

MS4 Annual Report Form

This report is being submitted for the reporting period ending March 9,

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If submitting this form as part of a joint report on behalf of a coalition leave SPDES ID blank.

Name of MS4/Coalition

Village of Ardsley

SPDES ID

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FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9

Revitalization plan re-imagines downtown

By Kris Di Lorenzo

Tiffany Zerk, deputy director of the Pace University Land Use Law Center, and Manhattan-based land use and economic consultant Kevin Dzwaka spoke via Zoom to the Ardsley Village Board on March 7 about the consultants' Downtown Ardsley Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DARIS).

DARIS is an action plan for creating a village center, as envisioned in the Feb. 1 working document the consultants submitted to the board. The plan carries out the implementation phase of the Village's Comprehensive Plan approved in January 2021. Zerk and Dzwaka were on the team, with Skon Solutions and Clery Consulting, who in 2020 developed that plan.

DARIS includes an assessment of the downtown area, existing conditions, a list of property owners and vacant buildings and sites, renderings, and descriptions of the projected downtown center.

Zerk stated that "the current infrastructure doesn't create a walkable environment; there is a lack of housing, sidewalks, landscaping, parking, and urban design standards" and that DARIS provides "strategies for new urban development."

As part of an economic development strategy for the central business district, DARIS includes creating a Village Center Business Association and a Village Center Business Improvement District "to attract and retain property owners and provide the community with enhanced access to desired goods, services, and cultural activities."

The consultants urged the Village to take specific steps, first hiring a full- or part-time junior urban planner, creating

a new zoning code for the Village Center, and conducting a feasibility study for converting the community center into a new Civic Center Building. They believe Center Street should be the focal point of the downtown district, "anchored" by the new civic center, a multi-use building with ground-floor retail space.

"The consultants recommend hiring a land use consultant to help draft the new zoning code, prescribing mixed uses for downtown: multi-family housing and retail, commercial office, civic, and green space, with industrial uses south of Ashford Avenue."

DARIS wants the code to allow four-story buildings with ground-floor retail required for all multi-family buildings; remove requirements for minimum lot area, yard, and side setbacks; and permit five stories if a building provides more affordable housing, green building elements, public space amenities, or green infrastructure elements.

The Village is encouraged to hire a marketing and design consultant for help with branding, sell Village-owned properties to developers committed to the objectives of the new zoning code, and use sale or lease proceeds to fund construction of the civic center. The properties include the village hall site, Bridge Street parking lot, and the Saw Mill Road/Ashford Avenue northeast and southeast corners of the village hall site, respectively, a parking lot and Sullivan Park.

Kaboolian affirmed that the Village is seeking a branding strategy. On March 16 she told the Enterprise, "We are actively looking to put out RFPs [requests for proposals] for a marketing or branding person to start creating the vision we want for the village; how we want the village to be portrayed."

DARIS also provides ideas for increasing walkability, installing more sidewalks, creating better access to the Saw Mill Parkway, and building a parking garage into a multi-family housing development, possibly on the village hall site.

Zerk explained that DARIS "gives action and guidance for the Village staff to move the next step forward, but also noted that it's a working document subject to change, according to the economy and market conditions."

However, she added, "We don't want this document to sit on a shelf. It's a guide, it has goals, and as you move forward in it, and conditions change, you continue to look at it, refine it, and work with your staff on it."

Kaboolian assured Zerk and Dzwaka that the Village government was "immediately working on zoning changes and will be addressing it in a month or two going forward."

Dzwaka and Kaboolian had another exchange about the intersection of Ashford Avenue and Saw Mill Road. Dzwaka said that since the Village-owned properties at the corners (Sullivan Park, and the parking lot) were "in play," mixed-use development might be a better use of those locations. He urged the Village to send out an RFP "and invite developers to take advantage of different land use regulations and zoning changes" to create "a welcoming, mixed-use development linking both sides of Ashford Avenue and inviting people to continue onward into the village."

Regarding proposed changes in building heights and setbacks, Dzwaka explained they'd increase the housing

stock, now limited mostly to single-family homes, by creating other housing for a diverse population, including people without families, recent graduates, and older people who want to age in place but can't afford homeownership or property taxes.

The junior urban planner who would be in charge of DARIS should have expertise in zoning, land use, branding, and implementation, would liaise with merchants and the business community, and cultivate relationships with developers, among other functions. "It is not the stuff for a board of trustees to get bogged down in," Dzwaka opined. Kaboolian said she liked the idea of an urban planner.

The "urban" vision for downtown is a picture of increased "street life"—more walking, less driving, and more parking for those who do drive; people dining out or taking worldly lunch at local establishments; strolling along sidewalks that lead to new shops, other businesses, recreational, or cultural activities, and enjoying new spaces to gather with friends—amenities mentioned in surveys of residents during the Comprehensive Plan process.

Kaboolian expressed her own thoughts about the directions Ardsley may take. "Developers will come to the village and know what our vision is for this village," she said. "For these decisions, what we do today, here is going to impact what happens years from now. What I do today to look like in 10 or 15 years?"

In any case, she concluded, the work would take 10 to 20 years. "I'm excited about it. It's not going to happen while I'm mayor, but at least I'll feel I had some part in getting the ball rolling."

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The new Ardsley Pollinator Pathway program presents "Veggie Mania" this Sunday, March 20, 10:30 a.m. soon after the community center. Kick off spring by learning about vegetable and herb gardening and how to start your own garden. Get the seeds and enjoy coffee, tea and green. There will also be activities for kids. Visit ardsleyvillage.com/pollinator.



Roch Agarwal and Linda Kell

'Veggie Mania' offers help for edible gardens

By Kris Di Lorenzo

"Veggie Mania" will spend its Ardsley this Sunday, March 20, at the Pollinator Pathway Project area of its vegetable and herb gardening initiative.

The free, six-person program at the Ardsley Community Center features two local residents who are experienced gardeners, Linda Kell and Dr. Roch Agarwal, who will demonstrate how to grow herbs and vegetables in pots and in the ground.

Kell, who has been gardening since she was a child, said she has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child. She has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child. She has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child.

Agarwal, who has been gardening since she was a child, said she has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child. She has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child.

Two different types of vegetables, explain how to pick a spot for planting outside around a question, and provide outdoor help. Adults will receive a packet of tomato, bean, or lettuce seeds for starting their own plants.

Children are included in the program. They'll learn about germinating seeds in biodegradable pots in plastic bags attached to the legume with the right amount of moisture until the beans sprout, then planting it, either in a pot or in the ground.

Kell, who has been gardening since she was a child, said she has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child. She has been growing herbs in pots and in the ground since she was a child.

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have organic produce everything grown at the community garden, and organic. To protect the vegetables from wildlife, Agarwal told them in a small greenhouse and in pots surrounded by netting. "You learn by your mistakes," she said. She grows tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, squash, eggplants, and all kinds of peppers. "I can have about 100."

Agarwal wants people to know that in three or four months, they can grow vegetables with a small box, dirt, and seeds. "I'll usually have started seeds in water trays, then planted them in big pots. The first thing I tell people is, please do not start with things that are hard to grow. I am not teaching them to grow, then replant them. This time of year, she said, people can start planting seeds inside."

Agarwal's family has an opinion about her choices in plants. "My first thing as soon as I come home to check every leaf, it reflects the stress. I know at all times. I tell her they are going to be by giving us cucumbers. My kids said, 'Mommy, are you crazy? I think we need another house because you have taken over the whole backyard, we have no space to play.'"

"I have boxes everywhere," Agarwal admitted.

The Pollinator Pathway Project presents Veggie Mania at the community center, 14 Center St., on March 20, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Admission is free. For information, visit ardsleyvillage.com/pollinator.

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Points of View FROM THE EDITOR



Spring cleaning

The arrival of spring on March 20 heralds the return of end-of-year events, including two annual cleanups scheduled for the two rivers that define the Rivertowns.

On Saturday, April 23, will be the Great Saw Mill River Cleanup organized by Groundwork Hudson Valley, a nonprofit based in Yonkers that has spent decades leading efforts to remove trash along the Saw Mill River, and to replace invasive vegetation with native species.

Of the six cleanup locations, four will be in the Rivertowns — Barragat Avenue in Hastings, Lawrence Street at the border of Ardsley and Dobbs Ferry, Bridge Street Plaza in Ardsley, and the Great Huguenot Memorial/Woodlands Lake in Irvington. The remaining two will be in southwest Yonkers.

The ceiling fan (pictured above) and assorted construction debris were photographed on Feb. 19 on the dead end road off Lawrence Street, between the Saw Mill River Parkway and the South County Trailway. That dead end is a magnet for illegal dumping. In addition, users of the trail park there.

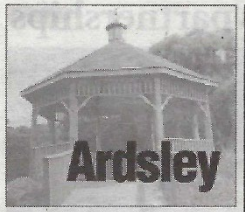
On Feb. 19, volunteers from Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, and Hastings, as well as two residents of New York City, spent two hours lopping invasive vegetation south of Lawrence Street. They also picked up trash.

Groundwork Hudson Valley has posted information about the Great Saw Mill River Cleanup on its website (groundwork.org), including links to register for each site. The cleanup will start at 10 a.m. and end at 1 p.m.

Next will be the Riverkeeper Sweep on Saturday, May 7. The deadline to organize a site is Monday, March 21. Registration for all of the sites will begin Friday, April 1. For more information, visit riverkeeper.org, click news and events, and then click events.

The sites usually include River Glen Cove in Hastings, Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry, and Scenic Hudson Park in Irvington. In 2021, there were 146 sites between New York City and upstate New York.

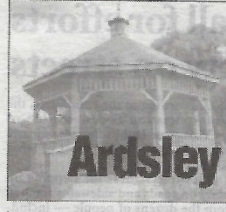
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Happenings

Volunteer for Westchester Parks Foundation's **invasive plant cleanup** at V.E. Macy Park on Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) next Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Register by finding the event at ardsleyvillage.com/calendar. For questions, email volunteer@thwpc.org.

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Happenings

Volunteer for Westchester Parks Foundation's **invasive plant cleanup** at V.E. Macy Park on Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) this Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Visit ardsleyvillage.com/calendar-2022 to register. For questions, email volunteer@thwpc.org.

Screening on Thursday, April 21, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom, of the short film "The Sacrifice Zone," followed by a countywide discussion about transitioning from trash incineration to sustainable, zero-waste alternatives. Visit ardsleyvillage.com/earth-day-2022 for the link.

Celebrate **Earth Day** by installing the new pollinator gardens at the Ardsley Public Library and preparing Sullivan Park on Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 1-3:30 p.m. Rain date April 24. Visit ardsleyvillage.com/earth-day-2022 to register.

