

SACHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY

# Final Presentation



Our Sustainability Journey

Your place to grow



# Light Pollution



1

We added photocell LED lighting to our Discovery Grove children's garden. They are dusk to dawn light-sensored, and we opted to have a switch installed so they are only on when we need them.

2

We updated our parking lot light fixtures with LED lights that meet the standards for Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) and New York State Education Department (NYSED). Lights face down and are on timers. Sections even turn off completely at times over night.

3

We also embarked on updating our security, task, accent, and ambient lighting in our Inside/Out garden space and entrance plaza. These LED lights have the ability to change colors and be programmed by a WiFi based app. They also have auto-shut off timers.

4

Our indoor lights shut off automatically at 11pm or earlier when custodians leave for the night.



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# Recycling



- Outdoor trash and recycle cans were added to our front entrance plaza and our outdoor program spaces. We also partnered with [One Earth Deposits, Inc](#) to collect the library's recyclables on a weekly schedule.
- Joined the NexTrex Challenge recycling plastic bags into benches with Trex.
- Added recycle cans for plastic bottles around the building and in all program rooms.
- Joined K-Cycle; Keurig's K-Cup pod recycling program.
- Added Shred-It services for patrons to shred their personal documents which are then recycled into household items.



# Recycling

- Swapped our printer paper to 30% recycled paper, FSC certified.
- Recycle our 3D printer filament and our printer toner cartridges.
- Donate our old newspapers to animal shelters.
- Held children's costume drive and swap.
- Teens held a family puzzle swap.
- World Conservation Day- Teen leaders collected water bottles and cans to upcycle into a bird feeder craft.
- Collected crayons for The Crayon Initiative that keeps crayons out of landfills by melting them down and recycling them. They are then given to pediatric patients in hospitals around the country. On Long Island, they are being sent to The Children's Medical Center at NYU Langone Hospital, Cohen Children's Medical Center, Stony Brook Children's Hospital, and St. Mary's Healthcare System for Children.



# Native Plants

The library has many native plants including:

Black-eyed-Susan

Eastern Arborvitae

American Beachgrass

Maple trees

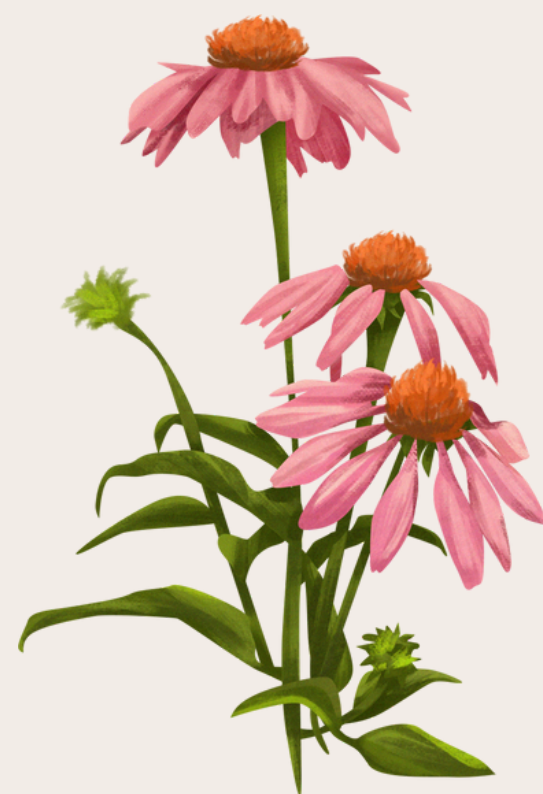
Oak trees

Pine trees

Purple Coneflower

Blue Iris

Birch Trees



# Invasive Plants

The library has not planted any invasive plants.

We have contracts with landscapers and Aronica, a plant health company, should the need to remove anything invasive occur.





# Planting Areas

The library uses mulch around planting areas to reduce weeds and the need to water. We have the mulch refreshed annually. We use Fibar in our children's garden- it's a permeable playground surface, consisting of manufactured wood product of differing particle sizes, that passes the ASTM F2075 Engineered Wood Fibar Standard.



