to the time when we can start backing off on restrictions, but all it would take is one infected person stepping off the jet and not paying attention to quarantine and masking to change that luck. We know that the more highly contagious variant is now found in Alaska, and if it arrives here and few folks are masking, it would spread rapidly.

I spent a fair amount of last year living in Seattle caring for my mom, and found it quite comfortable, as virtually everyone wore a mask everywhere and conscientiously gave each other space when out in public. Then, when I came back to Petersburg, it was quite a shock to see so many people NOT wearing masks, and not paying attention to distancing. I was therefore very relieved when we passed the masking mandate. Now, no one likes to be told what to do, especially me! But because there are so many people NOT adhering to the common sense act of wearing of a mask during a pandemic, a mandate seems to be necessary.

I just finished reading "Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu and How it Changed the World" and it is amazing how we seem to have learned so little from history. Much of what we are fighting about in this current pandemic were also issues back in 1918. Fortunately, science and medicine have come a long way since then, but it would seem human nature has not. Back then people also grew weary of the mandates and restrictions, fought against masking and distancing, and paid a very heavy price in wave after wave of the flu, when they thought they had it beat.

Please, we are so close to the end of all this. Masking is a very small but very effective tool in our battle against this pandemic. Vigilance, not complacency, will win the battle.

Thank you for listening,
Mary Ellen Anderson
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