Town of New Castle

Chappaqua, NY

Town of New Castle New York, Town Supervisor Lisa Katz

Pledge Summary

As described in the Town of New Castle 2017 Comprehensive Plan, New Castle's land area is comprised mainly of bucolic, low-density residential neighborhoods. Of the Town's approximately 15,000 acres, 14,488 acres are zoned for single-family residential use, and of these, 91% (13,194 acres) have one- or two-acre minimum lot sizes. This low density residential development pattern, derived from the Town's zoning, has helped to maintain scenic vistas, large lots, areas of open space quality, and forested and undisturbed swaths of land that characterize the Town's neighborhoods. Preservation of the bucolic residential character of the community's neighborhoods is a priority to New Castle's residents, as reflected in our 5-Year Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day foundation, and recent Bee City USA designation from the initiatives of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. A brief description of the The Town's on-going development programs which coincide with applicable Mayors Monarch Pledge & Action Items in parentheses include: -Town Board 2022 Proclamation in Honor of Monarch Butterflies unanimously passed 4/26/22 (Communication and Convening Item #1). -New Castle Garden Club Native Plant Sale 5/5 - 5/7, 2022 (Program & Demonstration Gardens Item #10). -Formation of volunteer group 'New Castle Vine Squad' in 2020; 2022 stewardship projects in concert with local Eagle Scout project at 2 Town Parks (Jean Craighead George & Bicenntenial) manually removed invasive vines from deciduous trees (sources of food for pollinators) in winter (Program & Demonstration Gardens Item #20). -New Castle Community Day September 2022 - New Castle Conservation Board to host monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation themed booth. To include Town poster highlighting existing registered Pollinator Pathway properties AND facilitate recruitment of other property owners (Program & Demonstration Gardens Item #21). -Town Park Glazier Preserve - beginning in 2022, a private organic landscape company has been hired to perform maintenance practices to maintain a designed and installed meadow adjacent the park entrance by performing a single annual mow event in early spring. Lack of active maintenance since the last mow event in 2019 to accommodate tree planting at the meadows periphery, indicates the meadow habitat will transition to successional shrublands and resemble the dense shrub thicket immediately adjacent two borders of said meadow. Also planned is invasive species removal of a linear tract of mugwort bordering the meadow adjacent a park trail (Systems Change Item #24).

Action Items Committed for 2022

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

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Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Victoria Bayard Tipp	2026	4/30/2026	
Town Supervisor Victoria Tipp	2025	3/31/2025	Signatories
Town Supervisor Victoria Bayard Tipp	2024	3/27/2024	Signatories
Town Supervisor Lisa Katz	2023	3/21/2023	Signatories
Town of New Castle New York, Town Supervisor Lisa Katz	2022	4/28/2022	Signatories

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

104

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

26 youth and 78 adults

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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0.02

Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

Rock outcrop interstitial spaces at Town Hall; Wetland Buffer area at Chappaqua Library

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

Select Pledge & Action Items occurred at public parks which are open to the general public and not restricted to only residents. For 2023, the Conservation Board will be reaching out to Committee on Race, Equity and Inclusion to discuss purpose, need and best collaborative approach to meeting these goals.

What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

A continuation of pollinator habitat conservation momentum following New Castle's Bee City designation in 2022 courtesy of the Xerces Society.

What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

The inclusion of changing weed and mowing ordinances as an Action Item, represented the push needed to change New Castle Parks & Rec mowing practices at select Town Parks whereby maintenance is more focused on promoting meadow and understory communities, and dissuading weekly flush cuts of herbs. We had issue locating milkweed plants due to limited supply; is it acceptable for nwf to include resources and/or listings of local suppliers? Any 'cradle-to-grave' documentation, experiences, successes, failures, methods etc. by property owners who've transformed their former turf cover into a pollinator habitat would help us in communicating applicability and practicality to interested parties/citizens.

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

New Castle submitted the pledge in April 2022. As a first-time pledger, we directed our efforts at Town owned lands as that was under our control to better facilitate and expedite select Action Items. Such an approach led to a blend of both initiatives (e.g. dedicated creation of habitat) as well as co-opting annual pre-planned community events for the Town Conservation Board to promote Monarch Festival celebration (e.g. New Castle Community Day). As New Castle also completed a Natural Resources Inventory in 2022, pre-planning and value add can be better accomplished in 2023 in both identifying and meeting Pledge Action Items not only on public properties, but in leveraging this information in attempting to

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reach out to private landowners as well in promoting pollinator friendly habitat and practices.

