

# Rye Sustainability Committee Minutes

May 5, 2021 / 9:30 AM / By Zoom

## Attendees

PRESENT:

Patti Capparelli, Chair (PC)

Suzanne Clary (SC)

Gretchen Kaye Crowley (GKC)

Pamela Haas (PH)

Linda MacKay (LM)

Donna Providente (DP)

## Missing

Judi Linton (JL) at Little Garden Club of Rye meeting with RSC table

Chris Cohan (CC)

James Ward (JW)

Sue Drouin (SD)

Sara Goddard (SG)

## Agenda ()

## Minutes

The Committee convened at 9:30 A.M.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by unanimous agreement.

### **New Business:**

Pollinator garden at food waste drop-off site:

Invasive cleanup at BPR & Playland Parkway:

Rye Nature Center Conservation Practices survey: Friends put together; focused a lot on food scrap recycling; looking to get a look at current status and attitudes. PC put in newsletter, will meet with Christine Siller on Friday. Will provide info re barriers/obstacles.

5/5 Little Garden Club of Rye event: Judy Linton is there

4/30 Arbor Day ceremony: Tree was designated for Em Riccio; Mayor read proclamation

EnergySmart Homes campaign: JW not present

**Energy:** Unified solar plan - PC had a meeting with Sara Goddard and Rich Mecca; Sara reached out and it will be discussed at upcoming BAR meeting. Solar is a small percent of their work. Solar costs are plummeting, and this permit could expedite people being able to install on roofs. Will inform us re BAR meeting.

Community Solar and GridRewards: PC says we will get 200 pts toward grant. Community Solar program will continue to the end of month; we only need 10 residents to get 200 points.

Fleet electrification: PC, SG met with Greg and Electrification Coalition can provide a free fleet analysis to forecast future EV purchases. Greg said they are looking at a Fleet Analysis consultant, and maybe this whole analysis could be something existing consultants can do; check back in a month. Police want to know where the City is with an EV patrol car.. We were hoping to have the whole fleet analyzed, so TBD.

Opportunity to participate in a program with Sustainable Westchester; residents could schedule a consultation with an energy provider to see what they could do. We can get points for this as well, but only if systems get installed. Summer through March 2022. City Council must approve the campaign.

**Waste Reduction/Recycling:** LM's FSR school campaign took place for three weeks in April; club put lots of effort into a virtual drive for awareness, registration. JL and LM worked hard to get word out through all newsletters, etc. Gigantic fail - only 3 new registrations; will extend into May. Not sure how to encourage students to be active re this. PH: was this student inactivity, or just not successful? LM not sure; will check with environmental club and teachers to see if they can find out. Maybe too much going on; maybe people don't want to change habits? Student overwhelm with end of year stuff? At Compost Giveback Day, RSC got 15 registrations that day - 7-3:00. Over 90 people collected compost, and getting something free helped with registration impetus. Now we are working on the curbside pickup renewal process with the City, a complicated and ongoing process. LM hopes to get feedback through that process, and get people off the wait list. Currently 578-580 households are signed up altogether, so she hopes we will be able to expand. Farmers Market begins this week and we hope to talk to new residents for new registrations. Emails are active with requests and feedback. Positive feedback was received during the compost giveback. PC says people with curbside spots don't want to lose them in January. So important to gather advocacy for that deadline. Elections may make a difference as well.

PC: City has donated all kits to RSC, and have requested we put links on our website to products they can buy eg. Amazon link to two different products similar to what City offers. Some confusion because we can't sell or endorse, so needs further research. At Green Screen, Mike's couldn't offer discount because conflicted with RCDS; we weren't sure whether we could do that.

LM: 503 status of RNC possibly could help? Problem with City not being willing to support program through sales of products.

SC: Why can't City just sell them? PC: City says they're not good at being middle man. Noga had asked us to sell them, and it's just very confusing right now and we need clarity and clear direction. Other cities: varies. Mostly DPW, but not all. So maybe just give kits for free at Farmers Market. Will email Noga with Kristen cc'd.

DP: When neighbors ask her about FSR participation, she could probably help get us registrations and offer the free bins. GKC: Maybe a coffee could help? DP wants to know what info needed when talking to individuals. LM will send that info to her. DP: How much more could we handle? Sometimes all Disbrow bins are full... PC: If curbside goes away, they'll be needing a lot more containers... City has never offered to expand curbside. DP: Are they hoping it will go away? LM: Stipulations have been made re actual usage, with DPW checking bins. PC: They said 85% participation rate, which is challenging for those with other homes and traveling... holiday weeks throw off schedule and force people to drop off at DPW. GKC: They've put a tremendous burden on participants during a pandemic, but we will continue full steam ahead. DP: Has DPW focused on other trash reduction? PC: Not getting responses to our requests for data.