# Chemical Pesticides & Herbicides

We have limited the use of chemical pesticides & herbicides as much as possible with our landscaper and plant health care. We have been using organic pest control for flying insects, ticks and mosquitoes for several years now and recently opted to swap lawn fertilizer for organic lawn feed with our landscaper.



# Reduced Outdoor Water Usage

## WiFi Irrigation Controllers

The library has invested in multiple WiFi-enabled commercial irrigation controllers. These smart controllers are easily controlled remotely and take temperature, precipitation, and humidity into account to limit or eliminate overwatering.

## Seasonal Irrigation Evaluation

Groundskeeping staff regularly evaluate irrigation equipment and watering patterns. Sprinkler heads are inspected, removed, relocated and updated to eliminate unnecessary watering.



# Reduce Non-Porous Areas

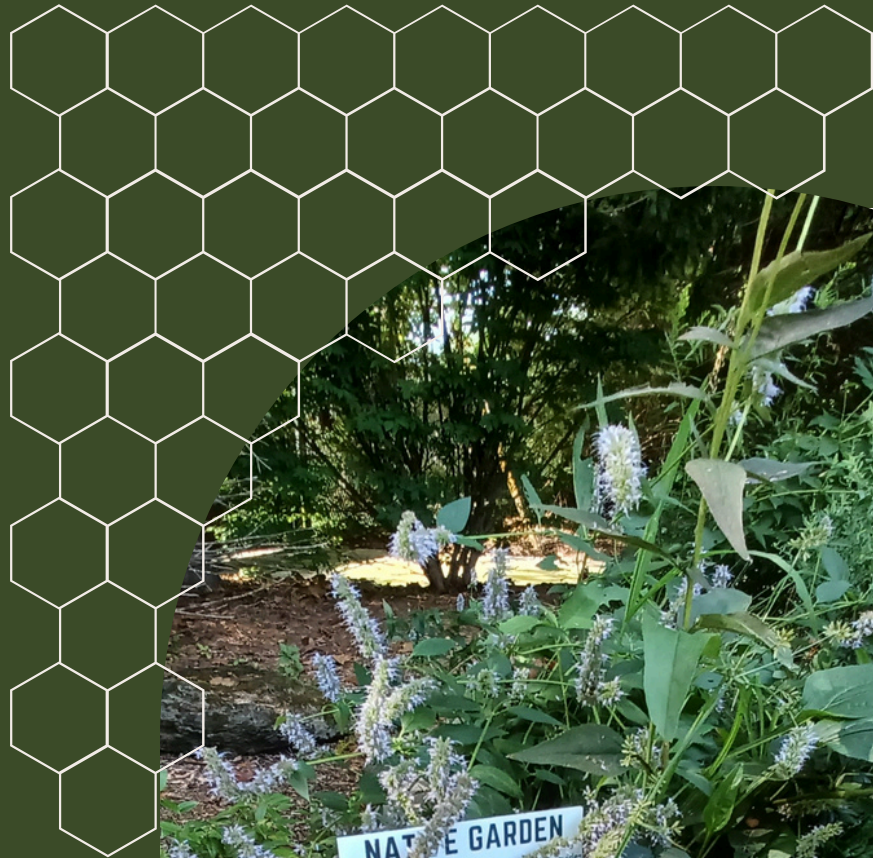


The library has many areas of lawns and plantings:

- A massive front lawn and garden beds
- Garden beds all along the exterior of the parking lot
- Trees and garden beds in islands in the parking lot
- Inside/Out garden beds and center lawn
- Discovery Grove garden beds and small lawn
- Teen Patio Planners care for our courtyard garden beds

## Strategically Plant Trees

The library has trees along the perimeter of the parking lot and in islands in the parking lot to provide shade.



# Plant a Pollinator Garden



In May 2023, 2024, and 2025 the library participated in NO MOW MAY. We designated and sectioned off a large area of lawn so it would be visible and purchased reusable, outdoor signs so we can participate annually.

In the spring of 2024 we planted a pollinator garden in our Inside/Out Garden space. This garden space was part of a program with our Teen Department and our Garden Guardians teen volunteers manage the garden for us throughout the season for volunteer credits.