Ardsley Cares celebrates Earth Day with volunteer opportunities on Saturday, April 23, including gardening throughout the village from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; trash cleanup throughout the village from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; and rock painting at the high school from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Rain date April 24. To sign up, visit https://bit.ly/3lWVnJ0.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9



Bamboo be gone

Ardsley Garden Club president Linda Kell cuts bamboo during an invasive vegetation removal effort that the Westchester Parks Foundation held at V.E. Macy Park on Saturday, April 9.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9

Revisions to zoning code seek to spur revitalization

By Kris DiLorenzo

Ardsley residents will have a chance to weigh in on proposed amendments to the village code — specifically changes to the General Business (B1) and Residence Office (RO) zoning districts — at a public hearing this Monday, April 18.

The amendments will address permitted residential and commercial uses, building heights, and parking requirements in the downtown and transitional downtown/residential area covered by those zones.

In a March 16 memo to Mayor Nancy Kabeolian and the village trustees, building inspector Larry Tomaso wrote, "... these are relatively minor amendments that I believe will help spur development in these districts by eliminating some development hurdles while bringing the code a step closer in line with the recently adopted comprehensive plan and the Downtown Ardsley Revitalization Implementation Strategy."

He also noted, "However, they are not meant to be exhaustive and are not a substitute for the major revisions to the code that will be necessary to move these plans forward."

According to the village code, "because existing single-family residential areas with frontage on arterial streets may be situated in a transitional location near commercial developed properties," the RO district was created "to both protect those existing residences from potentially objectionable commercial development while allowing limited types of compatible transitional business uses consistent with the residential character of the area."

Currently, in the B1 district, which includes Center Street and the municipal building, and has borders at American Legion Drive and the Saw Mill River, the code permits the operation of any type of retail store and shop in the general business district, training or skill development not in a school or academic program, including but not limited to martial arts and dance studios, gyms, and exercise facilities, tutoring centers, and similar uses.

Building height limits in the B1 district would be increased from a maximum of 30 feet to a maximum of 40, and from a maximum of two stories above the grade plane to four. The maximum height of an accessory building would be increased from 15 to 20 feet.

Currently, when two or more different "uses" share the same parking facility or lot(s), if one or more of those establishments steps operating, the joint use of parking spaces automatically ends. The proposed zoning change would have the joint use of parking spaces automatically end when a change of use by one or more of the establishments occurs.

In the RO district, an inset bordered by Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A), Vets. May Park, and the New Croton Aqueduct, the proposed zoning changes would affect multi-family buildings, the major change being that in all such buildings, residential

uses would be permitted on the ground floor, Kabeolian explained to the Enterprise. For the RO district, this makes the buildings economically feasible as well. If you can't get retail business in, the owners still want to rent the property."

Development requirements not presently specified in the code would be stated: maximum building height would be 40 feet, or four stories above the grade plane, and maximum building coverage can't exceed 40 percent of the lot area.

Other adjustments state that in the RO district, all standards and requirements regarding permitted uses will be the same as those for the B1 and R3 (a large residential district stretching between unincorporated Crotonburgh to the juncture of Hamilton Road and American Legion Drive), except that nonresidential off-street parking is not required.

These proposed amendments to the code evolved from the recommendations in the Downtown Ardsley Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DARIS) "working document" presented to the board on March 7 by consultants Kevin Dwyer and the Pace University Land Use Law Center. DARIS was developed in alignment with the comprehensive plan's goals and objectives of revitalizing Ardsley's underutilized and vacant properties, diversifying housing opportunities, and adopting more flexible zoning code standards.

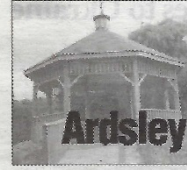
Regarding DARIS, Village Manager Joe Cerretti said, "It doesn't affect any existing uses. It does provide more flexibility and greater potential for the redevelopment of [landlord's] properties." Asked whether the zoning changes would affect traffic at the Ashford Avenue/9A intersection, he stated, "The Village does not anticipate, at this point, any adverse impacts to traffic at that intersection."

Kabeolian offered another viewpoint on any changes in the traffic situation as the downtown area develops. "If you're going to create development that's going to potentially create housing, unless we have a much more robust transportation system, people are going to have cars. You have to think about this all the time... We are fortunate because we have two bus lines that go through the village... the #65, you catch right on Ashford Avenue, it takes you to the Dobbs Ferry train station. The #39 takes you to the Hartsdale station. I used to park at the McDowell Park parking lot to take that train. It's very doable, particularly if you work in New York City and have a regular work schedule."

The mayor is sanguine about what the zoning changes, if approved, can mean for the village. "We're excited to start the implementation of our comp plan by making some of these changes to our zoning code to make our development more robust and easier in our downtown area."

To view the comprehensive plan and DARIS, go to the new website: bit.ly/37G1j50

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FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2022

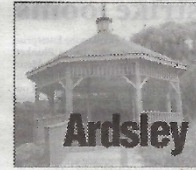


Happenings

Screening on Thursday, April 21, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom of the short film "The Sacrifice Zone," followed by a community discussion about environmental justice and alternatives to sustainable, zero-waste alternatives. Visit ardsleycan.org/cardi-day-2022 for the link.

Celebrate Earth Day by installing the new pollinator gardens at the Ardsley Public Library and preparing Silliman Park on Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 1-3:30 p.m. Rain date April 24. Visit ardsleycan.org/earth-day-2022 to register.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022



Happenings

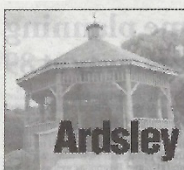
Celebrate Earth Day by installing the new pollinator gardens at the public library and preparing Silliman Park this Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 1-3:30 p.m. Rain date April 24. Visit ardsleycan.org/earth-day-2022 to register.

Ardsley Cares celebrates Earth Day with volunteer opportunities this Saturday, April 23, including trash clean-up throughout the village from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; and rock painting at the high school from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Rain date April 24. To sign up, visit <https://bit.ly/3l1wVn0>.

Groundwork Hudson Valley hosts the Great Saw Mill River Cleanup this Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Visit groundworkhudsonvalley.org to sign up to volunteer at a location in Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, or Irvington. Rain date April 30.

The Ardsley SAYF Coalition and police department sponsor Drug Take-Back Day next Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at village hall. Bring unwanted, unused, and expired prescription or over-the-counter medication for disposal.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2022



Happenings

The Ardsley SAYF Coalition and police department sponsor Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at village hall. Bring unwanted, unused, and expired prescription or over-the-counter medication for disposal.

The garden club hosts a plant sale featuring annuals, herbs, and vegetable plants next Saturday, May 7, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the community center.

Join the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway program to install a pollinator demonstration garden at Anthony E. Veteran Park on Saturday, May 14. Register for a time slot, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 1-3:30 p.m., at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org. Rain date May 15.

The next Veggie Mania Free Seedling Exchange hosted by the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway program is Sunday, May 15, 12:30-3 p.m. at the community center. Get free seeds and one-on-one vegetable gardening advice. Visit ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

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Carol Sommerfield, Linda Aziz, Pierce Dillon, Noah Segal, and Milena Chan work at the library.

Native plants take root at library and park

By Kris DiLorenzo

Volunteers descended upon the Ardsley Public Library and Silliman Park, at the southeast corner of Ashford Avenue and Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A), to plant native vegetation on Saturday, April 23, in honor of Earth Day.

The effort was spearheaded by the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Project (PPP), which is part of Ardsley CAN by 2050, an initiative to reduce the village's carbon footprint.

The library project drew volunteers who ranged from age 6 into their 70s. It was led by Pollinator Pathway Committee chair Carol Sommerfield, garden club president Linda Aziz, and Girl Scout troop leader Miriam Sasalau, whose daughter Calista (Ardsley High School Class of 2020) started the garden in 2019, and younger daughter, seventh grader Calista, continued with her Scout troop.

Through the garden club, the Bronx River Sound Shore Audubon Society chapter awarded a \$3,500 grant to the PPP to create native gardens that support pollinators throughout the season.

Village Trustee Steve Edelstein led the Silliman Park effort, where Boy Scouts and their parents worked with other community members. Edelstein is the village board liaison to the Garden

Club and the PPP. The Village funded the Silliman Park work.

Ardsley's Department of Public Works supplied the mulch, compost, wheelbarrows, shovels, water truck, and other necessities for both projects. "We did much of the heavy lifting for us," Sommerfield noted on April 25.

"The goal is to supply blooms, which means nectar and pollen, from April through late October, to support our pollinators throughout the season," Sommerfield explained. "Some of our host butterfly plants are pussytoes, asters, golden Alexanders, heandrogens, redjacks, milkweed, black-eyed Susans, and coneflowers. We also planted some of the 10 best pollinator plants for bees

Gardens

and butterflies, such as mountain mint and milk yucca. The diversity of the gardens will ensure our threatened, specialized native bees are also supported."

The gardens will ultimately be full of perennials, though for the first few years they will incorporate pollinator-friendly yet deer-resistant annuals such as zinnias, cosmos, and salvia while the perennials become established.

Volunteers prepared garden beds at the library using what Sommerfield calls the "lasagna" method.

"You place an inch of compost or leaf mulch on the planting area, and water it, then place a thick layer of newspaper, 10 to 12 sheets, on the garden around the plants and water it thoroughly," she elaborated. "Place 3 inches of compost on top of the newspapers and water it again. Dig in the plants, place 3 inches of mulch on top of the garden and water it all again."

The upper garden to the left of the library entrance was a test of community spirit.

"One of my favorite memories was at the end of the day when we had to mulch the large garden," Sommerfield recalled. "We were all very tired, and spontaneously we formed three groups to create a mulch brigade. One group of Girl Scouts filled pots with mulch, a group of adults took the pots and brought them over to another Girl Scout group in the garden, who then spread the mulch through the garden. It was fast and such a great example of teamwork. We got the mulching done in no time and enjoyed teamwork at its best."

The volunteers at Silliman Park



Steve Edelstein works at Silliman Park

expanded an effort that began in 2017, resurrecting the overgrown area named for Arthur Silliman, head of Ardsley's public schools from 1922-1958. The park, which is a woodland garden, a meadow, and Bramble Brook, where native trees and shrubs supplied by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Trees for Life program were planted.

"On Saturday we planted 144 perennials," Edelstein stated, listing black-eyed Susans, purple coneflowers, asters, and purple and yellow coreopsis. "We estimated that we dug over 200 holes. We also planted some grasses, ground cover, and sedges. The major work was planting perennials right at the corner, near the Ashford Avenue bus stop, so people can see it. Then we filled in plantings at other spots."

We also planted additional shrubs — arrowwood viburnum, inkberry, oak-leaf hydrangea — and moved some red-twig dogwoods.

