



Sustainable Sleepy Hollow Monthly Meeting

November 3, 2025

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88609834663?pwd=VaCY9Qi975x2ZwTM0j0CDag9QiJSRv.1>

Meeting ID: 886 0983 4663, Passcode: 208060

Attendees: Sarah Smiley, Char Wiegel, Gina Carey, Jairo Janeiro, Deb Wood, Anne White, Julia Barone senior, Stephanie Barone, Adanhyr, Gina Carey, Arlene Siegel

On zoom: Char Weigel, Rachael Sokolowski, Dan Convissor, Kiko Bourne

Notetaker: Kirsten McLaughlin

Agenda:

1. Introductions & goal to finish by 8:30 pm
2. Recent Event Recaps (15 minutes)
 - a. October 12 - SUP Witch Parade (Char)
 - i. Tara who organizes the event said they would add us earlier in the process so that we can organize a presence there.
3. Upcoming Event Status (10 minutes)
 - a. December 6 - Pumpkin Smash at Peabody/Rain Date Dec 7 (Carol)
 - i. Kim is approved from the district to sell goods
 - ii. We think there will be a ladder fire truck
 - iii. Carol will share the flyer for this year
 1. Diana will distribute
 2. Adanhyr will distribute at the HS
 - iv. We are listed on the state DEC site (there are only 2-3 in Westchester)
 - v. Calling all volunteers!
 1. We have a trebuchet & Sling shots
 2. At least 5 would be great
 3. Kirsten, Stephanie, Julia, Arlene, Adanhyr will bring people from SPEAR
 - vi. There will be porta-potties this year
 - b. April Earth Month - TUFSD Meeting (Char)
 - i. Confirmed with the school that we will be part of Horseman Saturday
 - ii. Matt Arone confirmed it will be outside in Barnhart
 - iii. Village will have bouncy castle and face paint
 - iv. Free Day will be April 25th
 - v. Duck Derby is last Saturday in April

- vi. Gina - Repair Cafe last year was April and this year proposed pushing to May

4. Old Business

- a. CAP - the BOT is suggesting that it is a new business and wants to push to Jan. Sarah is going to try again because we believe it is old business
- b. Leaf Blower Ban (Char/Kiko)
 - i. Char/Kiko created a 2 pager
 - 1. They are going to meet with the 2 neighborhood negotiations
 - 2. They have started discussions with landscapers
 - ii. We knew that it would be considered new business so cannot do until after the education campaign and after the new board is sworn in December
 - iii. We are looking for input from the community on this so that we can gather viewpoints that we may not already have
 - iv. Even if the ban was passed then there would still be a transition period allowing for phase out. The notification period would be negotiated for the technology change
 - v. Request for everyone who uses a landscaper to share the flyer to gain feedback and add to the dialogue.
 - 1. How close are they to having the equipment that they need given that other villages have passed this already?
 - vi. Anne gave positive feedback to the flyer and shared that the SH Manor garden club is always looking for programs to discuss.
 - vii. Anne also proposed an idea of taking chunks of it and posting separately to different social media sites
 - viii. Dan proposed that using at tabling events in bite size pieces
 - ix. What are some of the pushback landscapers have?
 - 1. The battery life limiting their use - this is mitigated by having multiple batteries
 - x. Dobbs Ferry has passed their as of Jan 1 2026 (it is also on the flyer)
 - xi. Tarrytown is working on it in lock step
 - xii. When the idea came up a long time ago and it's great to see the momentum around such a hot button issue.
 - xiii. Someone asked if they could start a petition and Char requested that this wait until the public hearing
- c. Material Recovery Facility mtg with Lou Vittrone and Peter McCartt (Kiko/Char)
 - i. Met with 10 other environmental counsel leaders so that we can better answer questions when they arise
 - ii. There were 3 counsel members there that the information that we share on our website are true. 95-97% of the recycled products they receive are sold.
 - 1. One issue is plastic bags - they do not go into recycling and then go to trash

