

## Village of Mamaroneck Climate Smart Communities Program

## Pledge Element 9 Priority Action: Climate Change Education & Engagement



### **Introduction**

The Village of Mamaroneck recognizes that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activity are causing climate change, the consequences of which pose substantial risks to the future health and well-being of our community. To demonstrate its commitment to addressing the growing threat of climate change, in 2010 the Village of Mamaroneck became a registered Climate Smart Community by formally adopting the New York State Climate Smart Communities (CSC) pledge. In July 2021, the Village of Mamaroneck passed a resolution to create a dedicated Climate Smart Community Task Force to make recommendations and oversee actions in the CSC program. As of November 1, 2023, the Village has completed 18 actions in the CSC program and is actively working on and planning other impactful actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

On April 22, 2002, the Village's Board of Trustees established the Committee for the Environment ("CFTE"). Comprised of 11 resident volunteers and who each serve a 3-year term, the CFTE advises and makes suggestions to the Village's Board of Trustees about ways to protect our natural resources from further damage, and to initiate, promote and recommend to the Board of Trustees programs and the adoption of laws designed to improve the health of the land, water and air in and around this unique waterfront village. The CFTE is responsible for providing information about environmental concerns to residents, businesses and public officials; raising awareness; promoting the quality of life in the Village; and encouraging participation in programs to reduce waste, increase recycling, decrease pollution, reduce energy consumption and carbon footprint, cut back on noise and litter, and eliminate the use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers.

The Village provides climate change community engagement and education through both the Committee for the Environment and the Climate Smart Communities Task Force ("the Committees"). These Committees work hand in hand and reach the community jointly through the Village website, the Village weekly email newsletter, Facebook and Instagram accounts and through contacts at the local schools and community organizations. Throughout the year the Committees sponsor and host various in-person community events both for climate education and for hands on service work. Each committee has its own logo, shown on the cover page, to use in all promotional materials for events.

All of the events and initiatives presented in this document are discussed at the monthly CFTE meetings. The agendas and monthly meeting minutes can be found by clicking on this link <u>Agendas and Minutes</u>

<u>The Village of Mamaroneck is qualified to earn 8 points for this PE9 Action</u>. As discussed in this document, the focus of the education and engagement addresses both reducing GHG emissions in the community (ie. climate change mitigation) and community adaption to climate change.

### **Goals and Scope**

Community education and engagement is woven into the work of the Committees. The goals are to engage the residents in the Village of Mamaroneck and local organizations in moving the community toward sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, improving adaptability, and mitigating the harms of climate change. The Village of Mamaroneck has flood zones, many of which are located in lower-income neighborhoods. Flooding is the main concern of many Village residents and businesses and the Committees are committed to educate the public about the need to reduce carbon emissions to reduce extreme weather events and mitigate damage from flooding.

The Committee's carbon emissions reduction and mitigation efforts include, educating on the value of supporting alternative energy technology such as solar and heat pumps, transportation alternatives, waste stream reductions, including food scrap recycling, and sustainable landscaping practices.

Efforts supporting climate change adaptation include educating on the value of and supporting expansion of tree canopy and resilient, sustainable plantings through our Healthy Yards initiative. The Village of Mamaroneck is also currently engaged in assessing stormwater infrastructure planning with the Army Corps of Engineers considering extreme rainfall and flooding events caused by climate change and educating residents on those issues.

The Village and the Committees provide community outreach both in person and virtually in a myriad of ways. Below are some examples of engagement:

- Educational presentations on various sustainability, climate, and environmental topics
- Community Clean up Days (spring and fall)
- Volunteer recruitment for clean-up days, native plantings in local parks and green spaces and repair café events
- Updates to the Village of Mamaroneck website and weekly Village e-newsletter
- Local press releases
- Social media communications, though Instagram and Facebook regarding not only our own efforts but that of other local, state, and national sustainability initiatives
- Email outreach for Village of Mamaroneck sustainability efforts and events
- Monthly CFTE meetings open to the public and minutes posted to the Village's website
- Partnering with local and regional organizations

### **Climate Change Education and Engagement Partners**

The Village of Mamaroneck and the Committees regularly partner with other organizations in its climate change education and engagement initiatives. To best reach and serve the disadvantaged community in the Village, the Committees work with the Community Resource Center and the Washington Housing Alliance. The Village and Committees have partnered with the neighboring municipalities of the Town of Mamaroneck and the Village of Larchmont on a host of initiatives, including Healthy Yards, Pollinator Pathways, Repair Cafes, Demand Response campaigns for GridRewards and Community Solar and the Love Your Food campaign about reducing food waste.

