

“The Town of Cortlandt has been a charter member in NWEAC which has now merged with other Westchester communities to form Sustainable Westchester. Please read about this important organization: Supervisor Linda Puglisi



### ***SUSTAINABLE WESTCHESTER IS LAUNCHED***

***New non-profit organization seeks to foster healthier communities by collaborating on energy efficiency and related issues***

Two organizations that have each been demonstrating the strength of inter-municipal collaboration on sustainability issues in Westchester County have officially joined forces to create a new non-profit organization called **Sustainable Westchester**.

Combining the parallel efforts of the Northern Westchester Energy Action Consortium (NWEAC.org) and the Southern Westchester Energy Action Consortium (SWEAC.org), **Sustainable Westchester** will help

participating municipalities build healthier and more sustainable communities through energy efficiency and related programs and policies.

"The new organization is launching from a position of strength, with most of Westchester's municipalities already signed up as members of the two combining groups," said Nina Orville, director of SWEAC and a Dobbs Ferry resident. "Both NWEAC and SWEAC have built strong track records by providing services valued by their member municipalities and we will continue to do that as this one organization named **Sustainable Westchester**."

"The launch of **Sustainable Westchester** marks a major step forward in our collective effort to save energy, reduce pollution, and create more healthy, vibrant communities here in Westchester County," said Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano. "Local governments now have one place to go for the most innovative solutions to our most serious energy and environmental challenges."

The two groups now combining have developed successful programs designed to share best practices on topics such as energy efficient streetlights, green building codes, autumn leaf management and solar permitting. They were instrumental in helping to launch the popular "Energize New York" program that has been rolled out in fourteen Westchester municipalities. Future programs developed and offered by **Sustainable Westchester** will build on the prior successes of NWEAC and SWEAC and will reflect the priorities of its members.

Herb Oringel, of Somers, has served as chair of NWEAC and has led the effort to merge with SWEAC. "We have evolved in the last five years, from a good idea held by a few forward thinkers, to a large consortium working with some of the most talented and dedicated people in New York State," says Oringel. "We expect **Sustainable Westchester** to be a major player in the effort to help local communities deal creatively and effectively with many of the sustainability challenges they face."

"Everyone is talking about streamlining local government and sharing services," said Leo Wiegman, Mayor of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. "**Sustainable Westchester** will make that a reality for its members, allowing Westchester's cities, towns and villages to collaborate on fiscally sustainable improvements that no single member could tackle alone."

With 501(c)(3) tax status, **Sustainable Westchester** is organized as a membership organization that is eligible for corporate and individual support. Local governments within Westchester County are invited to become members. Individuals and businesses that understand the importance of helping communities build sustainable futures are encouraged to provide financial support.

**Sustainable Westchester** anticipates its first membership meeting to be held this fall, at which time the election of its first Board of Directors will take place. For more information about membership and support of **Sustainable Westchester**, go to [www.sustainablewestchester.org](http://www.sustainablewestchester.org), [www.facebook.com/sustainablewestchester](https://www.facebook.com/sustainablewestchester), or [sustainablewestchester@gmail.com](mailto:sustainablewestchester@gmail.com).

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