PC: Fiona Degman at RHS sent us an email; local restaurant food waste reduction sustainability project; they have contacted the Chamber of Commerce and are working to get local businesses to sign a pledge and get a sticker.

PC: Rye Record will be running something re Arbor Day event.

### **Water/Land Use:**

Discussion with SC: coastal environmental initiatives are not being communicated to local city government. SC suggested we contact Peter McCartt because many of these are about county locations. Habitat restoration committee connects much of this activity. City engineer will reach out as well; wasn't aware. CCAC Tracy also was not contacted - they don't have their own email so can't be contacted easily. PC shared that she also has been having trouble with communication; finds out via Mamaroneck sometimes. SC: of the 8 sites, 5 are in Rye yet Rye is not invited. Pam Tarlow now works for the county; she may be one key to this. SC: maybe once or twice a year, have a meeting with these Sound Shore groups. Could make it easy to apply for grants jointly as well. PC shared re Pace U land use course - there was a similar group, then it became inactive.

### **Healthy Yards/Pollinator Pathway:**

CC has had an idea for the food waste dropoff site as a pollinator location. PC shared Jim Frank's photoshopped version of the hill near parking. Trees there are invasive, could be removed. Wants to move forward quickly; something to request of the City. LM: Could we use RNC \$? PC: for Monarch garden. DP can check with Friends of Disbrow Park, but PC said not sure how much of that \$ would be available.

Trees: CC's info submitted to Greg; response was that City had already planted at Rye Rec, and because of storm loss expects to plant more, but not giving any specifics or numbers. At the end of summer, we will see a list of what the City has planted. This is the 3rd list from CC; City does reference and use the lists, so we can compare City list against CC list and build new list for 2021. CC also wants us to look more closely at City tree budget to see if could be increased for 2022. This year \$20K is for "trees and parkland" - not sure how much is for trees. SC: Could City put a naturalist in budget? PC: Let's prepare want list for next budget discussion. PC: CCAC is doing an open space inventory. SC: Jay Estate is looking to hire pt intern, and so this might be a possibility for the City.

PC: BPR/PP has been a focus for vine cutting; CC has gotten help and is looking for help from local groups. Now ticks and poison ivy could become a hindrance for volunteers. Possibly in the fall would be more successful. Preplanning for next March will be key. Bill Detorto will be available to come in fall.

Monarch gardens have been dug out; RNC will pick up plants next Friday.

Firemen's Circle pollinator - statue will be returned in August, so City wants to hold off until August; Liz can order items, but must be in ground by Oct. If status changes for August, they will let us know.

Rye Town beehive installation video: Over 200 views so far, so can view on Rye TV. GC: It was a great video.

SC: Jay Heritage has had a lot of pollinator activity; a garden room with alternatives to lawns has a menu with panels that show different combinations with a list so you can do that in your own backyard. Lots of variety and selection. PC: Inside? SC: project is 2 acres of sunken gardens separated by framed stone walls up to 6 feet high; 3 rooms, connected by stone arches. Includes access to marshlands; will have open days for visitation and transition to Marshlands. PC: Is Jay Heritage Center part of the June 13 pollinator gardens tour? SC: Liz Garrett has been working on it, should be included; PC: we could promote that.

**Community Outreach/Awareness:** GKC thanked everyone for attending Green Screen event. More than 65 registered, but there were probably closer to 100 attendees. Lots of in-person feedback after the event at RCDS. PC: Went really well; GKC was moderator, did Carver get any donations? GKC: Need to sort out the question of promoting businesses. 2022 suggestions are already coming in. LM: Idea: great to have people attend on video, and maybe next time could project a remote visitor. Example: she went to a Lincoln Center event that had clips from a documentary. GKC: Length of movie is a factor, so maybe we will continue having people watch

beforehand. It was a lot of work to do this remotely this year, but hopefully we can do both next year. Looking for more feedback.

PC: Re Mike's Organic, two videos were shown at the beginning of the presentation, and he offered \$100 discount on CSA membership. RCDS couldn't send that out; asked if we could. GKC: Will be curious to see what City Hall says. LM: We could post on our own personal social media and Rye Moms. PC: only for attendees... GKC: Who's running this program? Is it City or private? (Discussion to be continued.)

Community Planting: PC: There were 12-14 volunteers at the event.

Seasonal leaf blower ban started May 1st. At a City Council meeting, Mayor Cohn was trying to get more info re what could be done, e.g. ticketing... police commissioner(?) will check with other communities to see how they handle it.

### **Other Business:**

Upcoming meetings: June 2, 2021 9:30 am

**Meeting Adjourned at 11:00 am.**