

## Sally Roberts

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**Subject:** FW: Formalizing "Rockland Pocket Preserve" as a village park  
**Attachments:** Rockland Pocket Tax Maps.html; RocklandPocketTax-GIS.png; 1-Rockland Site2-Plan wPlants.pdf

**From:** Kate Dehais <[kdehais@vomny.net](mailto:kdehais@vomny.net)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 27, 2022 10:48 PM  
**To:** Lou Young <[lyoung@vomny.org](mailto:lyoung@vomny.org)>; Mayor and Board <[MayorandBoard@vomny.org](mailto:MayorandBoard@vomny.org)>  
**Cc:** Committee for the Enviroment <[cfte@vomny.org](mailto:cfte@vomny.org)>; TreeCom <[TreeCom@vomny.org](mailto:TreeCom@vomny.org)>; James Barney <[jbarney@vomny.org](mailto:jbarney@vomny.org)>; Jeff Ahne <[jahne@vomny.org](mailto:jahne@vomny.org)>; Jason Pinto <[jpinto@vomny.org](mailto:jpinto@vomny.org)>  
**Subject:** Formalizing "Rockland Pocket Preserve" as a village park

Dear Lou and members of the Board of Trustees,

As you know, the CFTE in concert with the Tree Committee has been working to restore a section of land at the south-west edge of the industrial area bounded by the Sheldrake River, and Rockland and Fayette Avenues as a nature preserve. The purpose of the preserve is to create a refuge of native plants, trees, and shrubs to support birds, butterflies, and other pollinating insects near a water source, and to provide pathways and benches for residents to relax and enjoy nature alongside the Sheldrake River. CFTE voted unanimously at the 11/15 meeting to ask the village to formally name the site as the 'Rockland Pocket Preserve' and to designate the area as a village park. A site plan from Nov. 1 is attached, and this website shows some of the work that has been done to turn this rough land into a preserve.

<https://rocklandpocket.wixsite.com/home>

Clearing of the site was done over 2 weekends in October, five sessions of 3 hours each when over 80 volunteers cleared away many decades worth of invasive plants, followed by many smaller sessions of root clearing, and path and planting bed preparation. DPW foreman James Barney helped in having parking blocked off on those weekends and for mountains of invasive weeds and roots to be disposed of.

In several additional sessions, volunteers planted over 600 native plants and many pounds of native seeds, all donated. The village planted 2 oak trees and 2 spice bushes, and in the spring will plant the balance of the trees allocated by the Tree Committee: 2 American cherries, 4 native willows, and 2 additional spice bushes. In the spring, CFTE will also plant another 600 or so plants on the balance of the cleared land. The committee will also put together a maintenance plan: the majority of the work will be weeding to be done by volunteers but we will ask the village to mow at specific intervals as part of invasive plant control.

On 11/9, the village manager met us at the site. He identified certain existing trees to be trimmed (since completed), asked James Barney to have wood chips for paths delivered, and for erosion control material to be provided. Barney had a section of guardrail taken down to accommodate the work. The siting of future benches and a garbage can was discussed with Parks foreman Jeff Ahne, and the design of a future sign was discussed with Jason Pinto.

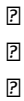
The Rockland Pocket Preserve site is comprised of 3 tax map locations (see attached): 8-99-1C, 4,828 sq. ft, listed as Village of Mamaroneck property; 8-99-2A, the corner 2,045 sq. ft. which is shown as State of New

York but according to the LWRP is village property; and part of 8-91-1, Village of Mamaroneck property, which is the shore of the Sheldrake adjacent to the Rockland Pocket Preserve but also continuing along Fayette Ave. totaling 21,549 sq. ft. Eventually we hope to restore this longer section as a river walk, but the portion of the lot adjacent to the other lots is estimated at 2,500 sq. ft., thus, the entire Rockland Pocket Preserve would total ~9,373 , 6,873 of which is being replanted with natives, the balance being steeper slope along the river which is existing trees but which the CFTE has cleared of invasive plants, garbage, and debris and is an integral part of the preserve.

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It all started more than 130 milkweed plants spotted on . June 7, 2022. The Village of Mamaroneck Tree Committee and Committee for the Environment has since started clearing decades worth of invasive plants.

[rocklandpocket.wixsite.com](http://rocklandpocket.wixsite.com)



For additional background to support the park designation, I will note that the Rockland Pocket Preserve and adjacent areas is named in Mamaroneck's Local Waterfront Protection Plan (pp 30-31) as "Conservation and Open Space Areas which provide habitats for abundant and diverse wildlife, "...Rockland Avenue Thruway Pocket (Low-lying vegetated area adjacent to Sheldrake River; flood buffer; waterfowl habitat)"

This area along the Sheldrake, including the area we are calling The Rockland Pocket Preserve, is also mentioned on page 94:

- v. *Sheldrake Riverfront along Fayette Avenue. As discussed in Section II, there is currently very limited access by the public to Mamaroneck's rivers. In particular, access by the public to the Sheldrake River is largely confined to the walking trail in Bub Walker Park. However, there are several key opportunities to expand this access using Village property. According to tax maps, the Village owns a parcel of land bound by the Sheldrake River and Fayette, Concord, Center and Rockland Avenues, in the industrial area. This parcel, which is vacant, could provide a key gateway to the Sheldrake River for the neighborhood, which currently has no direct access to any Village park, from the key arterial of Rockland Avenue.*

Thank you Lou for your support of the Rockland Project Preserve. I would like to note that in addition to the tangible benefits to nature and to neighborhood residents that this park will provide, the CFTE itself is acquiring experience and expertise in the managing of invasive plants, knowledge that that can assist the village in future restoration work it may undertake.

Sincerely,  
Kate Dehais  
Volunteer, Committee for the Environment