The Village and Committees have worked with the following local, regional, and state partners:

Village of Mamaroneck Tree Committee Village of Mamaroneck Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee Town of Mamaroneck Village of Larchmont Mamaroneck Public Library **Community Resource Center** Washingtonville Housing Alliance Marine Education Center Harbor Island Conservancy Larchmont-Mamaroneck Pollinator Pathways Mamaroneck Chamber of Commerce Mamaroneck Union Free School District/Board of Education Rye Neck Union Free School District Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts of Larchmont/Mamaroneck and Rye Neck Sustainable Westchester Hudson Valley Regional Council Solarize Westchester Federated Conservationists of Westchester County New York Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)

### 2023 Initiatives:

#### **Energy Smart Homes Community Campaign**

In partnership with Sustainable Westchester and led by the CFTE/CSE, the Village of Mamaroneck launched an Energy Smart Homes community campaign in 2023. The goal of the campaign is to educate and engage the community and to encourage adoption of energy efficient and clean heating and cooling technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

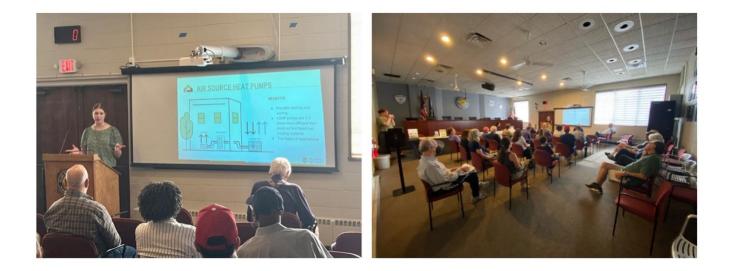
The Village hosted two in-person events to promote this campaign. The first was on August 29, 2023 at the Mamaroneck Public Library and the second was on September 17, 2023 at the Village Courthouse. Other information was disseminated on the Village website and tabling at our bi-annual Village Clean-up and our annual Monarch Butterfly Festival.

#### Going Green at Home Event September 17, 2023

This event was held at the Village Courthouse on September 17, 2023. It was organized by Debbie Sullivan a member of both the CFTE and CSC in coordination with Lauren Kroell of Sustainable Westchester. Lou Young, Village Trustee and Liaison to the CFTE gave some welcoming remarks. Lauren Kroell explained Sustainable Westchester's EnergySmart Home Program, put it in context of NYSERDA; explained air source and ground source heat pumps and their efficiencies, and provided information on rebates and incentives. Joshua Cruz, Energy Management Solutions, explained importance of air sealing and insulation on energy saving. Two local residents, Dave Finch and Liam Robb O'Hagan, discussed their experiences with ductless air source heat pumps and geothermal. The program was 1 ½ hours and there were 28 attendees.

The event was publicized on the Village website (<u>Click Here</u>), in the Village weekly e-newsletter on social media and on the LMC Media "Community Conversation" (<u>Click Here</u>) which can be seen on cable TV and streamed.





#### Talk to an Energy Advisor Event – Mamaroneck Public Library August 29, 2023

This event gave residents the opportunity to speak with energy advisors for free about any and all energy-related concerns. This included discussing their high energy bills, getting assistance with applications for home energy upgrades, obtaining funding support, and learning more about the Inflation Reduction Act.

