



Second Annual Report Rush Recreation and Park Association (Rush RPA)

2020 Year in Review



Mission of the Rush RPA

To protect, preserve, and assist in the proper management of the public lands of the Town of Rush, New York, and contiguous areas, for the benefit of current and future residents of our town and region;

To promote preservation of open space, forests, farm land, park land, clean air and clean waterways;

To promote the use of public lands in a sustainable way that protects the climate and reduces greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and erosion;

To promote health and wellness by preserving green space and providing or facilitating outdoor activities;

To establish and promote local environmental education on issues related to the preservation of natural resources;

To establish and promote programs to monitor the protection of natural resources;

To provide a framework for volunteers who wish to support the goals of the Association;

To support community efforts and programs that are consistent with the land and resource preservation goals of the Association, including public-private partnerships; and

To support other activities that promote, protect, preserve, enhance and expand the community's natural resources.

Membership: Please consider becoming a member of the Rush RPA, or a 2021 business sponsor. Your active participation is important to achieving our goals. Please share this report with friends and neighbors. You can join by visiting our website at www.rushrpa.org, or by sending a minimum contribution of \$12 to "**Rush RPA**," c/o Pamm Wait, 431 Five Points Road, Rush, NY 14543.

Rush Citizens E-List: To receive notices and updates about the Rush RPA and other Town of Rush matters, **please join the RUSH CITIZENS email list**. Your contact information is kept secure and is not shared. Simply send an email to rushcitizens@gmail.com with "Rush Citizen" in the subject line.

Website: www.rushrpa.org **Email:** rush.ny.rpa@gmail.com



Greetings

The Rush RPA was founded after many years of work by citizens who wanted to preserve a town park and build it into an amenity for the Town of Rush and surrounding communities. On October 23, 2019, the Rush Town Board passed a resolution to approve our park plan.

We invite you to take time to read our annual report. We have made measurable progress in achieving our strategic goals, even with the unexpected challenges due to COVID safety restrictions. Our list of 2020 projects is noteworthy with all of our projects continuing into 2021.

Our Finance Report shows we exceeded our annual minimum goal to raise funds for the Hundred Acres Park with generous donations and membership contributions. It is also important to note that Rush RPA was instrumental in making sure Rush was a partner with the Town of Henrietta in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Planning Grant. This plan will include a Riverside Trail that will connect Breese Park in Henrietta with the Hundred Acres Park.



Our Urban and Community Forest (UCF) grant application for a native tree planting was submitted in December 2019. While we did not receive the grant, we came close, and participated in a debriefing session that will prepare us to submit again in 2021. The good news is that we developed many strong partnerships with experts, businesses, and non-profit organizations, and submitted the grant with the full support of the Rush Town Board.

We appreciate the support of the 2020 Town Board: Supervisor Gerry Kusse, Deputy Supervisor Victoria Mosetti, Board Members Amber Corbin, Ryan Lang, Phyllis Wickerham and Dan Woolaver. A special thanks to Bruce Howlett who has become a key partner in helping us implement our development plans. In addition, we appreciate the ongoing support and commitment to our efforts of Dave Kunsch, Dave Sluberski, Garrett Koplun of the NYS DEC, Kyle Webster of NYS Parks and Recreation, Penny (Paula) Smith, Senior Park Engineer, Letchworth State Park; Kay Megorden-Staten, permaculture design expert; and many others.

We appreciate all the support we have received during the year. Our group is open to everyone and we look forward to seeing you at upcoming educational forums, nature hikes, Rush Clean-up Day and other events. We hope many more citizens will get involved and help us to realize our goals for the community.

Marianne Rizzo, President

We acknowledge our 2020 members and express our gratitude for their support of our mission.

Nancy & Carl Ast	Florence Higgins & John Lebens	Carolee & Bob Powers
Carol & Ted Barnett	Beth Hoak	Emma Rainwater & Naomi Salama
Deb Burgio & John Kaman	Bruce Howlett	Carol Ralph & Tom Petrus
Lynne & Mike Burke	Carl Jutzin	Marianne Rizzo
Elise & Hal Carter	Don Kingsley	Susan & Jim Roach
Janet & Jim Chaize	Pat & Robert Kraus	Charles Rorick
Bethany Choate & Matt Heimbueger	Shirley Kucera & Michael Tallon	Amy Schubach
Julie & Al Choate	David Kunsch	Sandra & Dave Sluberski
Amber & Paul Corbin	Debra & Gerry Kusse	Milda Vaivada
Jessica Drenk & Dave Musgraves	Doreen & Hal Manning	Trish & Dave Vanable
Carolyn & Michael Ganley	Ann McMican & Jack Mould	Diane VanLare
Chris Giordano	Jeanne & John Morelli	Pamm Wait
Janet & David Glocker	Laura & Cecil Palmer	Phyllis & Tom Wickerham
Kathryn & Leroy Hankins	Linda Phillips	
Laura & Mark Henry	Sue & John Porubek	

Financial Report
Rush Recreation and Park Association, Inc.
Pamm Wait, Treasurer

Statement of Activities for the 12 Months ending December 31, 2020

Revenues	
Memberships	\$ 2,584.00
Donations	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
Total	\$ 7,584.00
Expenses	
General & Administrative	\$ 53.40
Board and Liability Insurance	<u>\$ 365.00</u>
Total	\$ 418.40
Net Assets At Beginning Of Period	\$ 4,251.76
Net Assets At End of Period	\$11,417.36



Key Projects

Community Education and Tours While we were unable to hold our community education forums in 2020, we did have a number of small tours.