Before they could plant, the volunteers had to evict unwanted tenants. "We did take out thousands of dandelions — the invasion of the dandelions. We dug those out by hand to get down under them to try to get out the whole root."

"The ultimate goal," he said, "is to have something there that's self-maintaining... Visually attractive, colorful... in places that people pass by every day, so they can have examples to look at and think about planting their own gardens. That's really what the Pollinator Pathway is all about — to create patches of pollinator-friendly plantings all throughout the community."

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Ardsley Pollinator Pathway. Arkin's garden ranges from a sunny front yard and to woodland backyard. Nordheim and George are filling their backyard with woodland native plants and *Erigeron*. Some examples: "Not English ivy or periwinkles. You can still drop them off Friday [June 3], but they should be labeled with the common name."

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George Latimer, Peter Tartaglia, Ken Jenkins, Jewel Williams Johnson, Kathy O'Connor, Marylene Shimsky, and Ellen Hendrick during the press conference.

Officials mark completion of repaved trail

Repaving part of the South County Trailway, which started last spring, wrapped up with a press conference on the morning of Friday, June 3. Westchester County Executive George Latimer led the event, which was held alongside the trail to be on Lawrence Street in Ardsley.

The \$3.1 million project rebuilt the 6.4-mile section of the trailway from Barney Street in Yonkers to Route 119 in Elmsford. Parking lots for the trailway were also repaved, including the Harragut Avenue lot off I-285 in the northbound Saw Mill River Parkway.

In total, the South County Trailway is 14.1 miles, from the border between the Bronx and Yonkers to the Eastview section of Greenburgh, where it connects with the 22.1-mile North County Trailway, which continues to the border between Westchester and Putnam counties.

The two trails follow the track bed of the Putnam Division of the New York Central Railroad which operated until passenger service ceased in 1958 and freight service in 1982. The Put was the successor of the New York City & Northern Railroad, which began operation in 1880. The railroad served 23 stations in Westchester, including Ardsley, Chaucery in Dobbs Ferry, and Mount Hope in Hastings.

Latimer was joined by Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, County Legislators Marylene Shimsky and Jewel Williams Johnson, two representatives of the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation — commissioner Kathy O'Connor and first deputy commissioner Peter Tartaglia — and Ellen Hendrick, the director for research for Latimer and a member of the Greenburgh Town Council.

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Residents seek solution to flooding issue

By Lisa D'Amico

On July 18, when the floodwaters rose, some residents in the neighborhood of the dam had to evacuate. When the floodwaters receded, the residents found their homes and businesses flooded. The floodwaters were caused by heavy rain and a storm surge. The residents are now seeking a solution to the flooding issue.

The residents are now seeking a solution to the flooding issue. They are looking for a way to prevent the floodwaters from coming back. They are looking for a way to protect their homes and businesses from the floodwaters.

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Dona Perrotti's photo of debris in her home on July 18



Dona Perrotti's photo of debris under her home on July 18

THE RIVERTOWNS Enterprise

VOLUME 47, NUMBER 20 • AUGUST 12, 2022

Dam removal to reshape part of Saw Mill

By Kris D'Amico

REGION — Westchester County has begun a \$4.5 million project to reshape the 13-acre Woodlands Lake by removing part of the dam that forms it, and then reconfiguring that area of the Saw Mill River with a pedestrian bridge, trails and pools, and native plantings.

Situated off the northbound Saw Mill River Parkway, the lake was built by building a concrete and stone dam across the river in 1940. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation determined that the dam is deficient, but not dangerous.

"The dam is not unsafe. It's not going to collapse," said Peter Tartaglia, first deputy commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. It added that this is not a flood mitigation project.

To preserve the lake, Westchester County would need to build a new dam, which would be more expensive than removing part of the current dam.

"We would have had to put up a bigger dam, a fortress, based on development, downtown," Tartaglia said, explaining that communities south of the dam had allowed the construction of homes and businesses in the floodplain. "You see this all over Westchester near the rivers and parkways."

Tartaglia also mentioned that much of the South County Trailway is in that floodplain. "The 14.1-mile trail parallels the Saw Mill River from Eastview to Yonkers and passes Woodlands Lake."

"It would be safer to remove the dam to avoid any future creating [of the water] during storm events,"

Dam removal

Tartaglia continued, "Now that we've had the experience of 104, obviously some of this [incident] is changing weather patterns and climate change, and 104 is certainly proof of flooding events worsening in our area."

Papito Construction Co. of Caran, in Putnam County, started draining the lake this month. Once that's accomplished, construction can start on the pedestrian bridge, which will replace the walkway atop the dam.

"It's going to be very pretty, but also going to serve as a re-stabilization area for the part of the river we're reconfiguring," Tartaglia elaborated.

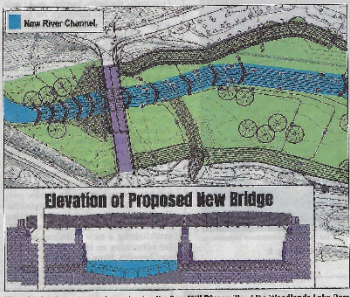
Westchester County Parks Commissioner Kathy O'Connor referred to the change as "reshaping the river," an effort to help keep woodlands south of the park from flooding and enable kids to swim unattended to where the Saw Mill River flows into the Hudson River in Yonkers.

The Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) for the project coordinates O'Connor's objectives.

"The project will change the site from a lake habitat to a riparian habitat," the EAF reports. "The riverbed will be altered into a flow channel that will support aquatic life. The stone walls of less than 1 foot will create pools that will accommodate fish and allow for fish passage. The project includes an extensive planning plan that will restore the site to natural habitat that will support native wildlife."

The EAF also notes, "Over 20 new trees, all native species, will be planted." Construction is estimated to last 12-18 months. During that time, the entrance off the Saw Mill River Parkway will be closed and that section of the park will be off limits.

Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Ieremi, who cycles the South County Trailway, is looking forward to the change. "There'll be some inconvenience during construction," he acknowledged. "It'll be on another trail. Sometimes you have to have a little inconvenience to have long-term gain."



Westchester County's plan for reshaping the Saw Mill River without the Woodlands Lake Dam

MS4 Annual Report Form

This report is being submitted for the reporting period ending March 9, 2023
If submitting this form as part of a joint report on behalf of a coalition leave SPDES ID blank.

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Name of MS4/Coalition Village of Ardsley

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2022



New England Aster grows in Rebecca Arkin's mailbox garden

THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE

Pollinator Pathway issues garden guides

By Kris DiLorenzo

The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Project has released three "Mailbox Gardens How-To Guides" — step-by-step instructions for creating pollinator gardens of different types and sizes.

A "mailbox garden" isn't strictly defined as a flowerbed surrounding a mailbox post. The guides, downloadable from ardsley-pollinatorpathway.org, provide the design, a list of necessary materials and their quantities, and a list of appropriate plants for a wildflower, grass and sod, or pollinator garden — no mailbox required.

The smallest mailbox gardens start in containers, holding a recommended three to five plants, according to the chosen type of garden. A mini-garden measures 5 feet in circumference, a small one is 8 feet, a large one, 12 feet. Each guide includes colorful layouts illustrated with suggestions for plants that attract pollinators. The wildflower garden's "Meet Your Plants" section comprises nearly four pages of selections, arranged in order of their blooming times.

Carol Sommerfeld, the driving force behind the Pollinator Pathway and a gardener since 1995, wrote the guides as a result of her experience providing free garden consultations. After each consultation, Sommerfeld prepared individual plans for the gardeners. Dina Paterson, now a member of the Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee, met Sommerfeld when she requested a garden consult. Paterson was excited about getting started on her gardening but found the information overwhelming.

"She didn't know where to start," Sommerfeld wrote to the Enterprise, "so she had a great idea to create a simple 'recipe' that anyone could follow, step-by-step." She designed and wrote the guides and Dina provided the real-life feedback and ideas on what people starting out would need to know. Paterson mentioned that many new families were moving to Ardsley, and though they wanted to help pollinators and the ecosystem, they needed the basics and a clear guide.

Rebecca Arkin made use of the guide for her wildflower mailbox garden. Arkin moved to Ardsley about two years ago and expanded from indoor to outdoor gardening last year. After clearing invasive species from a section of her yard, she asked for a consultation about replacing them with native plants. After her meeting with Sommerfeld, Arkin said, "I just about a 60-page print-out.

She sent me an extremely detailed explanation of a plan." Arkin, a former strategist for satellite technology, recognized that though she's an organized person, "You think you want to do it, and it's overwhelming." She used the mailbox guide. "I did a proper mailbox garden — I have a real mailbox — a 6-foot circle." Arkin allowed pre-existing noninvasive hydrangea to remain; its blooms have turned from white to pink. She installed purple, pink, and candy-striped phlox, yellow cornopsis, purple New England asters, lilac penstemon, echinacea, hummingbird mint, and black-eyed Susans that the wildlife thought "was a delicious lure to discover, so it didn't end up blooming."

Arkin also applied the plant suggestions to other parts of her property and now has seven different gardens. Sommerfeld notes that mailbox gardens can also be square or oblong. "The guide is just that a guide on how to get started."

Sommerfeld and Paterson made sure to recommend native plants that can be found in local nurseries and even big-box stores, or bought as seedlings from online suppliers and shipped to each home. Most of the plants Arkin bought were available at Rosedale Nurseries in Hawthorne. "The only way it could be easier," she said of using the guide "is if there was an instant buy or 'it's very straightforward'."

The guides offer a choice between two ways of preparing a garden: digging or no digging. Digging requires organic compost, natural shredded pine bark mulch, and no guesswork: a guide tells how many bags of each will be needed for each size garden.

The "lasagna" method of planting calls for layering cardboard, newspaper, mulch, lawn clippings, compost or manure, liberally mulched between the guide gives directions for creating each layer.

The guides also include explanations of which species of pollinators use which types of plants as "hosts," tips for discouraging what some people consider unwanted pollinators, such as wasps and hornets, and information on endangered pollinators. "One of my personal goals with the gardens was to use not only native plants but also host plants, thereby supporting butterflies and moths in their adult and caterpillar stages," Sommerfeld stated. "I have found when performing free garden consults that people really love to know specifically what they are supporting and how. That is why there is a section that describes how the plants specifically support pollinators."

Arkin has been seeing the fruits of her labor since planting her mailbox garden in May. "Every time I passed by it this summer, there were at least a half-dozen bees, butterflies, and moths there," she affirmed. "I've seen a lot of bees since switching to native plants this year. The adults are pollinators; they eat pollen and nectar."