- iii. A few key messages
 - 1. Empty the liquids / wipe the container to keep the quality of the stream as high as possible so that the county is paid a higher value for the quality of the recycled items. Caps - Keep it simple
 - 2. KIS Principle: Keep it simple - better for people to get the basics right
 - 3. They have made investments into optical sorting technology to improve the recycling effectiveness
 - 4. Anything that is recycled is cheaper than hauling to the incinerator
- iv. Anything with multiple layers that has glue on it - this damages the quality of the recycling, i.e. book spines (cut off the parts with the glue)
- v. Request for municipalities to leave more notes
 - 1. Kirsten will follow up with Kevin to give positive reinforcement
- vi. Stephanie proposed a recycling game and have a neighborhood win who is the best recycling
 - 1. Kirsten will also check with Kevin on this idea
- d. Carol proposed weeks where there are holidays to see how the DPW would feel about just one day of the second day garbage pick up - shoot for 2027
- e. Library of Things (Carol)
 - i. Carol raised the question about the Library of Things being hosted at the library so asked to think about ideas from the Repair Cafe that could be held at the Library
 - ii. Library asked that we create a list of 10 items
 - 1. Seeds
 - 2. Wifi HotSpots for Loan (Gina)
 - 3. Crafting / Knitting items
 - 4. Electric Drill (would have a case)
 - iii. Char suggested looking at other LoTs to see what they offer
 - iv. If you come up with ideas then please email them to Carol
 - v. We would get anywhere from 1-4 CSC points for this
- f. Monarch Garden on Beekman (Susanne/Rachael)
 - i. At the end of the summer we noticed that some plants weren't doing well because it was so hot and dry. In September we proposed to remove old and dying shrubs and have the village pay for new native drought tolerant shrubs
 - ii. Going forward the village agreed to watering them in the village routine throughout the summer.
 - iii. Call for volunteers this Saturday!
 - 1. From 11-3pm
 - 2. Shrubs in the middle where there are dead evergreens
 - 3. Shrubs on the right side where invasive shrubs are
 - 4. In the spring hoping for drought tolerant grass and shrubs

5. Committee Liaison Updates

- a. Tree Commission (Char)
 - b. Douglas park tree planting last Saturday November 1st
 - i. Goal for erosion control and understory
 - ii. The DPW lost 3 employees so in the process of hiring
6. New Business
- a. Stormwater management education for residents (Char)
 - i. Flyer at the bottom of the agenda (and these notes)
 - ii. DPW asked for our help to keep harmful items out of the sewers
 - 1. Starting in our kitchen keeping oils out of the drains
 - iii. Idea to promote pieces of this flyer on social media for easily digestible oils
 - iv. Would the school be open to sharing this?
 - b. Field Trip proposal (Susanne): "Throwing Shade on Extreme Heat"
 - <https://www.hrm.org/exhibitions/throwing-shade-on-extreme-heat/>
 - i. Solutions for extreme heat at the Hudson River Museum (Warburton Ave, Yonkers) through 15-Feb-26
 - c. Columbia Climate School capstone application (Kirsten)
 - i. Mirroring what Nyack's application is to integrate decarbonization plan and possible Thermal Energy Network (TEN)
 - d. Ramapo University Capstone (Char)
 - i. Students interested in daylighting the 'Andre Brook' stream near Sykes Park. Daylighting is uncovering previously covered streams then buried down Valley street because of a Cholera epidemic. The Walgreens parking lot used to be a pond where people could skate
 - ii. Studies done on the benefits of daylighting even parts of brooks. Yonkers has done this and it completely changes the atmosphere of the environment
 - iii. It's been also part of the CAP to daylight and it is good timing for students
 - iv. It would start in the spring semester
 - v. There will be a December lecture on it at Ramapo
 - e. December - Horseman Saturday December 13th
 - i. They have partner tables
 - ii. Eddie Castro is the main contact
 - iii. Ideas for the table - corks, crocheting, upcycling cards
7. Next Meeting: Monday, December 1 (Kirsten) Village Hall & Zoom
- a. Bring a snack to share as you'd like for the holidays!
8. Adjourn: Target by 8:30 pm

2026 Event Dates (just for the record): Earth Month/Green Horsemen Festival: Saturday, April 18, 2026 (rain plan inside Senior Center); Sleepy Hollow Free Day: April 25, 2026 - rain date April 26, 2026. Pumpkin Smash at Peabody: December 5, 2026 - rain date December 6, 2026

Meeting Chair Schedule:

April / August / Dec- Kirsten

May / Sep - Char

June / Nov - Sarah

July / Oct - Susanne

SLEEPY HOLLOW!

