

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION – Annual Report

2013 ACTIVITIES

The West Seneca Environmental Commission meets monthly, generally the fourth Tuesday of each month, at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center at 7:00pm.

Members appointed by the West Seneca Town Board are: Evelyn Hicks, Chair, Joyce Mallette, David Monopolus, Richard Rutkowski, Vice Chair, James Caruso, George Rockey, Steve Kondrak, Karl Spencer, John C. Oshei (Youth Member).

Supervisor Sheila Meegan is the Town Board liaison to the Commission.

A record of our 2013 activities include:

Educational:

- Creek Clean ups – (Earth Day) cleaned up trash and litter at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center on Buffalo Creek and on Cazenovia Creek (at Ridge Road and Orchard Park Road).
- Environmental Awareness Presentations – created an educational Power Point presentation and conducted school assemblies for 7th and 8th grade students at West Seneca West Middle School during the 2013 school year to inform them of environmental issues in the Buffalo Creek and Cazenovia Creek watersheds.
- Installed 200 Storm drain medallions at storm drain inlets on 27 Town roads
- Set –up and connected three rain barrels and created signage for the rain barrels located at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center
- West Seneca Library display –July 2013
- Participated in National Night Out – (8/6/2013) at the Southgate Plaza
- Prepared a Power Point of Environmental Commission accomplishments and presented same the annual Open House at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center.

Community Issues:

- Creek Contamination - discussed problem, possible corrective measures for improperly treated wastewater being discharged from residential homes (Hi View Terrace) to Cazenovia Creek with NYSDEC regulatory officials, Town Board members.
- Municipal Trees Identification – Attended workshops regarding the invasive insect, the Emerald Ash Borer. Ash trees identified/marked at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center, the West Seneca Soccer Complex, and Town Parks at Mill Rd., Harlem Rd., Densmore Ave., Fireman’s Park, and Sunshine Park.

Community Issues (continued):

- Reviewed and commented on environmental issues concerning two major building projects in West Seneca. Submitted comments and recommendations to the West Seneca Planning Board for further review and consideration.

Ongoing projects:

- Buffalo Creek Oxbow – (Located at 2805 Clinton St.)
 - Continued working on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant to improve and restore the Town-owned portion of the West Seneca Oxbow wetland.
 - Recruited a volunteer corps who formed the Oxbow Field Club – consists of volunteers who will eventually oversee the care of the Oxbow wetland.
 - Eradicate invasive plants species in the wetland, plant native plants, trees, native seed collection, and a butterfly garden.
 - Conducted student work-days at the West Seneca Oxbow Wetland for West Seneca West Sr. High School and Canisius High School teachers and students.
 - Updated the “Know Your Backyard” booklet and worked on the new, accompanying informational and educational video.
 - Facilitated the installation of “Low-Head Dam Warning” signage along Buffalo Creek.
- Canoe/Kayak Launch - identified and evaluated possible locations for installation of a canoe/kayak launch along the Buffalo River
- Continued follow-up on the development of a 113-acre Wildlife Refuge Site to be managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation along Cazenovia Creek near Leydecker Road on the West Seneca Developmental Center site.
- Continued evaluation of potential grants and other funding sources to address stream bank erosion and other bank failures (ice scour) along the creek system in West Seneca.