Stewardship of The Hundred Acres In these difficult times, we continue to have a productive partnership with the town, to preserve the Hundred Acres Park. We appreciate the trust that the Town Board has demonstrated, and firmly believe that by working together, we can succeed.

Comprehensive Plan Update Rush RPA members joined with other Rush residents in the early stages of planning for a full update of our town's Comprehensive Plan. Our development plan for the Hundred Acres Park aligns with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, which designates the area as open green space.

Public Access to the Hundred Acres Park Wide trails have been mowed for passive recreational activities. The eastern fields have been prepared for planting in the spring of 2021. Tree plantings will also start in 2021. Native warm season grasses and wildflowers will attract pollinators and provide a refuge for endangered birds and other native species. These efforts will enhance the already existing beautiful and serene natural setting.

Rush Riverside Refuge The Rush RPA maintains an active interest in the Rush Riverside Refuge/former BOCES property as part of Rush's endowment, and hopes to contribute to its development as a treasured site for natural preservation, recreation, and public use.

Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad Museum (RGVRM) There is a growing interest in the history of railroads in our region, and the Hundred Acres Park will be a good partner with the museum. The Rush RPA is committed to a strong and effective collaboration with RGVRM to meet our common goals to provide valued recreational activities to the residents of Rush, our entire region, and our state.

Tree City Designation The Rush RPA is actively advocating for the Town of Rush to become a Tree City. This program, run by the Arbor Day Foundation, encourages a town to develop and implement a plan to protect trees on public lands. There are many important benefits to being recognized as a Tree City.

Janet Chaize, Vice-President

2020 Board of Directors

Marianne Rizzo, President I am committed to helping the town of Rush and surrounding areas to preserve and maintain our rural character and achieve ecological balance. I am dedicated to parkland and all green space. I'll do what I can to protect and restore the soil, air quality, trees, the Genesee River, and habitat for wildlife. Our efforts to protect the town's ecosystems help make the world a better place.

Janet Chaize, Vice-President I am committed to preserving and restoring natural habitats for wildlife and people. I garden organically. My forty years of work in the mental health profession has taught me that people are healthier, mentally and physically, when they can walk in nature. It is incumbent upon us to preserve nature, especially parks that have forests.

Pamm Wait, Treasurer I love living in Rush. I want to help protect and preserve our green space and rural character. I believe my 40+ years of work experience in banking and finance can help the Rush RPA as we continue to grow and accept new responsibilities and challenges.

Carol Hee Barnett, Secretary I have enjoyed recording the accomplishments of the Rush RPA, and enjoy staying in touch with our growing membership and keeping everyone apprised of Rush RPA activities. I am currently working to help Rush achieve designation as a Tree City.

Kathy Hankins I continue to serve the board to contribute in the areas of land use, accessibility, small business, nonprofit management, fundraising, advocacy, and grant writing. I am deeply committed to preserving and fully enjoying our town's public assets, green space, park and recreation lands and trails.

Jack Mould I believe that preservation of the earth starts at home. I will use my communication skills and community connections to protect Rush's beautiful natural assets to the absolute best of my ability.

Carol Ralph, First Past President It is my duty to do what I can, in the short time I am here, to protect and improve the aspects of the environment that are in my control. My focus is on educating myself and sharing that information with the public. I enjoy spending time in nature studying plants, insects, birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals.

Carolee Powers Carolee left the board in June 2020 because of time constraints. She continued to actively participate in our Garden Project. We greatly appreciate her contributions to our new association. She has been a strong advocate to protect and preserve our town's natural assets, and deserves a round of applause from our community for her commitment to our community.

2020 Rush RPA Highlights

- ❖ First stages of development of Field #4 in preparation for planting in spring 2021
- ❖ Achievement of a high grade on our first grant proposal for \$50,000 with town and local business partners, leaving us positioned to improve our rating by becoming a Tree City
- ❖ Successful updates to maintain our standing with NYS Grants Gateway to apply for state grants
- ❖ Third Annual Celebration of a Do It Yourself (DIY) Arbor Day and Town Clean-Up
- ❖ Development and implementation of a Garden Project to plant and maintain the Town's 12 gardens, saving the town \$4350 of tax dollars budgeted for gardening
- ❖ Recipient of more than \$7,750 of in-kind donations, in donated hours and mileage
- ❖ Recipient of a \$5000 development gift for our work
- ❖ Recruitment of Rush representatives for Riverfront Trail planning grant
- ❖ Presentation to the Town Board on becoming a Tree City
- ❖ Improvement of our Bylaws to ensure staggered terms for board members, to increase efficiency and promote succession planning, continuity and sustainability for the Rush RPA