Sommerfeld confirmed that the next mailbox guide will be for gardeners to support monarch butterflies. On April 11, Ardsley Mayor Nancy Kabboulian signed the National Wildlife Federation Mayor's Monarch Pledge, which states, in part: "The Village is committed to and (has) already taken many actions to help the monarch butterfly including increasing public awareness of the issue and encouraging residents to build gardens for monarchs."

The Village is aware of the importance of saving monarchs and other pollinators, and believes that encouraging the expansion of native plantings will not only benefit monarchs but all native species, as well as providing natural and beautiful spaces for Village residents."

Arkin is pleased with her mailbox garden. "I just dug and mulched and hoped for the best," she volunteered. "Will I win any awards from any botanical societies? Maybe not, but I'm getting two thumbs up from the birds and the bees."

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9

Ardsley Cares Day resumes good-deed marathon format

By Kris DiLorenzo

Ardsley Cares Day returns to full pre-pandemic fervor this month, with nearly two dozen activities to benefit more than 20 organizations, all taking place on Saturday, Oct. 29, between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.

In 2021, to allow for social distancing, the all-volunteer event was spread out. Dubbed "Ardsley Cares All Year," each month was devoted to a specific activity. In 2020, the day devoted to good deeds was canceled.

Sponsored by the PTA since 2008, Ardsley Cares Day this year is reaching out to communities as disparate as the residents of senior living complexes, animal shelters, and the Ardsley Children's Center.

Helmed by co-chairs Melissa Iannuzzo-Feldman, Linda Lipka, and Sarika Chawla, Ardsley Cares Day organizers have posted online guidance for which kinds of donations are suitable for which organizations. There are also online sign-up sheets for volunteers to choose shifts for clothing, food, and toy drives; cleanup programs and outdoor beautification projects; and direct donations. Visit ardsleypta.org/ardsley-cares.html.

Once again, children can volunteer to play sports and games with special needs children at the Ardsley Field Day; the Youth Movement Against Alzheimer's (YMADA) can work on crafts with Alzheimer's; and at the end of the final shift, those with driver's licenses will caravan to some of the organizations that are

recipients of the clothing, canned goods, books, sporting equipment, and other items collected during the day.

Some volunteer shifts have been filling up. The Ardsley Children's Field Day, sorting and packing toiletry kits for local women's shelters, painting rocks for the Peaceful Playground at Concord Road School, reading to children at the Ardsley Library, and sorting sporting goods for youth programs and children in need are popular.

Animal shelters are in luck. At Ardsley Middle School, volunteers will bake dog biscuits for the Yonkers Animal Shelter, or make dog toys and catnip pillows for Paws Crossed in Elmsford; others will bake dog biscuits at SPCA Westchester in Briarcliff Manor.

Several of the day's approximately 20 committees, each of which oversees an activity, are promoting environmental consciousness. "Go Green Thumb," sponsored by the Ardsley Garden Club, gives children of all ages the opportunity to spruce up and plant bulbs at the middle school's Pollinator Garden. The Greenburgh Nature Center in Scarsdale will hold separate children's and teen sessions to teach about sheet mulching, a way to combat invasive plants and help create a meadow. Pascon Park will be the setting for an activity open to those 12 and over: a tour of the rain garden, an explanation of how to manage stormwater, pollution, and ecology — and daffodil planting in the process.

Lipka, Iannuzzo-Feldman, and Regina Dossio co-chaired the 2021 event. Iannuzzo-Feldman told the Enterprise on Oct. 3 that despite restrictions imposed by Covid-19, "We collected hundreds of toys from the community... at least 80 jackets, 50 pairs of boots. Hundreds of toiletry bags were made, hundreds of sandwich bags, at least 200 bags of sweatpants, coats, gloves scarves, hundreds of sweatshirts. People set up Amazon wish lists and sent it to us at the [Ardsley-Secor Volunteer] Ambulance Corps, because we had so many donations."

This year, from October 25 through October 29, each school will have a donation drop-off area," she continued. "A bus will be planted at the police station where you can drop off donations."

The PTA will have need of more volunteers for sorting and packing career clothing and laptops for the Foster Teen Employment Network; gently used or new fall or winter clothing for infants to adults, for the Sharing Shelf; and kitchenware, bedding, towels, toiletries, and children's pajamas, for Hope's Door, a shelter for victims of domestic violence.

The Sharing Shelf is a Port Chester-based clothing bank founded to meet the basic material needs of low-income children and teens in Westchester County, and help them remain in school by providing them with personal hygiene items and appropriate clothing.

"We started planning months ago," Iannuzzo-Feldman noted. "This event has been in the works since last April. After volunteers sign up, she explained, in one or two weeks, they'll start receiving e-blasts about what they need to do for their particular event. "We'll remind people to start collecting their items, and start reminding them about where to donate," she added.

The Ardsley Cares Day committee, especially its co-chairs, will be in constant motion well beyond October. Iannuzzo-Feldman stated, "We literally could not do it without each other." She and Lipka are chairing again this year because, she explained, "It's a great event. It's a great way for a family to come out and help families in need, to help others, which is why we're all doing it."

PAGE 6 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022



Hastings reads to Kira Morn and his father, Michael, plant a tree.

THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE

120 native plants added to Chauncey Park

One hundred and twenty native shrubs and trees were planted at Chauncey Park on Saturday, Oct. 15. The park is adjacent to the Saw Mill River Parkway, between the Ashford Avenue Bridge to the north and River Avenue Square to the south.

The Dobbs Ferry Conservation Commission hosted the event, which attracted volunteers, members of the Climate Safe Yonkers Task Force and members of the Green Team, which consists of students enrolled in public high schools in Yonkers.

Groundwork Hudson Valley, a nonprofit based in Yonkers, runs the task force and the Green Team, which helps maintain seven ecological restoration sites along the Saw Mill River between Yonkers and Mount Pleasant. Groundwork Hudson Valley also hosts the annual Great Saw Mill River Cleanup.

The plants were supplied by Trees for Tribes, a program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program. Beth Ruessler, the riparian buffer coordinator for the Hudson

River Estuary Program, was on hand. In addition, the DEC supplied plastic tubes to protect the plants, wooden stakes to hold up the tubes, and mats to suppress weeds.

The shrubs and trees were added to

65 planted in October 2020, 75 planted in May 2021 and 65 planted in October 2021. In addition, invasive vegetation has been removed from the site, including knotweed, mugwort, mulberry, rose, and porcelain berry.

PAGE 12 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022

Points of View FROM THE EDITOR



Lancaster-Oakley Earth Observatory will lead a public meeting on the Piermont Pier on July 11, 2023.

Weigh in on water

Tuesday, Oct. 18, is the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Clean Water Act, which was approved by Congress, signed by President Richard Nixon, and then approved again by Congress, which overrode the veto.

Tuesday, Oct. 25 is the deadline to submit input to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), which will use that info to decide whether to redesign certain saline waterways, including the Hudson River south of the New Bloomfield Bridge and tributaries such as the Saw Mill River.

The DEC classifies waters based, in part, on how people use them. Waters used for activities that involve ingestion or immersion, such as swimming, must meet higher standards under the Clean Water Act. To meet such standards, investments in stormwater and wastewater infrastructure could be necessary.

To collect data in time for the Oct. 25 deadline, Riverkeeper, Save the Sound, and the NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program created an online map (<https://riverkeepingsp.org/water-recreation.html>). The map allows the public to click on a spot and then fill out a survey about how they use the water at that location.

Last month, an email blast from Riverkeeper included an estimate that Hudson River watershed communities need to spend \$3.1 billion to repair or upgrade wastewater infrastructure.

The watershed suffers at times from combined sewage overflow, which centers from stormwater and wastewater discharging into the river. During dry weather, wastewater flows to treatment plants before being discharged into the Hudson. During heavy rain, stormwater and wastewater mix and then bypass the treatment plants to avoid overwhelming them. Westchester County owns the closest treatment plant to the Riverkeepers, located in Yonkers.

Every month from May to October, Riverkeeper, the Lancaster-Oakley Earth Observatory, and Queens College test water collected between New York City and Westford for fecal contamination. Riverkeeper posts the results on its website. The DEC will consider water testing data. For water use data, the map offers the best option for the public to weigh in.

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PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022



Red chokeberry in Linda Aziz's garden

Pollinator pros lay groundwork for winter

By Kris DiLorenzo

Ardsley's Pollinator Pathway cadre gave gardeners and would-be gardeners tips on how to prepare for winter — and see the results of their efforts in the spring — via a Zoom presentation on Oct. 12. PP, launched in March 2021, is a subcommittee of the Village's Climate Advisory Committee.

Members of PP and its Veggie Garden Mania team provided guidance to follow in the coming months to protect pollinators, grow native plants, and produce vegetables. The first step in the process is contrary to what many homeowners do: maintaining a manicured lawn (which PP states is the most irrigated crop in America) by disposing of grass clippings, dead leaves and brush, tree stumps and logs, dead-heading plants, and cutting down stalks.

Instead, PP team member Linda Aziz urged her audience, "Leave your leaves." She recommended that rather than blowing or raking, use fallen leaves and other organic debris as mulch for cultivating plants and creating hospitable habitats for pollinators, first doing a final weeding and removing even the smallest invasive plants.

"Birds need leaf litter" for shelter and to find insects during the winter, Aziz said. Also, some bees overwinter in stalks, under grasses and seiges, in animal burrows, and under logs.

For those who don't have the time or the will to engage in a labor-intensive process, PP highlighted the "Lazy Gardener" approach. For example, scraping the seeds out of a tomato or pepper rather than buying seeds at a nursery to save time and money.

To collect seeds from flowers, shrubs, and trees, Carol Sommerfeld, chair of the PP team, advised "keeping an eye on plants after they've flowered" — seeds are generally ready from four to eight weeks afterward. "Look for seed pods that are dry, brown, or bursting," she said. "On a dry day when seeds are ripe, they're easy to remove." Sommerfeld cautioned against using seeds that have fallen to the ground, because they're prone to mold and fungus.

Another "Don't" is collecting seed or plants from public land or collecting from endangered species. The latter is a violation of the Environmental Conservation Law.

Winter is the time to plant native

seeds outdoors. "The easiest plants for seed collection," Sommerfeld noted, "are coneflowers, goldenrods, asters, columbine, great blue lobelia, cardinal flower, phlox, black-eyed Susans, mistflower, penstemon, sunflowers, jewelweed, and grasses or sedges."

Regarding vegetables, she said, "... plant indoors before the last frost or directly in the ground after the first frost." Tomatoes, beans, peas, peppers, and lettuce seeds are easy to harvest and grow. To keep soil from losing nutrients in harsh winter weather, Linda Caldwell, of the Veggie Gardening Mania team suggested planting cover crops such as red or sweet clover, rye, or oats in the fall, four weeks before the first frost.

