



Rye Sustainability Committee

2018 Accomplishments

Grouped Within Rye Sustainability Plan Focus Areas

I) ENERGY

Goal: Promote community commitment to renewable energy/energy efficiency.

Accomplishment(s):

- Organized and co-sponsored an [informational presentation and workshop](#) in conjunction with Sustainable Westchester (Westchester Power) on Community Choice Aggregation on March 19th, 2018 at the Rye Free Reading Room.
- Supported the adoption of Community Choice Aggregation by Rye City Council in November, 2018

Goal: Update Rye's *Climate Smart Community* actions to achieve Bronze status and/or receive \$5,000 grant.

Accomplishment(s):

- Coordinated and facilitated the necessary steps to achieve [Clean Energy Community designation](#).
- Secured a \$5,000 NYSERDA grant for the City of Rye by working with City staff and appropriate NY State officials.

II) TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Incorporate Electric Vehicles (EVs) into City of Rye municipal fleet.

Accomplishment(s):

- Worked with City staff to investigate EV options and ensure timely ordering and delivery of several EVs for Rye municipal staff.
- Four new EVs (Chevy Bolts) were delivered and are now in use by City staff.
- Delivery of EVs helped fulfill one of four High Impact Actions required for qualification of the [\\$5,000 NYSERDA grant](#) obtained by RSC members.

III) WASTE REDUCTION/RECYCLING

One of the key areas of focus in the City of Rye Sustainability Plan is ['Waste Reduction & Recycling'](#). In the introductory summary to this RSP chapter, it states that "Americans lead the industrialized world in waste generation...The build-up of excess waste causes a multitude of environmental problems...The solution - to reduce waste at the source - is tremendously effective and simply a matter of changing ingrained habits."

At the outset of 2018, there was a big spike in public awareness and media coverage of the staggering ecological problems caused by pervasive plastic pollution. Throughout the year, there was also a steady surge in interest in food waste recycling.

To that end, Rye Sustainability Committee built on the success of their other waste reduction and recycling campaigns (the [Reusable Bag Initiative](#) and [Put a Cork in It](#) cork recycling program) to introduce a [plastic straw reduction campaign](#) and voluntary [food scrap recycling pilot](#).

Goal: Waste reduction campaign to reduce disposable plastic straw usage.

Accomplishment(s):

- Launched [Sound Shore Last Straw campaign](#). RSC presented at Rye Chamber of Commerce meeting on Wednesday, February 7th, 2018 to introduce and launch *Sound Shore Last Straw* pledge campaign.
- Wrote, designed and compiled various outreach and educational materials to support and proliferate SSLs.
- Recruited Rye-based food & beverage establishments to make the [SSLs Pledge](#).
- Co-sponsored Rye Town Park Commission Oakland Beach cleanup on April 21st.
- Worked with Rye TV in producing a [Public Service Announcement](#) on plastic straws.
- Initiated individual [SSLs Pledge](#) to encourage residents to curb individual plastic straw usage.
- RSC focused its annual [Green Screen](#) film series on the issue of plastic straws with a screening of the documentary *Straws* followed by Q&A with film producer Linda Booker.
- To date [twelve establishments](#) (private businesses and private clubs) have signed the SSLs business pledge and are participating in SSLs campaign:

1. Aurora Restaurant
2. Bareburger, Rye
3. Coveleigh Club
4. Granola Bar of Rye
5. Le Pain Quotidien, Rye
6. Manursing Island Club
7. Morgan's Fish House
8. Rosemary & Vine
9. Ruby's Oyster Bar and Bistro
10. The Red Pony
11. Town Dock
12. Village Social, Rye

III) WASTE REDUCTION/RECYCLING (Cont'd)

Goal: Community residential composting program.

Accomplishment(s):

- Created a [Food Scrap Recycling \(FSR\) initiative](#) for the City of Rye. Steps included:
 - Working with City staff and Scarsdale representatives to develop program particulars, including drop-off locations, curbside route, number of households and costs.
 - Creating educational and outreach material.
 - Surveying/interviewing municipalities nationwide to gather relevant information about FSR curbside programs.
 - Performing extensive outreach to enroll 150 households interested in participating in the curbside pilot; and gathering names and addresses of over 150 additional households interested in a Rye community composting program.
 - Presenting a detailed overview of FSR and the RSC's FSR pilot details to City Council on October 3rd and November 7th, 2018.
 - Pilot was approved unanimously by City Council and will begin March 2019.

Other Waste Reduction /Recycling Accomplishment(s):

- ['Put A Cork In It'](#) Cork Recycling Initiative: Participants in program have grown to 21 as of December 2018:
 1. American Yacht Club
 2. Apawamis Club
 3. Aurora Restaurant
 4. Bare Burger (Rye)
 5. Coveleigh Club
 6. Fogama
 7. Frankie & Johnnie's Steakhouse
 8. G. Griffin Wine & Spirits
 9. Kelly's Sea Level
 10. La Panetiere
 11. Manursing Island Club
 12. Morgan's Fish House
 13. Rosemary & Vine
 14. Ruby's Oyster House & Bistro
 15. Rye Grill & Bar
 16. Rye Roadhouse
 17. Shenorock Shore Club
 18. Town Dock
 19. Village Social
 20. Westchester Country Club
 21. Wine at Five

IV) WATER/LAND USE

Goal: Reinstate City of Rye Tree City USA status.

Accomplishment(s):

- Increased native street tree plantings throughout city via funds gathered by Rye Sustainability [‘Branching Out for Rye’ Tree Fund](#).
- Gathered required data regarding 2017 shade tree budget and number of 2017 tree plantings/removals for application.
- Organized and planned [2018 Arbor Day observance](#) and proclamation on October 12th, 2018 at site of Purchase Street/MTA Access Road plantings.
- Submitted 2017 application to reinstate the City of Rye as a Tree City USA retroactively for 2017 for the first time since 2006!
- Working on completion of 2018 application, to be submitted at end of December 2018.