<https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/>

# Outdoor Program Spaces



Inside/Out  
Classroom & Garden



Outdoor Classroom  
Discovery Grove



Teen Patio  
Courtyard



Parking lot  
concerts and fairs

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# Inside/Out Community Garden

Registered as a public garden through American Public Gardens Association



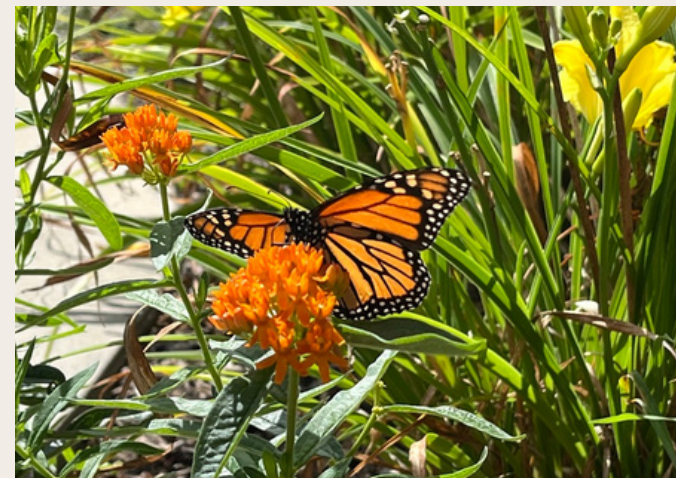
Outdoor, Gardening,  
and Green Initiative  
Programming

Garden Growing,  
Stewardship, and  
Community Service

Native Plant  
Education

# Discovery Grove

Outdoor classroom for play-based learning in a nature setting where children develop a respect for nature and are encouraged to explore their interests. Classes and events are offered for a range of ages to socialize during cooperative play. *Certified through Nature Explore.*



- Water Play
- Music
- Building
- Digging
- Mud Kitchen
- Art
- Climbing
- Gardening
- Live Willow Enclosure
- Butterfly Release
- International Mud Day
- Arbor Day
- Fairy House Builds
- Storytimes in the Willow
- Nature Play
- Nature Crafts
- Family Camping
- Trips to local farms



# Creative Programs

At Sachem, we've come up with some unusual programs to hold in our garden spaces such as Haunted Garden and Garden of Lights.

Haunted Garden is our free "spooky walk" that runs 5 nights in mid-October and Garden of Lights is a free holiday lights display to music that runs for 7 nights in December.

The Library buys or makes the props and we reuse as many decorations year after year and change the themes. We get between 10,000 to 15,000 attendees during each run every year. In 2026, we'll be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> year of Haunted Garden.

Other programs include Sidewalk Chalk, Trunk or Treat, Pet Adoption Fair, Concerts, Meditation, Outdoor Movies, Lawn Games, Storytimes and Concerts by the firepit, and Summer Reading Club Kick Off events.