PP team member Kathy Evers elaborated on the "Lazy Gardener" way of preparing or expanding a garden for spring: through sheet composting, to plant without digging.

After mowing grass as short as possible, one should leave the clippings, then "smother the grass" with at least six to eight sheets of newspaper, cardboard, or Ram board (made of 100 percent reclaimed paper) and a second layer of compost and/or wood chips, covering the area, and water thoroughly so the material is wet. She guaranteed that any gaps in the material would let grass grow through, requiring extra work in the spring to clean it up before planting.

Finally, the area should be covered with at least 6 inches of compost and/or small wood chips similar to mulch, then watered. A thick, compact layer of compost and/or mulch is necessary so "critters" have less ability to reach and shred the paper.

A gardener without a large yard can use small containers or planting boxes outdoors, using leaves to protect the soil, and securing or other type of barrier that allows light in and keeps rodents out. The pots must be kept out of direct sunlight, and soil kept moist; in the spring, plants can be transplanted outside.

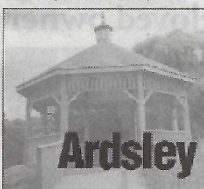
Sommerfeld pointed out reasons to collect and germinate one's own seeds: "To get a lot of plants easily, and it makes it easier for plants to adjust to changing climatic conditions." The seeds will have no pesticide on them, either.

PP's motto is "We are making significant change, one yard at a time." They hold educational events, often virtual, and an annual PP Seed Swap.

"The Ardsley PP Seed Swap, our second annual, via combination seed swap social event and celebration in December," Sommerfeld stated. "Our event is always in December — near the solstice. This allows us to collect the latest (all) seeds and be ready to plant them in January — perfect timing." The free Seed Swap will be outdoors at Sommerfeld's house, 23 Orlando Avenue, on Dec. 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Rain/snow date is Dec. 11, at the same time. "There will be lots of seeds to be had," she added. "We can give advice and answer any questions about starting seeds or native gardening."

PP offers free on-site gardening consultations year-round. Sommerfeld has conducted 68 so far. Recordings of PP webinars and presentations, previous newsletters, "How-to" guides, and other information is available on the PP website: ardsleypollinatorpathway.org/home. In the next PP Zoom presentation, Nov. 9, 7:30-8:45 p.m., "Letting Go of the Lawn: Reviving a suburban yard, part 1," Kathy Evers will take viewers through the first phase of her journey to "rewild" her yard. Evers transformed her entire property in a year, spending the winter and early spring preparing for the "return to nature."

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022



Ardsley Happenings

Ardsley Pollinator Pathway presents Kathy Evers to discuss "Letting Go of the Lawn: Reviving a Suburban Yard, Part 1" on Wednesday, Nov. 9, 7:30-8:45 p.m. via Zoom. For details and to register, visit ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9

Volunteers show their heart during Ardsley Cares Day

By Tim Lamorte

Hundreds of volunteers turned out to serve their community and more during Ardsley Cares Day on Sunday, Oct. 23.

The annual event returned to its single-day format after being canceled in 2020, and then turned into a series of efforts during the 2021-22 school year, both due to the pandemic. Ardsley Cares Day started in 2008.

For five hours, volunteers participated in community service activities in Ardsley as well as Briarcliff Manor, Dobbs Ferry, Hartsdale, and White Plains. The effort was led by co-chairs Melissa Iannuzzi, Feldman, Linda Lipka, and Sonia Chwala, with the support of the Ardsley PTA.

In Ardsley, the hub was the middle school, where donated books, clothes, food, sports equipment, and toiletries were sorted; cleanup toys were made for the Pines Cares Animal Shelter in Elmsford; and dog biscuits were baked for the Workers Animal Shelter.

The food was for Feeding Westchester, a nonprofit in Elmsford that supplies food pantries and soup kitchens. The toiletries were for the Coachman Family Center, a homeless shelter in White Plains. The sporting goods were for Boys & Girls Clubs.

Fifteen-year-old Suraj Patel, a sophomore at Ardsley High School, led the packaging of the toiletries, which consisted of items donated by his parents, who own the Ardsley Acres Motel, as well as two dentists and Ardsley School District teachers.

Most of the clothes were for The Sharing Shelf of Westchester, a nonprofit in Port Chester that helps children and teens. In addition, professional clothing and laptop computers were collected for the Foster Teen Employment Network,

a nonprofit in Rye Brook that connects employers to teens aging out of the foster care system.

Fifteen-year-old Kyla Altschuler, a sophomore at Ardsley High School, joined the effort to aid The Sharing Shelf during Ardsley Cares Day after strapping her own collection for that nonprofit last month. She was assisted by her mother, Andrea.

Prior to Ardsley Cares Day, drop-off sites for donations were set up at Cornwall Road Elementary School, Ardsley Middle School, Ardsley High School, and the Ardsley Police Department. Those donations also included items for Hope's Door, a nonprofit that helps domestic violence victims.

Elsewhere in Ardsley, a village-wide cleanup was held and flower bulbs were planted at Pascoeur Park, the public library, and the corner of Saw Mill River Road and Revolutionary Road. There was also rock painting at the elementary school and a read-a-thon at the library.

Volunteers visited the Ardsley Children's Center in White Plains and three houses for senior citizens — Anna Woodlands in Ardsley, Cabrina of Westchester in Dobbs Ferry, and The Chelsea at Greenburgh. They also helped with sheet making at the Greenburgh Nature Center and baked dog biscuits at SPCA Westchester in Briarcliff Manor.

Volunteers at the middle school were joined by Congressman Emanuel Berman, who helped prepare dog biscuits; dough, State Senate Majority Leader Andrew Stewart Gossins, Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Felten, Schools Superintendent Ryan Schoenfeld, and Mayor Nancy Kabeoolian. During her remarks, Kabeoolian referred to Ardsley as "the little community with the biggest heart in the whole world."



PHOTOS BY TIM LAMORTE/ENTERPRISE. (OPPOSITE PAGE)

Kyla and Andrea Altschuler (above) sort clothing for The Sharing Shelf. Jeremy Marita (below) plants bulbs at the corner of Saw Mill River Road and Revolutionary Road with his wife, Lucia Ferr-Martin, and their children, 7-year-old Camila and 4-year-old Graham.



PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022



TIM LAMORTE/ENTERPRISE

Department of Public Works general foreman David DiGregorio and staff member Matt Meyers lower one of four new trees planted at Pascoeur Park on Oct. 22.

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PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

Village solicits input on parks, recreation

By Kris DiLorenzo

Ardsley is asking residents to evaluate its parks and recreation services through an online survey (bit.ly/3D4dQTE). The public is invited to critique present parks and recreation facilities and programs, and share ideas about what they want to see in the future.

Feedback from the survey will be used to identify priorities and outline strategies for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan encompassing facilities, programs, and services. Weston & Sampson, a planning and design firm in Reading, Mass., and Berry Dunn, a management consulting firm with several offices in the U.S., will help develop the master plan which will guide decision-making and investment as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

According to the Comprehensive Plan, the Village can provide "safe, attractive, accessible, and well-maintained parks and recreational facilities to serve residents of all ages and physical abilities" by prioritizing funding for recreational assets, restoring and interconnecting Ardsley's public parks, creating new and renovating existing recreational spaces and facilities, re-establishing and improving public access to the Saw Mill River, and developing more recreational programming.

The 28-question survey is designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of parks and recreation facilities and programs, and point out opportunities for improvement and expansion. As stated on the Village website, the mission of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is "to promote the health and well-being of our community, environment, and economy by facilitating recreational opportunities and coordinating the enhancement of our parks, facilities, and natural resources now and into the future."

The master plan's goal is to "steward village resources in a sustainable, environmentally responsible, and fiscally prudent manner for the long term, and to resolve issues before they get worse or become too costly to repair."

Village-owned facilities include

Youth & Community Center. The Village also has various pocket parks: Pocost Park, Silliman Park, Firefighter Park, Legion Park, Bicentennial Park, and Floyd Lichtenberg Park.

The survey asks respondents to rate the importance of courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball) and fields (baseball, softball, soccer), community gardens, community and neighborhood parks, open space and natural areas, playgrounds, picnic shelters, rental and event spaces, and trails and pathways. Respondents are also asked about the quality of those facilities.

Some questions are specific, such as facilities used and programs attended during the past 12 months. The survey allows suggestions and comments on each topic, for example, which facilities or programs are needed or not needed. It also poses questions about the need for a new community center and what amenities would be desirable. Respondents can weigh in on what the Village should address in the next five to 10 years. They're also given lists of facilities and programs to rate from "not important" to "very important."

A multitude of programming ideas to be added or introduced is presented: bus excursions and overnight trips, environmental education and nature programs, a farmers' market, intergenerational programs, music and art in the park, programs for special needs individuals and for different age groups from preschool through senior citizens. Respondents can also tell the Village which activities and programs they want the community center to offer.

The Village wants to know what it can do to entice more people to use parks and recreation facilities, citing better maintenance, lighting, communication, customer service and staff knowledge, enforcement of ordinances, accessibility, pricing and user fees, safety and security measures, and even Wi-Fi connectivity.

Weston & Sampson gave the initial presentation of their proposal for a master plan to the village board on May 16. Their work will include natural resource management to protect,

ect will incorporate findings from the Village's Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) analysis, which will identify areas of local importance such as water resources, bedrock geology and soils, scenic and cultural resources, climatology, vegetation, and wildlife.

The Weston and Sampson proposal notes Village pollinator policies and procedures, recommending removal of invasive species, phasing out the use of non-native nursery species not appropriate for the region, and replacing them with native plantings.

Trustee Steve Edelstein, who serves on the steering committee, summarized, "The purpose of the Parks and Rec Master Plan is to move forward on implementing recommendations from our recently completed Village Comprehensive Plan. The Village wanted to ensure that we make the right investments so that we address the needs of our whole community and that we prioritize items of highest value or concern to our residents. In addition, the plan will inform our capital plan so that these improvements can be managed responsibly within our budget."

PAGE 12 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

Points of View FROM THE EDITOR Back the bond act

On Election Day next Tuesday, Nov. 8, one side the ballot will be filled with the names of candidates for Congress, Governor, State Senate, State Assembly, and the Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington boards of trustees. The village board elections are all uncontested.

On the other side of the ballot will be Proposition 1 to approve the New York State Clean Air, Clean Water, and Green Jobs Bond Act. In Hastings, there will also be a proposition to shift the election for the mayor and board of trustees from March to November.

