



SUSTAINABLE  
HUDSON  
VALLEY

# 2012 Highlights

2012 was a year of gathering strength for Sustainable Hudson Valley and our partners as we worked together to create a real "island of innovation" in the region. We teamed up with Energize, a proven model for inspiring households to save energy and money, and established a pilot rollout in Red Hook. We brought together five leading



communities to share best practices and begin to leverage resources regionally. We expanded, and repeated, the exciting Placemaking in a Changing Climate training which has now reached over 100 local leaders throughout the Valley. We played a central role in creating a Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan full of high-leverage ideas, and we are excited to be part of the steering committee that will translate this vision into implementation. Sobered by the impacts of climate change this year, and heartened at the political opening that has resulted, our board, staff and collaborators have been in a state of creative ferment that has produced new resources for you, including an online Resource Center for Sustainable Communities (<http://www.hvresourcecenter.org>) and an analysis of strategies for developing community resilience (available on our website). Join with us to build on this momentum in 2013.

***“Sustainable Hudson Valley's mission is to speed up the shift to a low-carbon economy with high quality of life for all, by bringing people together with knowledge and each other.”***

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[www.sustainhv.org](http://www.sustainhv.org)

[www.hvresourcecenter.org](http://www.hvresourcecenter.org)

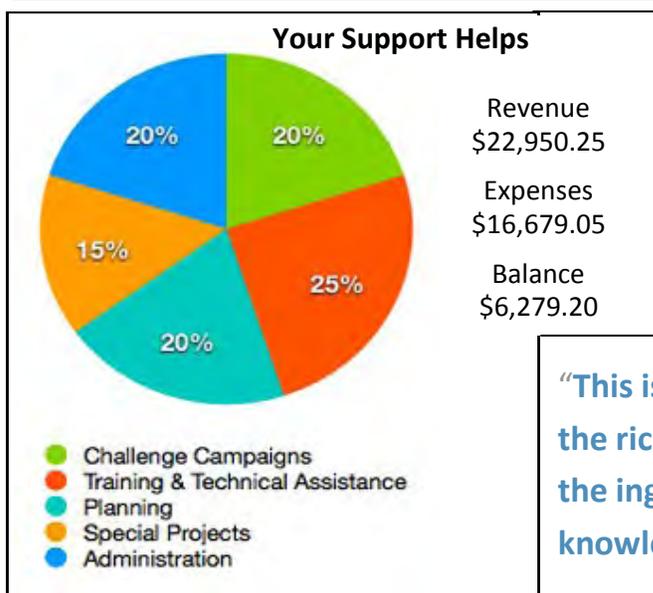
[www.hv10pctchallenge.net](http://www.hv10pctchallenge.net)

This year, the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan was created by a 7-county collaboration involving over 300 skilled volunteers. Board member Herb Oringel represented the Northern Westchester Energy Action Consortium on the project's steering committee. Board member Victor-Pierre Melendez served as one of the two staff coordinators. Board member Lea Cullen-Boyer and Executive Director Melissa Everett were active in the working groups on energy and economic development. The focus of our contribution, throughout the process, was on strengthened involvement of institutions and the general public for dynamic implementation of the plan. We helped to expand the plan's focus on emergency preparedness and community resilience, and economic development strategies such as building up the region as a hub of education, training and service-learning for sustainability, attracting professionals in sustainability the way the Culinary Institute attracts foodies. SHV is excited to be part of the steering committee created for the implementation of the plan.



This year, SHV was able to restore the funded position of Executive Director on a half-time basis in the fourth quarter, allowing Melissa Everett to keep pace with the expanded opportunities of our program. We said farewell to two board members, Patty Goodwin and Tom Kacandes, with heartfelt thanks for their services. We also welcomed Kirk Jensen to the board. With a rich career in scientific editing and publishing, Kirk brings the strengths of his project management, promotion and communication skills, as well as an international network of environmental scientists.