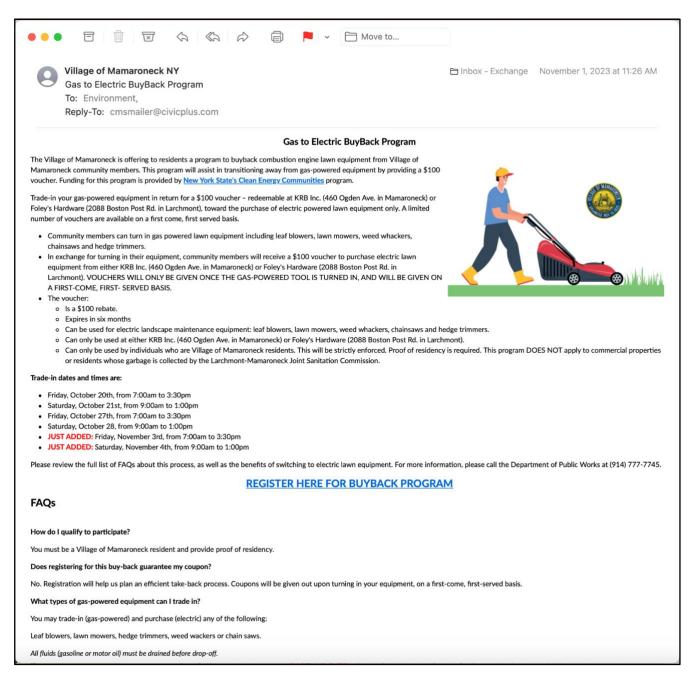
This event was publicized on the Village website <u>Click Here</u>, in the Village weekly e-newsletter and on social media.



# Gas to Electric Lawn Equipment Buyback Program October/November 2023

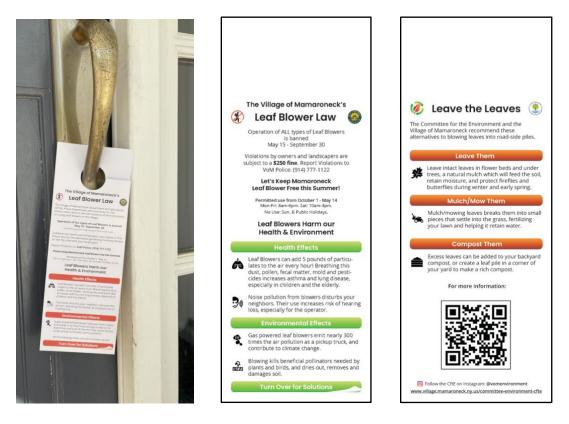
The Village of Mamaroneck is offering residents a program to buyback combustion engine lawn equipment. This program will assist in transitioning away from gas-powered equipment by providing a \$100 voucher to be used toward the purchase of electric lawn equipment at two local retail outlets. Funding for this program is provided by a previously earned \$5,000 grant from <u>New York State's Clean Energy Communities</u> program. Two emails were sent out to Village residents to inform them about this program.

Message on Village Website - click here



## Leaf Blower Ban/Leaf Mulching May 2023

The Village placed door hangers on the front door of all single-family residences to raise awareness of the Village's ban on leaf blowers from May 15th through September 30th. In addition to informing the public about the ban, the door hanger contained information about the negative environmental impacts from leaf blowers. On the flip side, the door hanger had information about "Leaving the Leaves" and the benefits of leaf mulching and composting leaves. The messaging was also reinforced with postings on our social media.





friendly reminder

## Leaf Blower Ban May 15 - September 30

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE MAGIC OF SUMMER



These insects cannot survive the force of leaf blowers

#### Food Scrap Recycling – Ongoing

The Village of Mamaroneck Food Scrap Recycling program launched in June 2018, spearheaded by the CFTE, with the goal of reducing emissions by diverting food waste from the incinerator and creating awareness about ways to reduce food waste. In March 2022, the Village began residential weekly curbside pickup of food scraps. For information on the Village website to inform the public about this service and how it works, click <u>HERE</u>. Since inception, the Village has tracked the monthly tonnage of food scraps. Click here....<u>Food scrap monthly tonnage</u>

The photo below shows a newly erected sign at the entrance to Harbor Island Park promoting the food scrap pickup program.

The CFTE promotes this program at the twice-yearly clean-up events and at the annual Monarch Butterfly Festival. Composted soil created by the food scraps is given away to village residents to promote healthy gardening.



For more info, call (914) 777-7745, click the QR code, or visit www.villageofmamaroneck.org