The \$42 billion bond act would provide \$1.5 billion for climate change mitigation, \$1.1 billion for restoration and flood risk reduction, \$650 million for open space land conservation and recreation, and \$650 million for water quality improvement and resilient infrastructure. The remaining \$300 million would be unallocated.

County, city, town, and village governments would be able to apply for funding from these categories. The bond act requires that 35 percent of the total funds be used in disadvantaged communities such as Yorkville, with a goal of 40 percent.

On the Hudson River, the bond act has the backing of Clearwater, Riverkeeper, and Scenic Hudson as well as Groundwork Hudson Valley, the Hudson Highlands Land Trust, the Palisades Parks Conservancy, and many more organizations. For a full list, visit [voteyes/cleanwaterwater.com](https://clearwaterwater.com).

In 2020, an earlier version of the bond act, for \$3 billion, was pulled from the ballot because of financial concerns caused by the pandemic. Gov. Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature then agreed to increase the funding, which must be approved by voters.

On Nov. 1, the Vote Yes for Clean Water & Jobs Coalition held a press conference in support of the bond act at Scenic Hudson Park at Peekskill Landing. Those supporters ranged from representatives of nonprofits to representatives of labor unions.

In a statement issued after the press conference, Pete Lopez, the executive director of policy, advocacy, and science for Scenic Hudson pointed out that "The Hudson Valley and New York State have come so far, but there is still more to do to protect clean drinking water, modernize infrastructure, and conserve world-class wildlife habitat for all to enjoy."

PAGE 12 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2022

Points of View FROM THE EDITOR Too far from zero

Instead of "waste," Caitlin Chang of Hastings preferred to use the word "discards" during an online panel discussion she moderated on the evening of Nov. 15.

The discussion was titled "Moving Westchester County Toward Zero Waste" and was hosted by the Westchester Alliance for Sustainable Solutions (WASS), of which Chang is a member. WASS was founded by Courtney Williams of Peekskill.

WASS wants to eliminate the need for the Wheelabrator incinerator in Peekskill, except for recyclables, most of the material picked up by municipal sanitation departments in Westchester ends up at Wheelabrator, which is on the Hudson River, adjacent to the former Indian Point Energy Center. Westchester County has a contract with Wheelabrator that ends in 2029.

The discussion featured five experts, most of whom talked about zero waste efforts in other states such as California and Vermont.

In Westchester, the zero waste movement has led to the establishment of food scrap drop-off sites in recent years, including Veteran Park in Ardsley, the farmers market in Irvington, and the departments of public works in Dobbs Ferry and Hastings. Westchester food scraps end up trucked to the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency.

WASS wants to expand such initiatives. On its website (wasspeekskill.org) is a food scrap composting pledge for individuals who want to participate in backyard composting, food scrap recycling, and other reduce, reuse, and recycle efforts.

WASS also wants Westchester County to hire a zero waste consultant and has drafted a letter for businesses and organizations to sign (wasspeekskill.org/wp/) and a resolution for municipal boards to pass (wasspeekskill.org/pdf/ZeroWasteResolution.pdf).

On Nov. 16, the office of Westchester County Executive George Latimer issued a press release titled "Westchester County Leads the Way on Recycling Efforts." The press release touted that the amount of residential trash collected has decreased from 495,659 tons in 2003 to 390,243 tons in 2021, and that the annual recycling rate has been at least 50 percent during that period.

Westchester County operates a Material Recovery Facility in Yorkville, which is for sanitation departments, and a Household Material Recovery Facility in Valhalla, which is for individuals. For more info about the latter, visit <https://environment.westchestergov.com/facilities/hmrf>.

That 105,416-ton reduction in waste is admirable. So is the \$7,006,704.59 the County made from the sale of recyclables in 2021. That 390,243 tons, however, is too far from zero and too far from eliminating the need for incinerating waste.



THE RIVERTOWNS
Enterprise
The Hometown Newspaper
of Hastings-on-Hudson,
Dobbs Ferry, Ardsley
and Irvington

VOLUME 47, NUMBER 37 • DECEMBER 9, 2022

Marketing pros to forge village's image

By Kris DiLorenzo

Ardsley — The Village of Ardsley has engaged Manhattan-based Crafted LLC to design a marketing plan that captures the community's personality and goals and promotes the benefits of living and working in the village. As expressed in the firm's agreement with the Village, effective Oct. 17, that new brand identity "will stay true to the village's longtime values and character while simultaneously speaking to the future of the Village's intent and aspirations."

The project will cost up to \$75,000, Mayor Nancy Kiboulain explained

to the Enterprise on Nov. 22. "This initiative is an implementation item in our Comprehensive Plan — to 'grow the visibility of the village through branding, marketing, outreach, and promotional efforts.' We want to know our history while paving the way for a new and modern image of the village. We want to create a village brand that helps attract more people to the village, investment, and development. We are excited to move this initiative from the camp plan forward."

The first step in the marketing is research into what Crafted terms the village's "ecosystem." Their research will include analyzing the branding or rebranding of other municipalities for comparison to the Village's vision and goals, delving into Ardsley's history, examining any available documentation, and conducting interviews with "key players" in the village to discuss business objectives, the current state of operations, and the gap between the present and the Village's ambitions for the future. Kiboulain noted that no interviews have taken place yet, and said, "I've not decided who will manage the project." She added, "We

will be seeking input from the public."

The Crafted team — led by president Peter Mender and creative director Craig Valsano — will provide guidance in developing Ardsley's "story" and clarifying its messaging. Part of that messaging will be a visual identity designed by a professional artist, including a village logo with various "taglines," to be used in print ads, public signage, street signage, banners, and all Village communications and social media, among other possibilities. Branding would encompass thematic signage, landscaping, monument lighting, electronic kiosks, public art, and other features to establish Central Business District (CBD) gateways.

Public improvements such as benches, tree plantings, monuments, brick pavers, and other upgrades would also contribute to the village's new image.

Crafted's strategy is in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan developed to support Ardsley's economic health: the plan was approved in January 2021. As stated in the plan, its vision for 2030 is "a focused marketing campaign with professional branding for the Central Business District, effective use of village assets, and targeted support for local businesses and underutilized properties will draw new development, enterprises, and residents to Ardsley."

According to the Comprehensive Plan, a brand for the village "fosters a sense of community, celebrates the village's unique heritage, retains key market segments downtown, and makes the CBD an attractive place for more visitation, investment, and development." Revitalization of the downtown is key, as the plan encourages the creation of a CBD merchants association to help market the village and promote its businesses as a means of raising public awareness of Ardsley's potential. Partnering with the Rivertowns Chamber of Commerce is suggested as another way to promote Ardsley's businesses. The plan tendered a sample message: "Let's work together to bring more businesses and amenities into our downtown."

To address the traffic problems posed by Route 9A/Saw Mill River Road, the plan notes, the marketing and promotion of a downtown corridor is best led by the business community, with local government as a partner.

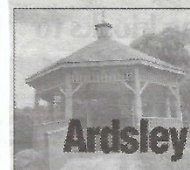
Other opportunities the plan recommends include publicizing redevelopment sites, using public venues for events, and promoting various areas in the village with events that temporarily relocate existing businesses' regular operations to other spots.

The Comprehensive Plan also urges positioning Ardsley as a "trail town," taking advantage of the South County Trailway by holding trail-related events. The plan acknowledges that the village has existing assets that can help build a brand to help attract new businesses and economic activity associated with sports, fitness, health, and recreation.

However, there are challenges to the branding/marketing campaign. The plan comments on "negative perceptions," listing resistance to residential development within the school district and the Village's "reputation" as a "challenging political environment in which to do development," stating that it will require effort to address the village's "image problem." Some solutions it offers are a business appreciation campaign, internal community education, and more digital media usage.

Crafted will set up a timeline and milestones for the branding process.

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2022

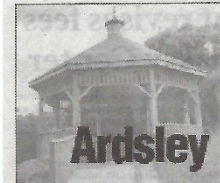


Happenings

The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway annual seed swap and social event this Saturday, Dec. 10, at 23 Orlando Ave., 11 a.m.-2 p.m., with hot chocolate, mailed apple cider, baked goods, and free native plant seeds. For details visit ardsleypollinatorpathway.org. Rain/snow date: Dec. 11.

The village partners with the Westchester Parks Foundation to remove invasive vines from trees at Macy Park next Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tools and work gloves will be provided. Register at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org to receive details about location.

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022



Happenings

The Village of Ardsley partners with the Westchester Parks Foundation to remove invasive vines from trees at Macy Park this Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tools and work gloves will be provided to volunteers. Register at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org to receive details about location.

MS4 Annual Report Form

This report is being submitted for the reporting period ending March 9,

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If submitting this form as part of a joint report on behalf of a coalition leave SPDES ID blank.

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Name of MS4/Coalition Village of Ardsley

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022



Jena Cowin watched as Carol Sommerfield talks to Lindsay Moss about adopting a milkweed.

Pollinator Pathway beckons with free seeds

By Tim Lamerie

The temperature lingered in the 30s as gardeners gathered to prepare for spring on Saturday, Dec. 10 — 11 days before the winter solstice.

The 3-hour get-together was the second annual seed swap hosted by Carol Sommerfield, chair of the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Committee, outside her home on Oriando Avenue. Hot apple cider, hot chocolate, and assorted baked goods were also provided.

The Pollinator Pathway movement, which started in Connecticut in 2017, promotes pesticide-free native habitats that attract bees, butterflies, and birds. The movement also encourages reducing lawns and removing invasive vegetation. Pollinator Pathway programs exist in Hastings and Irvington as well.

The seeds at the swap, all of which were free, were supplied by Sommerfield and Filippus Loogdond of Bedford. Free plastic pots were also available. Hoogland is an administrator of the Westchester Pollinators group on Facebook and a co-founder of Healthy Yards, a nonprofit that co-hosted a seed swap at the Bedford Hills train station in October.

The Ardsley seed swap featured an

adopt-a-milkweed table, where four types of milkweed — common, butterfly, showy, and swamp — were available in pots of soil. Girl Scout Jena Cowin, a fifth-grader at Ardsley Middle School, staffed the table.

Like other native perennials, milkweed seeds need to be outside during the winter, either in pots or in the ground, in order to germinate in the spring — a process known as stratification. Milk-

weed is the only plant on which monarch butterflies will lay their eggs.

Ardsley Mayor Nancy Kaboolian was the first to adopt a milkweed. Two days later, the Village of Ardsley learned that Kaboolian was added to the Mayor's Monarch Pledge Leadership Circle for 2022. The pledge is a program of the National Wildlife Federation. The Leadership Circle is for heads of government whose communities take eight or more actions to help monarchs. In Ardsley, there were 14 actions.

In July, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listed migratory monarch butterflies as endangered and at risk for extinction due to habitat destruction and climate change. The monarchs winter in Mexico and California, and then migrate north to breed during the summer.