# Passive Programs



## Meditation Stations

scan the QR code for a guided meditation in the garden



## Storywalk®

enjoy a picture book stationed around the garden, book changed monthly



## Seed Library

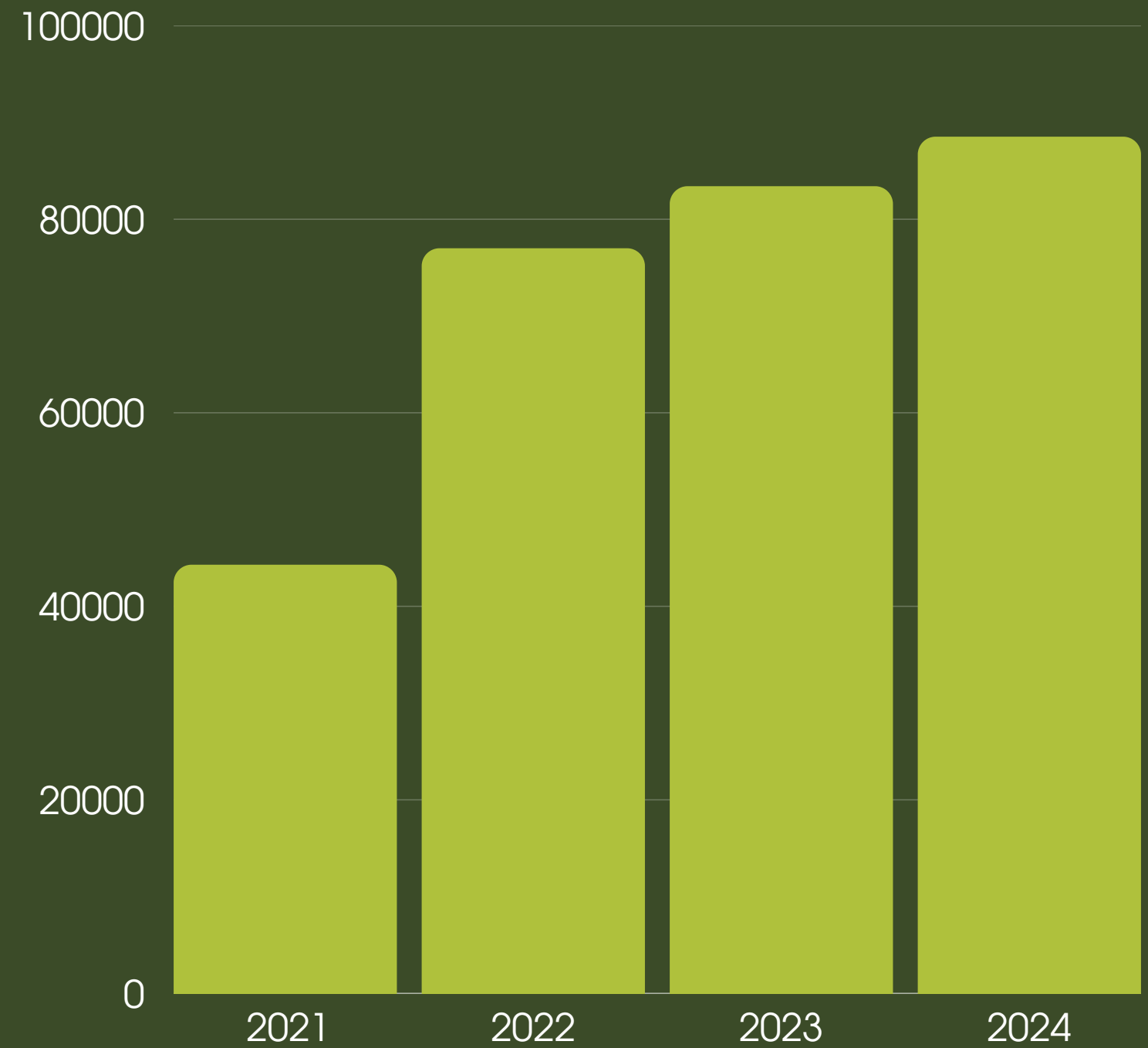
every spring get your garden started with seeds from the library

# Outdoor Spaces Visits

Visits to our spaces have increased year after year:

2021	44,298
2022	77,003
2023	83,416
2024	88,533

June, July & Aug of 2023 & 2024 we averaged 9,476 visits to our 2 outdoor spaces each month.





# Indoor Spaces

- Created an Indoor Air Quality Policy.
- Replaced the use of aerosol products and greened our cleaning products.
- We have many public spaces that have daylight views.
- Turn the overhead LED lights off when possible to conserve electricity.
- Moving towards public service desks that are standing height so staff can stand or sit to conduct business.
- Upgraded to MERV13 air filters in HVAC system.
- Added ceiling fans to some areas and Dyson fans to others to circulate air.

# Improving Indoor Air with Plants



Installed 2 living Plant Walls



Numerous plants around the building



Started a plant cutting station

# Site Management Plan

Adopted a Site Management Plan that addresses all our sustainable and green efforts, policies, and procedures in one place, so staff can refer to it as needed. This is our compass as we make daily decisions.



# Transportation



Installed bike racks  
& bike repair station



Adopted a  
No Idling Policy



Bike and Pedestrian  
Safety Programs

# Collection Center

The Library works with many agencies as a collection center for donations.