SAVE TAXES & THE ENVIRONMENT



ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN

1

Cooking oil and grease clog village infrastructure. Our tax dollars are spent cleaning and repairing. Let grease cool and put in trash or pour into a non-recyclable container and discard.



2

Leaf litter & grass clippings contribute to pollution and Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). HABs cause fish & wildlife die-offs. In 2025, dogs died from drinking HAB-affected water in the Hudson & its tributaries. People cannot safely boat, kayak or fish. Bag or mulch clippings & leaves. Or if you put leaves in the street for village pick up, keep drains clear.



3

Sleepy Hollow has many buried streams and low lying areas prone to flooding. When leaves and other materials clog drains, streets flood and cause costly repairs.



4

If you use a commercial car wash, water is recycled and safely sent to treatment facilities. If you wash your car at home, do it on a lawn or gravel & dump your soapy bucket in the sink.



5

Whatever goes into storm drains ends up untreated in the Pocantico or the Hudson. Do not put chemicals or animal waste in village drains.



Questions?

Kevin Smith, Superintendent
Sleepy Hollow
Department of Public Works
ksmith@sleepyhollowny.gov
[914-366-5190](tel:914-366-5190)

Reduce Street
Flooding



ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN



Gas Powered Leaf Blower (GPLB) Considerations

Toxicity/Cancer Risks

Unlike four-stroke engines, the two-stroke engines in gas powered leaf blowers do not completely combust fuel, exposing operators & others to harmful levels of toxic and carcinogenic fumes¹ including:

- carbon monoxide¹
- benzene²
- toxic aromatic hydrocarbons²
- formaldehyde³ and more.

Did You Know...

- Since 2010, Sleepy Hollow Village Code has banned gas-powered leaf blowers between Memorial Day Saturday and September 30.
- Any ban on gas-powered leaf blowers still allows you to use electric leaf blowers at any time. So there is no need to give up using a leaf blower if that solution works best for you.
- There are equivalently powerful electric and gas-powered leaf blower options as measured by:
 - speed of leaf clearance (cubic feet per minute or cfm)
 - power of engine (miles per hour or mph).There is no need to give up efficiency by switching to healthier electric models!
- If you are a customer of a landscaping company that has clients outside of Sleepy Hollow, many neighboring municipalities have already banned gas-powered leaf blowers (see "Local Bans"). So many landscapers have already begun conversion to electric units.
- Residents and landscapers using electric leaf blowers typically have more than one battery to avoid downtime.
- Questions or comments? Email Sustainable Sleepy Hollow at sleepy.hollow.eac@gmail.com

Positive ROI

Switching to equivalently powered electric blowers (e.g., Stihl BGA 200 for municipalities & large properties) yields a positive return on investment (ROI) in under 1.5 years (adjusted for Westchester gas & electric costs)⁸. Landscaping companies doing business in neighboring communities with bans have already advanced along this return on investment timeline.



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Time to Adjust

Any ban on gas-powered leaf blowers would include a phase-in period to allow residents & landscapers to plan. And our village DPW has already begun conversion with 3 electric leaf blowers out of a 6 fleet total. Village Parks has 2 electric out of 5 total.

Special Risk To Children

The Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) of Mount Sinai Hospital supports leaf blower bans because of heightened impact on children's respiratory health.¹⁰ PEHSU states that children are more vulnerable to respiratory danger from gas-powered (internal combustion) leaf blowers because they breathe faster, are rarely wearing protective equipment, are closer to the ground, and have still-developing organs.

Health Damage from Noise

GPLB sound exceeds safe thresholds even 800 feet away from the source,⁵ negatively impacting productivity, health, and quality of life.⁷ Also, low-frequency sound is a common cause of annoyance and other stress-induced adverse consequences.⁵ GPLBs typically exceed 95 A-weighted decibels (dBA).⁷ Prolonged exposure >85 dBA is found to cause hearing loss and permanent ringing in ears.⁴ Electric leaf blowers are quieter and operate below harmful thresholds.⁶

Emissions

30 minutes of yard work with a two-stroke GPLB produces about the same hydrocarbon emissions as a 3,900-mile drive from Texas to Alaska in a Ford Raptor.⁹

Sources

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Local Bans

Many municipalities that share landscaping companies with Sleepy Hollow have already instituted year-round GPLB bans: Irvington, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Larchmont, White Plains, Bedford, Nyack, Mamaroneck & more.



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