The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Committee will host an invasive vine removal at Macy Park on Dec. 17, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; a From Seed to Plant Workshop at the Ardsley Public Library on Dec. 26, from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; and the second part of an online presentation titled "Letting Go of the Lawn" on Jan. 18, from 7:30-8:45 p.m. To register for all programs, visit www.ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

On Jan. 22, the Great Westchester Pollinator Meeting will be held at the Bedford Hills train station with a seed workshop from 2-4 p.m., followed by a meeting and presentations from 4-6 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2022 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9



Hands-on

Mayor Nancy Kaboolian picks up trash along Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) during a volunteer cleanup and invasive vine top that the Westchester Parks Foundation held at V.E. Macy Park on Saturday, Dec. 17.

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2023



The existing site at 657 Saw Mill River Road

Court clears the way for gas station plan

By Kris DiLorenzo

The Supreme Court of the State of New York Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department, handed down a court order on Nov. 22 in favor of the Village of Ardsley Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Thornwood Four Corners, LLC, granting Thornwood the right to pursue its application to build a gas station and convenience store at 657 Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A), south of the intersection of 9A and Ashford Avenue.

Thornwood leased the 35-acre property in March of 2016 from The Thorpe McKernsey Family Partnership and applied to the building department for a permit to construct a gas station comprising eight new gas pumps with a canopy, 20 parking spaces, and an 1,800-square-foot convenience store. The application doesn't request any variances.

A service station is not a legal permitted use in the R-1 Business District, but a City statute formerly zoned on the site as a legal nonconforming use, and Thornwood wants to continue that use. However, the village code states, "Whenever a nonconforming use has been discontinued or ceases operation for a period of 6 months or more, or is changed to a conforming use, such nonconforming use shall not thereafter be reestablished."

Armand Bojarski, who lives at 486 Ash-

ford Ave., abutting the site, had his petition to block Thornwood's plan dismissed. He had contended that there was a lapse in operation — "abandonment" — from February 2016 to April 2017, and therefore Thornwood couldn't build a gas station.

Thornwood maintained that the discovery of two previous oil spills contaminating the site, delays in construction equipment arriving, winter problems arising during excavation, and interactions with the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regarding remediation of the soil and other issues delayed construction, but that the company had not abandoned the site, and had always intended to continue its use as a gas station.

Thornwood filed an application with the ZBA, seeking a determination as to whether the nonconforming use of the property as a gas station had been abandoned. The ZBA affirmed that the gas station had not been abandoned, and that the nonconforming use could continue.

Bojarski filed a lawsuit in February of 2018 against the ZBA's decision, and on July 30 of that year the court dismissed his petition. He appealed the decision, the Village and ZBA cross-appealed, and the Nov. 22, 2022, order dismissed both the appeal and the cross-appeal. The court has also ordered that one bill of costs is awarded to the Village and ZBA, payable by the petitioner. Further, the order states, "In light of our determination, we need not reach the parties' remaining contentions."

"As a result of the court decision, they can proceed forward with the site plan approval process," Building Inspector Larry Tommaso wrote in a Jan. 3 email to the Enterprise. The proposal is basically the same as it has been with some modifications, but the plan is still subject to change based on BAR [board of architectural review] and village board comments.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2023 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9



Spreading seeds

Carol Sommerfield, chair of the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Committee, sprinkles water-cress seeds in a container for Hibba Haler of Dobbs Ferry and her 7-year-old son Oscar during a "From Seed to Plant" workshop at the Ardsley Public Library on Dec. 26. Participants also planted milkweed seeds and lima bean seedlings to bring home.

MS4 Annual Report Form

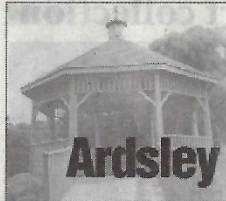
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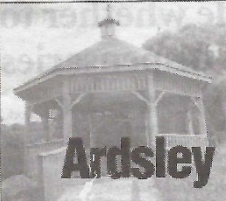
PAGE 8 —
THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2023



Happenings

Ardsley Pollinator Pathway presents "Organic and Awesome Lawns" with national expert Paul Tukey discussing how to achieve a beautiful landscape without the use of chemicals and offering other how-to information on Thursday, Feb. 16, 7-8:30 p.m. via Zoom. For details and to register, visit ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

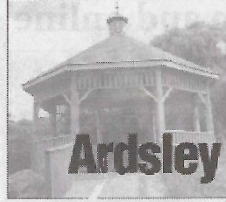
PAGE 8 —
THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2023



Happenings

Volunteer to help Ardsley Pollinator Pathway, in partnership with the Saw Mill River Coalition, remove invasive vines from trees along the Ardsley section of the South County Trailway next Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-noon. Snow date March 5. For ages 12 and up. Register at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

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THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE
FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023



Happenings

Volunteer to help Ardsley Pollinator Pathway, in partnership with the Saw Mill River Coalition, remove invasive vines from trees along the Ardsley section of the South County Trailway this Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-noon. Snow date March 5. For ages 12 and up. Register at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2023



Sarika Chawla's front yard after much of the lawn was removed in June 2022.

Experts outline how less grass is greener

By Kris DiLorenzo

The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway recently conducted its second of a two-part Zoom presentation, "Letting Go of the Lawn: Rethinking Your Suburban Yard," moderated by Carol Sommerfeld, chair of APP. The APP committee is a project of Ardsley GANI by 2030, a campaign to reduce the village's carbon emissions.

"Letting Go of the Lawn" showed how to embrace sustainability through landscape practices. Part one took place last Nov. 8; part two on Jan. 18.

Committee member Kathy Evers shared her experience transforming her yard, mostly by hand, using native plants. She detailed the necessary steps to convert a conventional yard into an ecologically valuable garden: identifying and removing invasive plants and shrubs,

planning the changes, observing how the sun moves around a property, and reducing the amount of grass by creating new beds for native plants and shrubs.

On Jan. 18, Evers continued her narrative and Sarika Chawla, a member of the Ardsley PTA executive board, discussed her own efforts as a newbie.

Evers' home sits on three-quarters of an acre. She outlined two methods of working, the "lazy gardener" approach and DIY (do it yourself). The first requires suffocating grass with alternating layers of soil and newspaper that turns into mulch, before anything can be planted. Her attempt wasn't entirely successful; plants took root, but weeds and grass grew through the layers, which weren't compact enough, and Evers was obliged to cut and weed before she could continue.

She decided that the DIY strategy was "pretty painful," but "it was very effective; it worked extremely well."

The second strategy was to get help. "I consider myself someone who doesn't have a green thumb... I had no idea what I was getting myself into," Chawla said. "I had weeds growing everywhere, and I didn't know which were plants and which were weeds; they all looked fine to me."

She referred to "Naturalist" to help distinguish them, then hired Kim Ekman, an environmental horticulturist and ecological landscape designer specializing in native plants. She is also the author of "The Pollinator Victory Garden."

In tearing up her "boring lawn," Chawla had to clear out nearly everything growing, leaving a bare stretch that didn't appeal to the neighbors.

However, she learned to appreciate the evolution of seasons. During winter, Eickman helped her plant "woodies" to prevent the area from looking "bare and dry and unpleasant," Chawla said, "so even in the dead of winter there are some things of beauty there, and you can see what's happening."

First, though, Eickman evaluated the soil, determined that it was "highly compacted and water-phobic," and delivered compost and other organic matter. "Otherwise," Chawla admitted, "I would have stuck a couple of plants in and hoped for the best."

By the end of her project, Chawla had 70 different plants in her back and front yards, and was excited to watch their changes through the seasons.

Evers stated that it wasn't necessary to eschew all "monocultural" plants; i.e. those not native to the location, but invasives must be removed. When she bought her house, its backyard was covered with eucalyptus, an invasive shrub, so she had professionals remove it. Regardless of the prevalent dictum, she left her hydrangeas and one pokeweed bush alone. "The pokeweed is good for animals, so in a meadow setting, it might be all right to leave them there," Evers explained.

She was quick to dispel one popular misperception: "People hear 'native plants' and they automatically think 'messy meadow.' But you can also have a more formal garden."

Evers noted that some plants, such as broad-leaved mountain mint, grow more quickly; her seed plugs became a hedge. Evers also planted highbush blueberries and a big tree. "It is not a native plant," she remarked, "but who doesn't love fresh figs?"

She grew some plants from seed, such as wildflowers and peonies, indoors under special lights, then transferred them outside. She had nearly a 100 percent success rate with plugs from local nurseries.

She discovered that ammonia hydrochloric was easy to grow. "I also found white wood aster hidden beneath a pile of weeds," she added, "which will

tolerate a range of conditions. It's a really nice plant to have in your garden."

"Critters" were a problem, though. Rabbits and a groundhog consumed almost all her plants, except for Mexican gallardia (Blanket flower). "So I have a beautiful hillside of Mexican gallardia," Evers recounted. "That's not the worst thing. It was very pretty, and some of the plants were 3 feet tall by the end of the summer."

She cautioned against planting everything all at once, though. "This is a work in progress. We do what we can every year, and that's OK."

Sommerfeld deflected the difference between native gardens and pollinator gardens. "Pollinators need flowers — as long as they're not invasive. In pollinator gardens, if there are non-natives, you have to take them out."

Confirming Evers' statement, she added, "Everything's an experiment; we learn along the way. I also think there's so much joy in playing in the garden, whether it works or not."

Chawla said she learned a valuable lesson. "I was really scared of bees before this; they made me nervous and anxious, and all of a sudden, I was watering these lush bushes for the flowers that had literally hundreds of bees buzzing all around. It was happy for them, and I was happy that they were having a good time, and I wasn't scared. They weren't coming after me, and my kids were OK with it, so I felt like there was some growth there."

Sommerfeld offered some simple advice about planning: "Two-thirds for the birds. One-third for us. Try to stick to having the majority in your yard be native, because you're supporting the ecosystem. I think that's a very reasonable approach."

As for lawns, she declared, "Lawns are fine; there are just too many of them. Keep them to a minimum. Use them like in a rug, or in high-traffic areas, and then have fun gardening in the rest of the space."

For design and plant information, all three women recommended visiting the New York Botanical Garden's native plants garden, joining Facebook groups such as Plants of the Northeast, subscribing to Cathy Ladden's Greenburgh Nature Center blog, and joining the APP website for specific garden guides.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023 THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE — PAGE 9

Organic lawn care expert shares insight into 'poop loop'

By Kris DiLorenzo

Paul Tukey, a national expert on organic lawn care, appeared in a Zoom session sponsored by Ardsley Pollinator Pathway on Feb. 16.