Goal: Increase *Branching Out for Rye* tree fund donations.

Accomplishment(s):

- Increased [Tree Fund](#) donations in 2018 bringing total BOFR donations to \$7,155.
- Funded planting of native redbud and red maple trees in downtown Rye.
- Continued promotion of tree fund and educational outreach of the importance of trees via social media, and various events, including partnership at Jay Heritage Center Doug Tallamy presentation in October 2018.

Goal: Increase RHYP pledges.

Accomplishment(s):

- [RHYP Pledges](#) increased by nearly 40% in 2018 to a total of 137 households and organizations.
- Organized a highly successful [RHYP event at Pet Pantry](#) on October 16th, 2018 in conjunction with Rye Nature Center.

Goal: Investigate an official municipal natural landscaping policy.

Accomplishment(s):

- Worked with City of Rye to ensure that Village Green is naturally landscaped and posted RHYP sign on Village Green.

Other Accomplishment(s):

- Survey and analysis of all Westchester municipalities road deicing methods.
- RSC Chair presented at August 2018 City Council meeting concerning Rye’s seasonal leaf blower, the continued dangers to health and the environment posed by leaf blowers and ideas for better enforcement of the seasonal ban.
- RSC Chair presented an overview of wetlands and their importance at March 2018 City Council.

V) COMMUNITY AWARENESS/OUTREACH

Goal: Continue partnerships with local organizations.

Accomplishment(s):

Awareness:

- **RSC Green Screen:** RSC held its sixth [Green Screen Series](#) during Earth Week with partner Rye Country Day School. A screening of the documentary *Straws* was followed by a Q&A with film producer Linda Booker.
- **RSC Leadership Award:** Voted on and conferred 2nd annual [Rye Sustainability Committee Leadership Award](#) upon Rye Country Day School representatives.
- **Communications:**
 - *Social Media:* RSC continued to increase its reach through social media via its [Facebook page](#) and newly launched [Instagram](#) page
 - *Website:* Website year/year increase in unique visitors is 85%
 - *Newsletter/e-news:* four quarterly and periodic e-blasts
- **RSC Awareness:** Increased awareness of RSC programs and events through an updated tagline (“Greener Together”), logo, and materials.

Partnerships:

- **Rye PBA:** Organized invasive vine removal event along Playland Parkway in conjunction with Westchester County Parks Department and sponsored by Rye PBA.
- **Rye YMCA:** Continued our partnership with Rye YMCA ‘Derby Goes Green’ initiative. Proposed waste reduction improvement and other carbon footprint minimizations successfully implemented at April 2018 Derby event. RSC tabled at Derby event.
- **Rye Town Park Oakland Beach Cleanup:** RSC helped promote and recruit volunteers for this event in April 2018.
- **Rye City Lion’s Club:** RSC Chair and Vice Chair presented at monthly Rye Lion’s Club meeting at Apawamis Club on May 17th, 2018. RSC was subsequently nominated for Rye Lion’s Club 2018 James A. and Marian M. Shea Community Service Award.
- **City of Rye Memorial Day Parade:** RSC participated in this annual tradition in May 2018 with our new banner in tow.
- **Rye Town Park:** Co-sponsored with RTP a Wiggle Worm vermiculture composting event at Rye Town Park pavilion.
- **Jay Heritage Center:** Co-sponsored Doug Tallamy ‘Restoring Nature’s Relationships’ event in October 2018.
- **Scarsdale CAC:** RSC worked closely with Scarsdale CAC representatives on Rye composting initiative and also jointly toured the Westchester Materials Recovery Facility with their group in November 2018.
- **Rye Youth Council:** RSC co-sponsored, promoted and volunteered at Rye’s Drug Takeback Day.

V) COMMUNITY AWARENESS/OUTREACH (Cont'd)

Goal: Continue providing guidance/mentoring to groups and organizations.

Accomplishment(s):

- **Rye Boy Scouts:** Worked with Rye Pack 2 Den 1 Webelos on their reusable metal straw sales. Presented overview of single-use plastics/plastic straw usage at Webelos annual picnic.
- **Lawnchair Theatre:** RSC advised/promoted sustainability efforts of *Lawnchair Theatre* July 2018 production of 'The Tempest'. Tabled at event. (Sonnet written and presented about RSC's sustainability efforts!)
- **Larchmont Sustainability Committee:** Met with and advised LSC members about how to implement a Larchmont healthy yards program.
- **Town of Mamaroneck Sustainability Collaborative:** RSC representatives attended and participated in TOMSC meetings throughout 2018.
- **Town of Rye Sustainability Committee:** RSC representatives participated in TORSC meetings throughout 2018 to share best practices.
- **Westchester Zero Waste Committee:** RSC members presented at and participated in 2018 Zero Waste Committee meetings to share best practices.
- **Friends of Edith Read:** RSC helped promote the 2018 Fall Fest and tabled at the event while conducting a sustainable arts & craft project.
- **County Zero Waste Day:** RSC co-sponsored, actively promoted and volunteered at the reinstated Westchester County Zero Waste Day at Playland in October 2018.
- **Conservation Commission/Advisory Council:** RSC members provide ongoing guidance and support to Rye CC/AC.
- **Straws Collaborative:** RSC's Chair and Vice Chair participated in and shared best practices with area civic and municipal groups at straws collaborative meeting, Greenwich Town hall in November 2018.
- **Federated Conservationists of Westchester County:** RSC Chair presented an overview of RSC's [Reusable Bag Initiative](#) and shared best practices/lessons learned at FCWC plastic bag pub talk in November 2018.