

Green Living

“All our wisdom is stored in the trees.”
— Santosh Kalwar

What Is Happening at the East End Riverfront Park?

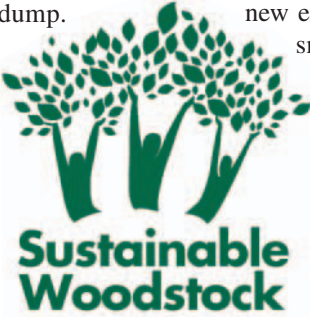
By Sally Miller
For Sustainable Woodstock

In August, with 50 percent of the funds raised by Sustainable Woodstock through private donations, the Village purchased a site for the new snow dump. The purchase of the alternative site is an important step in the establishment of the East End Riverfront Park and the anticipated revitalization of the East End. Bids have gone out for construction of the new snow dump and work should start this fall using funds from the \$175,000 Community Development Block Grant that was awarded to the village in 2014.

Mary MacVey and Joby Thompson have been championing the East End effort from the start. Joby says that “the purchase of the land that insures the move of the village snow dump to new location away from the Ottauquechee and the Riverfront Park is an eight year dream come true for me both as a village resident and a member of Sustainable Woodstock’s East End Action Group. We will now be able to move ahead with what we’ve already begun cleaning up the entire dump area, planting and mowing grass on a large open area, creating a rain garden at the base of the slope down from the parking area, creating a riparian buffer to help prevent further erosion. After that the sky’s the limit. We’ll talk with village and town residents...picnic areas, paths, play areas for kids, edible landscape areas.”

It’s been a long process; the East End Action Group was started in 2009 as a project of the Sustainable Woodstock Economic Development Action Group. The EEAG determined that revitalizing the East End was a community priority and focused on cleaning up the Jungle and developing plans for a riverfront park. From 2010 to 2011 the EEAG received endorsements from many community groups for the riverfront park. Relocating the snow dump seemed a logical first step and conversations were started with the village and other stakeholders.

Following a significant loss of land at the proposed park site during Irene, the EEAG continued to move forward on a simplified plan for the park and relocating the snow dump. The village agreed to designate it a seasonal park and dilapidated buildings on the site were removed. In 2013 the EEAG leveraged community support to allow the village to proceed with the land purchase of an alternative site for the snow dump. With input from the EEAG the village was awarded two Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Ecosystem Restoration grants totaling \$77,500 for improvements to the site including building a rain garden, improving the riparian buffer, invasive species control and stabilizing the slope.



1. The riverfront park is seen here in 2015. 2. Barbara Barry, Jen Dembinski, Josh Gale and Mary MacVey help plant donated plants at the East End. 3. The old snow dump, seen here, in 2014. 4. Remember this? It was the old shed in the jungle.

Sustainable Woodstock Photos



In 2014 the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Economic Development awarded the Village a \$175,000 CDBG grant to create a new environmentally friendly snow dump on a site away from the Ottauquechee River. The East End Action Group was instrumental in preparing the grant application, and Sustainable Woodstock committed to raise the 10 percent match for this grant. If you would like to support this effort you can send a tax-deductible donation to

Sustainable Woodstock or donate online at sustainablewoodstock.org. More recently, the EEAG returned to their original goal of developing the East End and convened meetings with East End property owners and community stakeholders to re-visit the 2000 East End master plan. With a \$12,000 grant from the Woodstock Economic Development Commission the EEAG hired the team of Landworks from Middlebury and Burke + White of Burlington to prepare a developer

package which will provide in one convenient spot, easily accessible information that is critical to any development project. The package will indicate that Woodstock is serious about paving the way for responsible development and demonstrate that there are willing partners with a thoughtful vision.

For the last three years annual work days and gatherings at the East End have engaged more than 150 local residents to “discover the

Do Just One Thing...

Go down to the East End and visit the park.

How Can You Help?

Volunteer Your Time:

- Help remove invasives - Join the knotweed crew or tackle wild parsnip
- Join us on Sept. 24 for a river cleanup day
- Ongoing landscape cleanup: Help with a clean up day in late Fall or next Spring
- Lend us your expertise: gardening, irrigation systems, plantings, your specialty
- Send us your ideas

Make a Donation:

- Sustainable Woodstock has committed to raising the 10 percent match for the CDGB snow dump construction grant. If you would like to support this effort you can donate at sustainablewoodstock.org.
- Support ongoing improvements at the park

possibilities” and do hands-on work at the site. Even though delays prevented the relocation of the snow dump, volunteers have continued to clean up the site and remove invasive plants. With a state-funded park-and-ride grant, the village has improved the long-term parking area.

MacVey points out that “it’s also exciting that some community groups are beginning to get involved to help construct the park and maintain it. The Woodstock Garden Club is one of our big supporters, with donations of plants and labor. So I’d encourage other organizations to envision how

they might contribute — perhaps donating benches or picnic tables, or organizing a work day, or building a path, or working with Sustainable Woodstock to install an irrigation system. If the community pitches in, it can become a beautiful space for everyone.”

As Joby Thompson says, “Now that there’s more activity visible on Route 4 at the East End — renovations to former railroad buildings and upgrades to the parking area — more people are beginning to notice that there is in fact a park taking shape below, at the river’s edge. It’s a community park, so we say ‘Come on down!’”



Please join us for the

EIGHTH ANNUAL NEFAH GOLF TOURNAMENT

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2016
at the Woodstock Country Club
11:30am Registration | 12:30pm Shotgun Start

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Reserve your foursome today by emailing Golf@NEFAH.org



New England Foundation for Animal Health

Proceeds benefit the New England Foundation for Animal Health (NEFAH) a 501c-3 nonprofit organization helping fund pet health care.