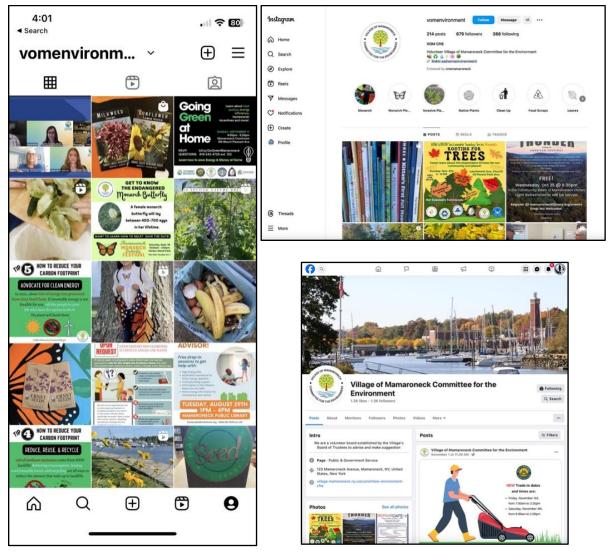






#### Social Media

The Village of Mamaroneck Committee for the Environment utilizes both Instagram and Facebook to promote its activities and to provide environmental/climate content to its followers/friends. The CFTE Instagram account has 676 followers and follows 388 accounts. Since inception in May 2022, there have been 213 posts many of which are to promote community events. The CFTE also maintains an active Facebook account which has in excess of 1K friends.



#### Links to posts:

- Facebook post promoting Village tree planting event
- Facebook post offering sustainable shopping tips to viewers
- Facebook post informing the public about the details of the food scrap curbside pickup program
- Facebook post promoting Village spring clean-up event
- Facebook post informing the public about one way to reduce your carbon footprint
- Instagram post explaining the benefits of using heat pumps as a heat source
- Instagram post informing the public about food scraps becoming a recyclable item in the village
- Instagram post informing the public about the NY Styrofoam ban
- Instagram post informing the public about one way to reduce your carbon footprint

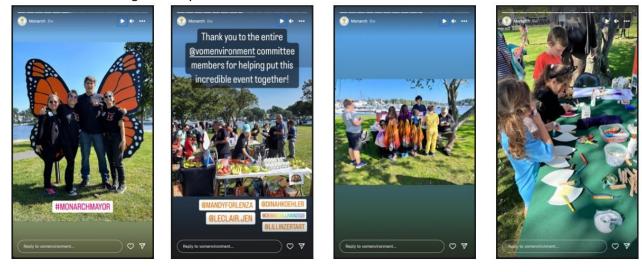
## Mamaroneck Monarch Butterfly Festival September 30, 2023

The Mayor of Mamaroneck signed the National Wildlife Federation's Monarch Pledge for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row in 2023 to show that the Village of Mamaroneck is concerned about the endangered Monarch butterfly. The pledge required the Village to take steps to help raise awareness about the Monarch butterfly and to help mitigate its extinction.

On September 30, 2023, the Village hosted its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mamaroneck Monarch Butterfly Festival at Harbor Island Park, during the Monarch's annual migration to Mexico. Approximately 800 people attended, mostly families with young children. Education was the major component of the event which included games, tables for children to create artwork, discussions about native plants, which are necessary to attract Monarchs. Native plants and seeds were given away to promote native garden plantings in people's home gardens. In addition, a native garden was planted in the park.



Monarch Festival Instagram Story







# Native Garden Created at Local Adult Care Facility June 2023

The CFTE reached out to Sarah Neuman, a local Adult Care facility, to plant a native garden for the enjoyment of the residents and to help create a pollinator pathway throughout the Village. In June 2023, the CFTE created a native butterfly garden to offer the residents and their families the opportunity to enjoy a beautiful space that attracts butterflies and birds. Residents watched the planting process and interacted with CFTE volunteers who explained how native gardens help preserve biodiversity.





#### Mamaroneck Land Reclamation Ongoing initiative

Two vacant, weed-filled lots were reclaimed by the Committee for the Environment to be developed into parkland for Village residents. A call was put out to the community for volunteers to help remove weeds and garbage and to then plant new native plant species. The volunteers were taught how to weed, how to plant and how to care for these new plants. Their education also included the importance of planting native species and their positive effects for migrating butterflies, birds, and insects as well as the surrounding environment.

# Ribbon Cutting for Rockland Pocket Preserve October 18, 2023

The Village of Mamaroneck designated a 10,000 square foot lot along the Sheldrake River as a new Village park. The park has donated benches and a giveaway book box for environmentally themed books. Link to Village webpage with flyer



Rockland Pocket Instagram Story





#### No Mow May May 2023

The Committee for the Environment began promoting the concept of No Mow May in spring of 2022 and continued this promotion in the spring of 2023. This was promoted on social media, on the Village website and in the Village e-newsletter. Residents were shown graphic images explaining that mowing less creates habitat and can increase the abundance and diversity of bees and other pollinators.



