



Fostering Community and Environmental Sustainability

We are a nonprofit, advocacy organization committed to fostering community and environmental sustainability by improving the quality of life of Purchase residents in New York, and protecting its surrounding environment. Sustainable development is the foundation of all our programs, activities and core initiatives.

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Soccer Facility Application Withdrawn

NEWS >> May 24, 2014

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PEPA Annual Meeting

EVENTS >> May 24, 2014

By now, you should have received a mailing from the Purchase Environmental Protective Association with an invitation to the Annual Members Meeting to be held on Sunday, June 22nd, from 6PM – 8PM at the Purchase Community House, 3095 Purchase Street, Purchase, NY. As Executive Director, I very much hope to see you there... [read more](#)

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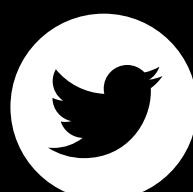
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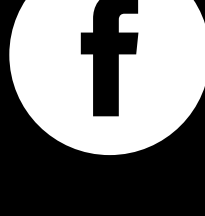
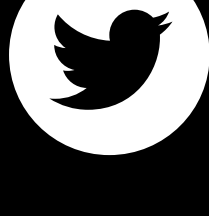
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About PEPA

The Purchase Environmental Protective Association (PEPA) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the environment and preserving the character of our community. By monitoring development proposals and informing the public on local environmental issues facing Purchase and the local area, PEPA's involvement and documentation of the historical, cultural, and natural features of its unique landscape serves as a vital resource to the community.

PEPA informs the public about relevant local issues, legislation, and policies by disseminating information through its website, newsletter, and other informative publications and mailings. The organization conducts appropriate research and hires professional experts as necessary to provide relevant information to the community and local governing bodies. Through this timely factual information, community decisions about the environment are made based on knowledge. PEPA also participates in local Task Forces, and regularly attends Town Meetings and public hearings. By having a presence at such forums, the organization can effectively represent its mission and steer decision-making accordingly.

In conjunction with Manhattanville College, PEPA offers educational resources including Field Trips, and Guided Walking Tours of the historic campus.

The Manhattanville College Archives/Library preserves, and provides access to Special Collections that document the history and architecture of Whitelaw Reid's former estate, known as Ophir Farm, on which the Purchase campus of Manhattanville College is now located.

Our History

The Purchase Environmental Protective Association (PEPA) was founded in 1917. It was established by concerned citizens living in Purchase who sought to protect the public's well-being by balancing priorities for land reservation with strategies for managing local development.

Back in the early part of the 20th century, Purchase was a rural community with rolling hills and untouched forests. Development as the world knows it today was still decades away. However, these concerned citizens had great vision and foresaw a time when the bucolic life in Purchase would be challenged by suburban sprawl.

Therefore, for more than 80 years, PEPA has worked to protect the rural character of Purchase by being a vocal voice advocating for community and all it encompasses.

With the help of PEPA's dedicated commitment and hard work of staff and local volunteers, today Purchase remains a pristine hamlet. Its sylvan beauty with open spaces and preserved woodlands woven around our homes and small neighborhoods ensures that residents of Purchase continue to live in an atmosphere of peaceful solitude.



Historic Purchase

The origins of Purchase, NY can be traced back to 1695 when John Harrison purchased the land from the Siwanoy Indians. Harrison petitioned the Governor's Council of New York to make the transaction official, and King William III granted final approval on June 25, 1696. The original sheepskin deed is hermetically sealed and may be viewed by appointment at the Harrison Town Hall.

Today, Purchase, a hamlet of Harrison, is home to many historic structures and sites. This portion of the website has been created in part to celebrate and preserve these treasures.

- Ophir Farm & Manhattanville College
- Holladay Stone Chapel
- Anderson Hill Road

Ophir Farm & Manhattanville College



Manhattanville and Purchase Environmental Protective Association (PEPA) are currently working together to preserve Ophir Farm Estate's historic structures and cultural landscape, much of it co-located on the college campus.

Anne Gold, executive director of the Purchase Environmental Protective Association (PEPA) and aide to the president of Manhattanville College, created a book, Ophir Farm and Manhattanville College, to celebrate the land's rich history and recent advances while identifying noteworthy sites on the Purchase campus to incorporate into a public walking trail.

The designation of the Manhattanville College Historical Walking Tour as an official segment of the New York State Greenway Trail System represented a triumph for the preservation of Ophir Farm as well. The inclusion provided widely acknowledged recognition to the site and walking tour.

The historical walking trail contains 14 locations including Reid Castle, assigned to the National Register of Historical Places in 1974, and surviving structures from the "Model Farm Group." This well-preserved sample of the model-farm era includes the dairy, stable/coach house and farmhouse. Also featured the Ann Holladay Stone Chapel, a Norman Gothic-style building and one of only three remaining family chapels in Westchester County. Maya Linn, renowned architect and creator of the Vietnam War Memorial, restored the 140-year-old stone chapel along with the creation of a neighboring solar-powered classroom in the surrounding environmental park.

PEPA financed the printing and mailing of the book, which was mailed to every household in Purchase, local educators, supportive organizations and government officials. The Ophir Farm and Manhattanville College book and the Historic Walking Tour are used as educational tools by Manhattanville professors, school groups and community organizations, including the Purchase Elementary School and the Harrison Girl Scouts.

Trail visits and special interactive workshops help future generations learn respect for our common heritage, and develop a sense of time and community. The book and walking tour also helps Manhattanville College pursue related grant proposals and has introduced the staff and students to historic preservation techniques and trail maintenance.

We are enthusiastic about the efforts to preserve Ophir Farm and hope you will read this beautiful new booklet to learn more about it. The Ophir Farm and Manhattanville College book and trail map are free and can be requested by calling the PEPA office at 914-960-3088 or download a PDF below:

- >> [Ophir Farm & Manhattanville College Book \(PDF\)](#)
- >> [Trail Map \(PDF\)](#)



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