The New York Times has called Tukey "the godfather of the natural land care movement." He's also author of "The Organic Lawn Care Manual," publisher of four magazines, an HGTV show host, and was nominated for three Emmy Awards for his documentary "A Chemical Revolution."

Carol Sommerfeld, chair of the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Committee, introduced Tukey, saying, "He looks at root-crooked problems, which means we don't have to keep treating symptoms."

"A lot of people think going organic means you're giving up something," Tukey told his viewers. "Going organic is not going ugly; you can have the greenest lawn in the neighborhood if you know what you're doing." He urged his audience to "learn to think like Mother Nature."

Tukey credits his grandmother, who ran a dairy farm in Maine with her husband, for instilling in him the concept of "the poop loop of life."

The "poop loop" was her shorthand for the cycle that begins with the soil and living plants. Dead plants and animal waste, including worm "castings," form soil from which new plants grow; even single-cell organisms eat, digest, and excrete. Animals consume the plants and excrete; those excretions, used as manure, return to the soil, where they fertilize seeds, which grow



Paul Tukey

into plants, and the cycle continues.

"I'm trying to get rid of what I call the 'mooon approach,'" Tukey said of his mission. "The lawn care industry wants to sell more fertilizer, more watering devices. The reality is, if you put less on, the planet is going to be much more healthy."

That approach includes abandoning products such as the herbicides Roundup and Weed & Feed. "All of that product winds up in the ocean at some

time, or in the rivers," he explained, and exposes humans and animals to airborne toxins that don't disappear after the little yellow lawn signs warning of their use have been removed.

Weed & Feed contains a chemical that was used in Agent Orange. Roundup has been banned in Montreal, Canada; in Ontario, only farmers can buy its concentrated form, after passing a certification exam and test. U.S. federal regulations require anyone using Roundup professionally to wear a hazmat suit. Tukey doesn't see the U.S. situation changing, because of lobbying by Roundup's manufacturer Monsanto (now owned by Bayer), which created DDT and CMOs (genetically modified organisms). Roundup is the target of lawsuits.

Killing weeds organically is safer and achieves equal results, Tukey said. During a roofing project, he kept a piece of rubber roof lining on the ground for a while, and accidentally discovered that it killed what was underneath. "The soil can't breathe anymore," he related. "Rubber pond liner also kills plants quickly and efficiently. However, he noted, "You will have bare soil. Plant what you want to have there right away."

Healthy lawns start with healthy soil, and Tukey urged his audience to have their soil tested for nitrogen content; the lawn's expected hours of sun, the amount of foot traffic, and ability to retain water. "You can't manage what you don't measure," he declared. "You're making a wild guess, and you won't know what you're doing." To increase a lawn's sponge factor, he advised fertilizing with a compost layer that's not too thick, because it will smother the grass.

A lawn needs a deep root system, so grass and plants can "drink" there instead of water remaining on the surface where grubs will eat the grass, causing brown patches. He cautioned those who mow their lawns to keep the blades sharp. "A sharp blade cuts grass, a dull blade tears grass. Torn grass gets disease and insect infestations," he said.

Tukey revealed that clover is not a weed, but a "fertilizer factory," because when its roots break off, they feed other plants around it; clover is also good for bees. He told listeners that weeds are "messengers," dandelions or plantain weeds on a lawn means that's what the soil wants to grow. "If you're hoping the bare patch on your lawn is going to fill in, it's not. Weeds are going to fill it instead."

Other nuggets of advice he dispensed: water lawns early in the morning; plant a buffer on sloping lawns to prevent any products leaching into any nearby water; use organic products made by Coast of Maine, Organic Mechanics, Patchy Organic Lawn Food, and Trench; and remember the "poop loop of life."

For examples of organic horticulture, Tukey showed slides of Glenstone Museum in Potomac, Maryland, a "living classroom" on an all-organic 350-acre site that includes native meadows, a 5-acre organic lawn, restored streams and tributaries, forests, and more than 14,000 recently planted native trees. Tukey is Glenstone's director of environmental stewardship.

time, or in the rivers," he explained, and exposes humans and animals to airborne toxins that don't disappear after the little yellow lawn signs warning of their use have been removed.

Weed & Feed contains a chemical that was used in Agent Orange. Roundup has been banned in Montreal, Canada; in Ontario, only farmers can buy its concentrated form, after passing a certification exam and test. U.S. federal regulations require anyone using Roundup professionally to wear a hazmat suit. Tukey doesn't see the U.S. situation changing, because of lobbying by Roundup's manufacturer Monsanto (now owned by Bayer), which created DDT and CMOs (genetically modified organisms). Roundup is the target of lawsuits.

Killing weeds organically is safer and achieves equal results, Tukey said. During a roofing project, he kept a piece of rubber roof lining on the ground for a while, and accidentally discovered that it killed what was underneath. "The soil can't breathe anymore," he related. "Rubber pond liner also kills plants quickly and efficiently. However, he noted, "You will have bare soil. Plant what you want to have there right away."

Healthy lawns start with healthy soil, and Tukey urged his audience to have their soil tested for nitrogen content; the lawn's expected hours of sun, the amount of foot traffic, and ability to retain water. "You can't manage what you don't measure," he declared. "You're making a wild guess, and you won't know what you're doing." To increase a lawn's sponge factor, he advised fertilizing with a compost layer that's not too thick, because it will smother the grass.

A lawn needs a deep root system, so grass and plants can "drink" there instead of water remaining on the surface where grubs will eat the grass, causing brown patches. He cautioned those who mow their lawns to keep the blades sharp. "A sharp blade cuts grass, a dull blade tears grass. Torn grass gets disease and insect infestations," he said.

Tukey revealed that clover is not a weed, but a "fertilizer factory," because when its roots break off, they feed other plants around it; clover is also good for bees. He told listeners that weeds are "messengers," dandelions or plantain weeds on a lawn means that's what the soil wants to grow. "If you're hoping the bare patch on your lawn is going to fill in, it's not. Weeds are going to fill it instead."

Other nuggets of advice he dispensed: water lawns early in the morning; plant a buffer on sloping lawns to prevent any products leaching into any nearby water; use organic products made by Coast of Maine, Organic Mechanics, Patchy Organic Lawn Food, and Trench; and remember the "poop loop of life."

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MS4 Annual Report Form

This report is being submitted for the reporting period ending March 9, 2023
If submitting this form as part of a joint report on behalf of a coalition leave SPDES ID blank.

SPDES ID

Name of MS4/Coalition Village of Ardsley

N Y R 2 0 A 3 1 6

Friday, January 23, 2023

2023 WINTER NEWSLETTER



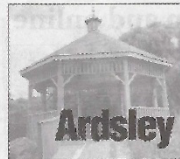
GROUNDWORK
Hudson Valley

Saw Mill River
COALITION

Village of Ardsley

The Village of Ardsley is working on a **Parks and Recreation Master Plan** to promote recreational opportunities while enhancing the parks, facilities, and natural resources of the Village. Additionally, new opportunities for the community to connect with the Saw Mill River in V.E. Macy park have been created through new viewing and seating areas.

PAGE 8 — THE RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE, FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023.



Happenings

Ardsley Pollinator Pathway and the Ardsley Garden Club host a Spring Garden Festival next Sunday, March 12, noon-4:30 p.m. at the community center. Visit ardsleypollinatorpathway.org for the schedule of events.



Marigolds saved by Carol Sommerfeld

Spring festival offers how-tos for gardeners

By Kris DiLorenzo

Eight days before the start of spring, the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Committee (APP) and the Ardsley Garden Club will offer help for gardeners preparing for the warmer weather.

The free festival is an all-volunteer occasion for the two organizations, which planted the public library's native vegetation garden last year.

"We want to get people excited about gardening," APP chair Carol Sommerfeld said. "For the garden club it is about the joy of plants — indoor plants and outdoor plants — and helping people to be better plant growers and stewards."

The garden club, more than 60 years old, helps promote the flowering environment around the village. "Daffodils, mums, impatiens, perennials, and other annuals have been added to areas in the downtown, library, parks, and traffic islands," club president Linda Soti stated. "We have given scholarships to graduating high school students, held many flower shows, and worked hard to improve the appearance of Ardsley."

For APP, Sommerfeld said the festival is about "the opportunity to connect, to win hearts and minds to help our threatened pollinators and ecosystem, and to be a resource to the community. Both organizations want people to experience the joy of growing your own food, and so we'll have lots of information about that."

Kid's aim is "to help get information out to area residents who are interested in planting both vegetable gardens and replacing lawns with native plants that will support habitat for bees, butterflies, birds, and all living creatures that are native to this area." During the festival, attendees can receive garden consultations, design ideas, and houseplant urgent care, learn to identify and manage invasive plants, and order native plant plugs and annual plants for spring delivery.

The garden club will be taking pre-orders for their annual plant sale on May 13, featuring annuals, vegetables, and herbs from Carlson Nursery on Dobbs Ferry Road in White Plains, including French marigolds, petunias, heptacris, geraniums, impatiens, coleus, and salvia, as well as basil, parsley, thyme, and cilantro.

APP will conduct a native plant plug pre-sale, featuring easy-care natives for both shade and sun, supplied by Zoe's Native Plants in Dobbs Ferry. Pick-up dates will be announced to customers after the sale, between April and the beginning of June.

"The Garden Club does so much for Ardsley and for beautification of the town, and their membership needs a boost," Sommerfeld noted. "Hopefully people can come, see what is going on, and become interested in helping the community through participating in either or both organizations."

Pollinators will benefit from the festival, too, through a work of art, children at the event will highlight the death of monarch butterflies, whose population declined in recent years.

"The kids will color monarch butterflies, caterpillars, chrysalis, and milkweed plants," Sommerfeld elaborated. "We'll then put all the creations on a wall at the community center and take a picture at the end. It will be beautiful and will also raise awareness about the plight of the monarch butterflies at the same time. At the end we'll take a picture of the art before disassembling it and feature it on our Ardsley PP website."

Elly Akhavan, former owner of Lilac Florist in Ardsley, will teach flower arranging, using sustainable materials and common flowers easily available; participants will create their own flower arrangements to take home.

Ardsley Children's Librarian Marinette

Saturday, March 12, 2022

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER



GROUNDWORK
Hudson Valley

Saw Mill River
COALITION

V.E. Macy Park



The park, located between two major highways, is an amazing river front green space in Ardsley. In the wake of flooding events, it became clear to county engineers and planners that **V.E. Macy Park** needed improvements. The park currently is under construction with plans to improve green infrastructure elements by reducing impervious surfaces and planting more native trees and shrubs to help restore the floodplain. Their improvements are also working to strengthen access to the Saw Mill River, to create a better park for all residents.