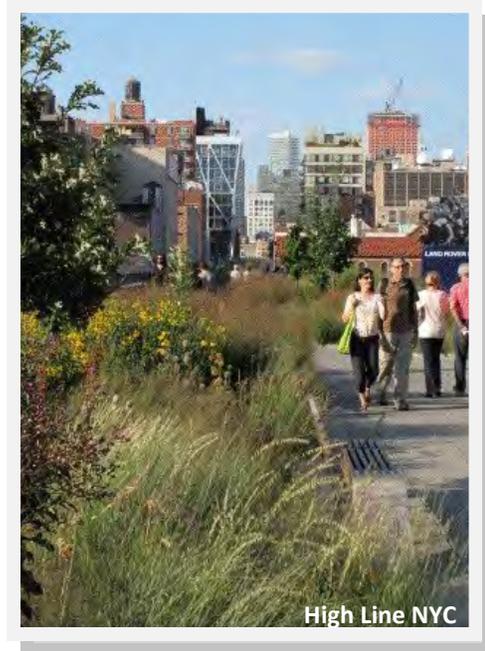
We have been excited at the impact of our training program, **Placemaking in a Changing Climate**. Created with the Project for Public Spaces, it is based on the principle that healthy public spaces make communities more livable, density more tolerable, and the built environment more resilient in the face of climate change. This year we expanded the content with modules on the urban landscape and on public participation, and we delivered both to general audiences and very focused community projects such as the Middle Main Revitalization in Poughkeepsie. While many planners engage in simple forms of "placemaking," we offer up this work as a best practice for leveraging the resources of geography and human talent to create truly distinctive locations -- and coalitions that will care for them. In the fast-moving field of climate change adaptation, we have created a method for helping people reclaim a sense of meaning and create beauty as they face the difficult realities of climate change.



**“This is more than a training in planning and design. By experiencing the richness of possibilities for livable, resilient communities—and the ingenuity of their peers—participants grow in more than knowledge, they grow in commitment” —Melissa Everett**

As our **10% Challenge** partner communities moved forward, it became clear that this vision did not translate into a "one size fits all" campaign. It also became clear that the greatest results - and resources - would be connected with a handful of actions. Home energy assessments and upgrades can save a household up to 30% on energy bills. Transportation improvements for walkability, bikeability and transit can sharply cut a municipality's carbon footprint. And in these areas, additional resources and partners changed the playing field. Green Jobs/ Green New York, the state's outreach and financing support program for home upgrades, emerged as a partner and sponsor for the Challenge. So did Energize, a complementary campaign bringing sophisticated social marketing tools to the engagement of households and creation of buzz. As 2012 ended, we were collaborating with both of these programs and deepening our model-building work - back in our original pilot partner community, Red Hook. The Montgomery Challenge partnership had evolved into a

full-fledged Sustainable Montgomery program for the town and three villages. The Warwick Challenge had evolved into a home-grown Energize program. In Hudson and Watervliet, the efforts are currently on hold, while our original partners have formed a broadened coalition to share best practices, now expanded to include Kingston, Newburgh and Fishkill. We are heartened that - in spite of the difficulties of running this program with limited funding - the communities continue to see promise in the model. SHV is now helping Energize to complete its Community Engagement Guide and a training curriculum that is available to any interested community.



**“SHV's work and leadership are extending the “islands of innovation” that were initiated by NWEAC and SWEAC in Westchester County, in order to provide the intellectual and practical glue to enable real progress on regional sustainability  
“ —Herb Oringel**

# Who We Are: Board of Directors

**Lea Cullen-Boyer**, Sustainability Coordinator, Westchester County Parks and Recreation

**David Dell**, Ph.D., Managing Director Schwartz Heslin Group

**Jeffrey Domanski**, LEED-AP, Organizational Sustainability Specialist

**Melissa Everett**, Ph.D., Executive Director

**Kirk Jensen**, Scientific Editor and Long Term Care Advisor

**Victor-Pierre Melendez**, M.Sc., Director, Green Cities Initiative, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

**J. Michael O'Hara**, Environmental Systems Design

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**Phil Myrick**, Project for Public Spaces and Livability Solutions

**Nina Orville**, Ex. Dir., Southern Westchester Energy Action Consortium

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