

I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Bonnie Hagen since 2009 in my capacities as Councilman for the City of White Plains and as Director of Program Development for Westchester County's Department of Environmental Facilities. Our common interests in promoting a green and sustainable approach to business and living initially brought us together on several volunteer initiatives.

In January 2010 I was appointed by the Mayor of White Plains to chair the Sustainability and Environmental Enhancement Committee (SEEC), a committee that would grow to include 35 community members: environmental, business and education leaders, elected officials, city commissioners, religious and student representatives. Bonnie was one of the first members appointed to the committee by Mayor Bradley and then appointed by me to the seven-member SEEC Steering Committee. With her strong business background and marketing/communications skills, she played a key role on the Steering Committee, helping to develop and implement strategies for how SEEC would be structured and operated.

As the five working subcommittees evolved, Bonnie took on the role of Chair of the SEEC Energy Subcommittee and worked with New York Power Authority (NYPA), the Commissioner of Public Works, business representatives and community leaders to research, present, and implement citywide recommendations for energy conservation to the Mayor and Common Council.

Bonnie's keen organizational and managerial skills played a key role in guiding SEEC to the finalization of the Progress Report presented on October 21, 2010 – a 1½ hour PowerPoint presentation and discussion and culmination of the first phase of SEEC.

With the focus on implementing committee recommendations, Bonnie then turned her attention to the city's first White Plains Earth Week 2011 and Sustainability Celebration. Two single-day green events had previously been held in downtown White Plains; this new weeklong program involved all sectors of the community.

As the lead co-chair, Bonnie coordinated, organized and promoted citywide Earth Week activities and the culminating Sustain White Plains Celebration and worked closely with the city administration, White Plains Public Schools, the Youth Bureau, Parks and Recreation, local businesses, environmental agencies, houses of worship and numerous community organizations. Bonnie teamed with the White Plains Business Improvement District to develop event logo, website, print ads and other marketing materials to promote activities and also worked as the lead coordinator for the Sustain White Plains Celebration held on April 30th, which involved over 50 green business and community vendors and tripled the size of the 2010 single-day event. The Earth Week activities and finale were enormously successful and involved several thousand participants.

Bonnie's strong project management and leadership skills played a major role in the evolution of SEEC as a vibrant community organization and were very instrumental in the success of the 2011 Earth Week and Sustain White Plains Celebration. The only match for her diversified skill set is her dedication and commitment to enhancing the quality of life for the people who live and work in White Plains.

Dennis J. Power
8/23/11