Selected Action Items

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0.9

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

Pesticide and herbicide use are not permitted on Town lands. The 0.9-acre Jean Craighead George Park represents an on-going effort, which was initiated by a citizen member of the New Castle Recreation & Parks commission in 2021. Working with the Town's Environmental Coordinator, this NYSDEC regulated wetland area is undergoing transformative restoration courtesy of local resident volunteers who perform vine cuttings clinging to native trees, cutting of non-native invasive woody shrubs and weed pulling of mugwort and phragmites. Courtesy of their surgical approach naturally recruited native species 'discovered' following weed pulls are not impacted and left in place.

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

JCGProposalMap.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

JCG_ProposedPlantList_Fall2022.xlsx

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Trees for Tribs Area I.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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Trees for Tribs Area II.jpg

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

New Castle Conservation Board and Recreation & Parks Commission

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

NYSDEC Trees-for-Tribs Program: All Planting of native nursery material (60 trees & 150 shrubs) and installation of protective trees tubes completed 11/5/22. https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5098.html#Tribs98.html#Tribs

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Monarch Festival at Community Day 9-17-2022.docx

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

1200

What was the date of your festival?

9/17/2022

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Chappaqua Rotary Club, New Castle Conservation Board, New Castle Garden Club, New Castle Healthy Yards, New Castle Pollinator Pathways

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

See attached word file for summary.

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must

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incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

April 26, 2022

Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Proclamation in Honor of Monarch Butterflies

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

TB Proclamation 2022 Monarch Butterfly.pdf

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

54 (17 Aster cordifolius, 17 Aster olb. 'October Skies', 13 Solidago 'Little Lemon', 11 Solidago caesia) Note: 64 remaining plants not given away were planted at various park & public spaces).

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

55

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

Chappaqua Garden Club Juniors Program, New Castle Healthy Yards, New Castle Pollinator Pathways. Note: Give-away Event occurred at New Castle Community Day. The 55 attendees do not reflect the total number of visitors to the respective 'booth', nor Community Day overall.....both of which were in the hundreds of people.

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Pages from 10.25.2022 Resolutions-2.pdf

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

glazierplants2006.pdf

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What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

New Castle Conservation Board and Recreation & Parks Department, Recreation & Parks Commission

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

See attached-Town Board passed a resolution to allow for private landscape company to take over trail and meadow maintenance at Glazier Preserve (Town Park) from the Recreation & Parks Department.

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

The maintenance activities have yet to be initiated by the private landscape company. The Administrative Action allowing for private care of Town lands has been completed via the attached Town Board resolution. **How will this ordinance allow for native prairie and plant habitats? The ~1.25-acre meadow was designed and installed in 2006 (see attached plant list). Over that time, maintenance mowing events have been infrequent (e.g. 1 mow in '19 during my 3.5-year tenure as Environmental Coordinator, and it didn't resemble a meadow when we performed said mow) and the immediately adjacent successional shrubland is dominated by a dense thicket of Rubus sp. The encroachment of this species into the designed meadow, in conjunction with the intrusion of mugwort at the interface of both mowed entrance pathway edges, require more attention beyond our limited Recreation & Parks staff reach. The Conservation Board is tasked with considering, approving and overseeing potential projects and the Preserve budget (which is unique in that it has an endowment fund that can only be spent at this Preserve, i.e. no other Town land spending permitted. The Board has made mention of looking to utilize a section of the meadow for additional public outreach demonstration areas and pollinator gardens, but cannot realistically access without coming in painful contact with Rubus sp. Flowering herb species currently dominating the meadow include Solidago sp., Euthamia graminifolia, Ageratina altissima and Eryngium yuccifolium. We are looking to promote more native flowering herb species distribution overall in the meadow, as well as have the ability to 'showcase' a demonstration garden accessible to the walking paths for education purposes.

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

I am recommending spring of 2023 so that meadow flowers which have gone to seed can provide food for wildlife over winter, as well as initiate weed pulling of living perennial plant tissue.

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