- Year-round collecting for Long Island Cares food bank; collecting around 8,500 pounds in non-perishables food items annually.
- Baxter's Pet Pantry collection of pet food items.
- Annual participation in Brookhaven Town's Toy Drive.
- Participate yearly in EJ's PJs pajama drives.
- Participate annually in Operation Christmas Senior in partnership with NYS Assemblyman Joe DeStefano and Voices for Seniors.
- Winter Coat Drive participated in partnership with NYS Senator Dean Murray.
- Bike helmet drives for The Social Brain.
- Comfort Kits for local Veterans Homes.
- Toiletries drive for Mental Health Association.
- Mutt-i-Grees program- teens donate pet food, animal care products and handmade toys, and pet beds to five local animal shelters. Donations are collected each month.

We also run several of our own drives annually:

- **Mitten Tree** collecting new mittens, hats, scarves, and socks for those in need in our community.
- **School Supplies** drive for new school items for children in need.
- **Children's Costumes** drive and swap- we recently implemented.



# Future Projects

## Rain Gardens

We have two areas of the property that have natural depressions where rain water runoff pools on the lawns surrounding the building. We plan to rehabilitate these areas and turn them into rain gardens with proper natural drainage and native plants. These areas will become friendly to pollinators, solve drainage issues, and serve as points for patron education in terms of runoff and rain gardens.

## Rainwater Collection

Investigate rainwater collection methods to provide alternative irrigation to garden areas and provide a point of education for patrons.

## Exercise Equipment

Implementing some outdoor exercise stations around our Inside/Out garden.

## EV Charging Stations

Adding 4 EV charging stations to our parking lot to support electric vehicles.

## Solar Panels

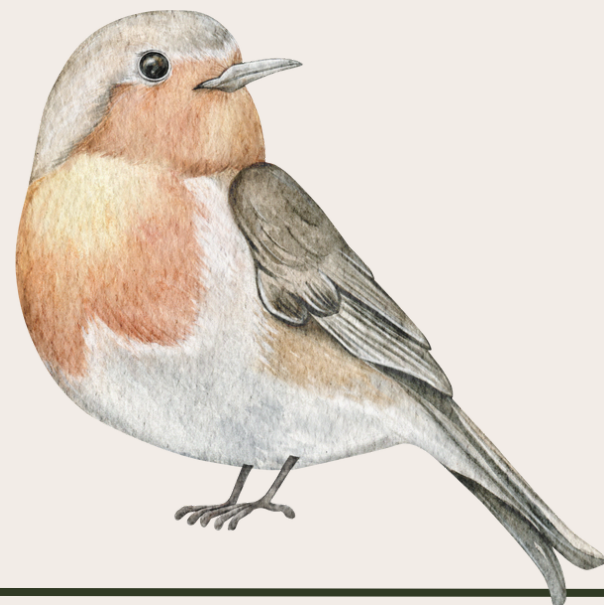
Updating our old solar panels on the roof of the library and upgrading the accompanying software.



# Conclusion

There were so many benefits to completing the Sustainability Initiative. At Sachem Public Library our outdoor spaces are used around 9-10 months out of the year. We have a children's garden, Discovery Grove and Inside/Out, our Community Garden Program Space. It is important for us to keep these areas beautiful, but to also be conscious of how we manage these spaces.

We want to keep our spaces safe for both our human patrons and our wildlife neighbors.



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# Resources

<https://darksky.org>

<https://www.longislandnatives.com/>

<https://www.linpi.org/>

<https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/>

<https://beecityusa.org/no-mow-may/>

<https://www.sachemlibrary.org/about/insideout/>

<https://www.sachemlibrary.org/services-resources/discovery-grove/>

<https://www.publicgardens.org/garden-finder/>

<https://natureexplore.org/>



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# Resources

<https://thecrayoninitiative.org/>

<https://nextrex.com/>

<https://keurigkcycle.com/>

<https://www.shredit.com/en-us>

<https://www.licares.org/>

EJ's PJs

<https://www.voicesforseniors.com/>

<https://www.brookhavenny.gov/>



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# THANK YOU



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