#### Mamaroneck/Larchmont Repair Café October 15, 2023

The event sponsored by the Town of Mamaroneck and co-sponsored by the Village of Mamaroneck and Village of Larchmont allows for residents to get items repaired in order to keep them out of the waste stream. Volunteers fix mechanical and electronic items, clothing, jewelry, and other items in need of repair. The CFTE/CSC had a table with materials to hand out to attendees to promote and educate the Village's climate change initiatives.







### Earth Day Events Cub Scouts Earth Day Education Event\_ April 2023

CFTE was invited to help educate more than 75 elementary aged children (and parents) from Cub Scout Pack 33 Larchmont/Mamaroneck. We shared 8 ways that children can help the earth, painted garden rocks with earth friendly messages and kids completed a pledge to earth that they felt strongly about.



#### Central Elementary School's Earth Day Festival: April 22, 2023

CFTE was invited to meet and greet with 200+ kids and parents. We encouraged signups to the Village's composting program, distributed free native seeds and educated children about the importance of our pollinators. We offered butterfly cut outs to color and decorate to encourage kids to stay and chat.



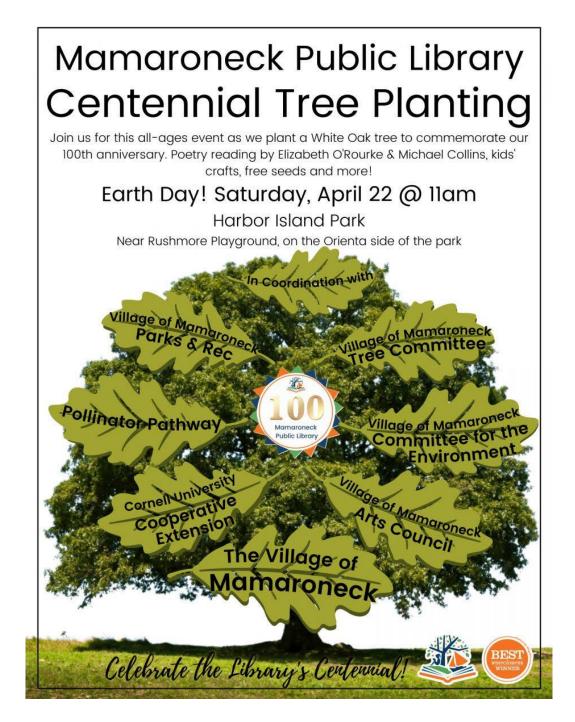
#### Larchmont Earth Day Festival at Constitution Park: April 22, 2023

The CFTE was invited to host a table at the Larchmont Earth Day Festival to help spread awareness of our current programs. We sold dozens of native plant seedlings to attendees and funds are being put back into our local pollinator gardens.

#### Mamaroneck Public Library Centennial Tree Planting: April 22, 2023

Members of the CFTE attended the Centennial celebration of the Mamaroneck Public Library where they planted an oak tree. We sold dozens of native plant seedlings to attendees and funds are being put back into our local pollinator gardens.

#### Link to You Tube Video of the Event



#### **Future Community Engagement and Education Plans**

The CFTE and CSC plan to continue engaging with the community through educational events, hands on volunteerism, and through digital outreach. We will continue to host our annual and bi-annual events, such as the spring and fall community clean-ups, the fall Monarch festival, and Repair Café. The CFTE will continue to host ad hoc native planting events in our community and at our schools.

The Committees will continue its seasonal outreach on the following topics: leaf blowing/mulching, No Mow May, Earth Day, etc. and will maintain an ongoing emphasis on the Village's food scrap program. The Committees will also continue to maintain an active social media presence to inform our followers about climate issues and events both within our community and beyond.

We will continue to seek opportunities to partner with our neighboring municipalities, our local library, our schools, local organizations, Sustainable Westchester and Hudson Valley Regional Council in our engagement and educational efforts.

Below is a list of planned climate change engagement and education initiatives: Climate Action Plan - The CSC is currently in the midst of creating a Climate Action Plan and we plan to have a public comment period.

Electric Vehicle Community Campaign - We are considering undertaking an Electric Vehicle campaign with Sustainable Westchester with the help of Mamaroneck High School students in the Original Civic Research and Action program. We would seek to replicate the successful campaign run by Hastings-On-Hudson. This initiative would leverage the installation of additional EV charging stations in the Village which is expected by year-end.