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Monarch Butterflies Coming to Peekskill Riverfront Green This Summer, Thanks to Community Partnerships

Peekskill, N.Y. – Nature is in bloom with the discovery of milkweed plants growing in different sections of the Peekskill Walkway along the Riverfront Green Park. This discovery, made by local Peekskill resident Jack Cook, led to creating a dynamic collaboration between residents, the Peekskill Parks & Recreation Department, the Peekskill Garden Club, and the Mayor and Common Council of Peekskill, NY. As a result of this collaboration, Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey signed The National Wildlife Federation Pledge, which commits to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators from extinction and engaging residents in building pollinator habitats throughout the City of Peekskill.

The pledge signed by Mayor Rainey underlines his support in saving the monarch butterflies and includes public communication efforts to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or neighborhoods. It also engages with community garden groups to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants, partner with The Field Library to do a planting in front of the library with “take and make” bags of seeds for kids to do their own gardens at home, work with city staff on identifying opportunities on milkweed and nectar-producing plant programs, and engage with leaders to support monarch butterfly conservation.

“What an honor it is to join the pledge on behalf of the residents of the City of Peekskill,” said City of Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey. “This collaborative effort makes a huge impact on our environment and also celebrates what we can achieve when we work together. When we all work in partnership, our city soars high like the monarch butterflies.”

The monarch butterfly is facing the danger of extinction due to the eradication of the milkweed plant, which is the only plant a monarch butterfly can feed and lay eggs upon. Without milkweed, monarch butterflies will not play a role in our ecosystem by pollinating other plants. Spearheaded by Peekskill resident Jack Cook, who worked with Bob Walters of the Pollinator Pathways Program Coordinator at the Beczak Environmental Education Center, they discovered areas where milkweed was already growing in our Riverfront Green Park. Upon their discovery, they have met with city officials, identified and tagged plants, created a map of the existing milkweed, and educated others on how the National Wildlife Federation Pledge will have a lasting impact on our planet generations to come.

About the City of Peekskill: The City of Peekskill is a thriving, historic community located on the banks of the Hudson River. Just under one hour north of New York City, Peekskill is culturally and economically vibrant with abundant natural resources due to its location on the river and at the gateway to the Hudson Highlands. With over three miles of continuous parkland, the waterfront is a regional destination with a variety of active and passive recreation, as well as breathtaking views of the Hudson River. While Peekskill’s waterfront parks, walking trails, and dog park remain open during the coronavirus pandemic, guidelines for social distancing are enforced. The downtown area features an array of dining establishments. Home to a growing arts community, Peekskill is also a hub for new generation technology and multimedia. For more information, please visit www.cityofpeekskill.com.

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(L-R): Peekskill Councilwoman Vanessa Agudelo, Peekskill Deputy Mayor Vivian McKenzie, Peekskill Conservation Advisory Council Chair Kay Barthelmes, Peekskill Councilman Dwight Douglas, Jack Cook, Peekskill Councilwoman Kathleen Talbot, Peekskill Parks Advisory Board Co-Chair Chapman Manzer, Peekskill Councilwoman Patricia Riley – photo credit: Events To Remember, Cathy Montaldo

Picture of milkweed location – photo credit: Events To Remember