



# Saw Mill River Watershed Advisory Board

## BOL Meeting Minutes - Published Draft

Advisory Board Chair: MaryJane Shimsky

800 Michaelian Office Bldg.  
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor  
White Plains, NY 10601  
[www.westchesterlegislators.com](http://www.westchesterlegislators.com)

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**Thursday, September 30, 2021**

**1:00 PM**

**Committee Room**

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### CALL TO ORDER

*The County Board will meet pursuant to Chapter 417 of New York State Laws of 2021, allowing public bodies to meet and take action without permitting in-person public access to meetings and authorizes such meetings and public hearings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided the public has the ability to view or listen and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed. To access the meeting, please visit: <https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com>*

*With a quorum present, Chair Shimsky called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.*

*Others in Attendance: Legislator Ruth Walter (D15), Legislator Catherine Parker (D7), David Kvinge-Planning Department, Peter McCartt-County Executive's Office, Taro Ietaka-Parks Recreation and Conservation, Ryan Palmer, Katie Lamboy, Center for the Urban River at Beczak, Ellen Theg, Oded Holzinger, Kerri Wyatt-Groundworks Hudson Valley, LJ Kuhn, Village of Ardsley, Richard Fon, Town of Greenburgh, Paul Summerfield, City of Yonkers, Tara Seeley, Westchester Community Foundation, Ann Marie Rocco, Jeffrey Econom-Village of Pleasantville, Mayor Amacost, Morgen Fleisig-Village of Hastings*

**Present** Legislator MaryJane Shimsky

### MINUTES APPROVAL

#### I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

##### Saw Mill River Watershed Advisory Board Quarterly Update

- Presentation by Kathalene Lamboy on the Saw Mill & Hudson River Stakeholder Report
- Flood Damage and Recovery Efforts
- New Parkland in Dobbs Ferry
- River Cleanup
- Additional Information

*Legislator Shimsky asked each of the municipalities to report on how they fared during Hurricane Ida. Mr. Econom said fairly well besides some road closures and residential flooding. Legislator Shimsky asked if they had any rescues and he responded no, before asking if the presence of the construction site may have affected the flooding and he responded no. Mr. Fon spoke next about the Town of Greenburgh's widespread flooding, property damages, and loss of life, along with their recovery efforts. He was hopeful that the County could provide assistance. Ms. Kuhn reiterated much of the same, with the business district closer to the Saw Mill taking a pounding, and the Bronx River side being most affected.*

Macy Park flooded as planned and they've noticed a slightly better rate of water receding, along with recent efforts by the Army Corps that have so far worked as intended. Hastings signed an MOU in October 2020 and among the commitments they made included passing a watershed ordinance, before speaking about some of their problem spots and remediation efforts, although Mr. Fleisig said additional advocacy is needed. Mr. Summerfield spoke about the devastating effects of the storm in Yonkers, which included landslides, the overloading of storm systems, and widespread flooding, believing this to be the worst flooding they've ever had. Legislator Shimsky said that it sounded like the landslides were similar to the mudflows in Hastings, and Mayor Amacost agreed. Legislator Shimsky reiterated the fact that these storms are going to continue to happen and that they need to plan for that and renewed the importance of continued advocacy.

Mr. Ietaka spoke briefly on an invasive species, the Asian jumping worm, and the need for vigilance, to which Legislator Shimsky agreed and shared some concerns she's had from the community, stating that measures they've taken work, but they will need to come up with new ideas together and share amongst themselves. Legislator Shimsky referenced the MOU and asked how many municipalities have signed onto it, and Oded said that five have. Legislator Shimsky referenced some of the efforts at river stabilization in Dobbs Ferry, and reported the BOL has turned over its claim to that land so their work can continue and spoke about plans for that area. She spoke next about debris in the Saw Mill in the past done with FEMA funding, and how that had positively impacted nearby communities. Legislator Shimsky spoke about the letter from municipalities to NYSDOT and a discussion ensued.

Katie Lamboy and Ryan Palmer then presented the final update on Saw Mill and Hudson River Stakeholder Report on the health of the river and a discussion ensued on its more methodology and importance in guiding policy. The Sewer district consolidation was raised and Legislator Shimsky spoke to its importance and why it should be done. LJ Kuhn asked if we've also been in touch with the thruway authority in addition to NYSDOT due to a past issue before speaking about a problem spot near Dobbs Ferry and thinks it would be beneficial to have someone from there weigh in. Legislator Shimsky said they could have a further discussion offline, but if they were able to get the state involved that could be an area they could look at and Mr. Fon said Greenburgh and Elmsford would also like to be involved in anything they do. Mr. McCartt spoke about the efforts Mr. Palmer and Tracy Brown, now at River Keeper, have done in regards to improving the watershed. Mr. Holzinger spoke about Groundworks efforts in keeping the river clean and healthy, and noted some of the fallout from Ida, along with prior preventative measures they took which survived Ida and helped mitigate some of the damage, along with upcoming events Groundwork would be hosting in October. Mr. McCartt wanted to raise awareness about some new invasive species in Westchester and beech leaf disease which could have potentially devastating effects and Mr. Ietaka spoke some more about the disease. Legislator Walter spoke about some flood mitigation efforts for the Bronx River and looked forward to collaborating with SWAB and other local groups. Margie spoke about their cleanup efforts and the importance of the birds and the bees act, and spoke about some opportunities to get involved. Legislator Shimsky reiterated the importance of engaging the state especially for the Saw Mill River. Ms. Kuhn briefly mentioned some accomplishments before Legislator Shimsky closed by going over the action items they had to work on.

## **II. OTHER BUSINESS**

## **III. RECEIVE & FILE**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Saw Mill Watershed Advisory Board adjourned at 2:10 PM.

DRAFT