

**Volume 3 Issue 9**  
**September 2021**



**Climate Smart  
Communities**  
Certified Bronze

# New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

## New Paltz Climate Solutions Meetup: Synthetic Turf Carpeting is a Hot Mess

**Tuesday, September 7, 2021**  
**6:00 PM to 7:30 PM EDT**  
**On Zoom – link below**

Kathleen Michels, Ph.D., will explain the properties and environmental dangers of plastic grass, which may look serene and green but couldn't be less grass-like. While in place, synthetic turf smothers plants and soil, traps and reflects heat, and poses health and environmental problems that grow graver the longer they are studied.



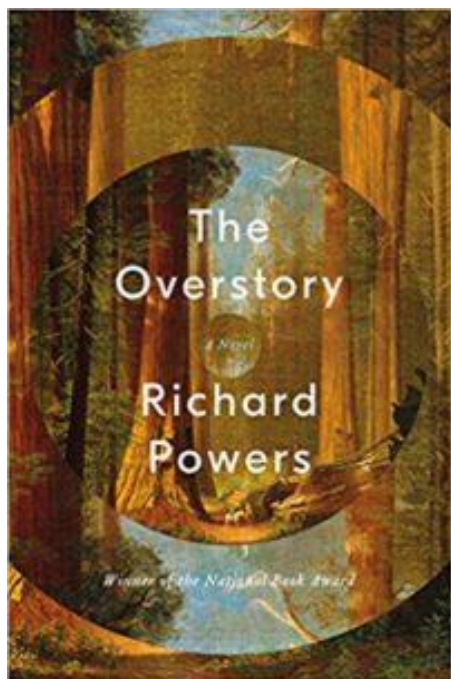
When the fields wear out (which takes about 8 years), they cannot be recycled. They are so heavy and so full of toxins that they cannot be incinerated, and so bulky that landfills balk at the prospect (who can manage a football field of plastic?). The stockpiling and illegal dumping of plastic sod can be seen from Google Earth, but the never-ending tide of microplastics is even more insidious – and that much more dangerous.

You may also be wondering, though clearly synthetic turf creates environmental problems, does it contribute to climate change? According to SynTurf.org, artificial turf releases more greenhouse gases in its the production, transportation and processing than the maintenance of natural turf ever would. Furthermore, unlike the environmentally unsustainable artificial turf, a natural grass field acts to reduce carbon dioxide. The Syn Turf organization quotes studies that show well managed turfgrasses that are cut regularly and at the appropriate height, fed with nutrients left by grass clippings, watered in a responsible way, and not disturbed at the root zone actively pull pollutants from the air, creating a greater carbon benefit. More information and references can be found at <http://www.synturf.org/carbonfootprint.html>

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84949317067?pwd=VjJraWhSd1lrWVQvcisrZmRYd0pJUT09>

## Climate Smart Book Club: September Book Pick



### *The Overstory* by Richard Powers

**Tuesday September 21<sup>st</sup>**

**7:00 – 8:30 pm**

**On Zoom – link below**

*The Overstory*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction, is a sweeping, impassioned work of activism and resistance that is also a stunning evocation of—and paean to—the natural world. From the roots to the crown and back to the seeds, Richard Powers' twelfth novel unfolds in concentric rings of interlocking fables that range from antebellum New York to the late twentieth-century Timber Wars of the Pacific Northwest and beyond. There is a world alongside ours—vast, slow, interconnected, resourceful, magnificently inventive, and almost invisible to us. This is the story of a handful of people who learn how to see that world and who are drawn up into its unfolding catastrophe.

Join us on Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91066225574?pwd=TIVKMU9vNWkxMGE5ZzdTM2VabWMxQT09>

If you have never joined us for one of our Climate Smart Book Club meetings, know that newcomers are very welcome! One of the benefits of joining a book club is that it may give you a push to finish a book that might otherwise sit unfinished. Many books are now available as recorded books and some of our members have found this a great way to get through more books they want to read. For me personally, I find that being able to process a book that has distressing information about the climate crisis with other people who have read the same book is very helpful. Often people have different perspectives and recall different things about a book that really struck them as important. These conversations lead to a deeper understanding of what we have read. Inevitably, book clubs also expose you to long lists of recommended subjects and books you may not have known about. At the end of each Climate Smart Book Club, we talk about future books and make a group decision about what books we will read next. While we call ourselves a “book club” we often also share information about related films and articles. Occasionally our book pick is also a film or an article.

You can find out more about the twenty books we have read so far and notifications about future Climate Smart Book Club book picks by going to <https://www.meetup.com/Climate-Smart-Book-Club/>. You have no obligation to come each month. You will see that we have 82 members in our book club but on average we have only a small subset of those members at each meeting allowing for everyone to have a part in the conversation.

# The Tiffin Project: Supporting Local Restaurants Without Contributing to Single Use Plastic Pollution

Last month in our newsletter we told you about tiffins - a way to prevent coming home with plastic or other “compostable” containers from a restaurant that you have to then throw away or wishcycle. Tiffin carriers are used throughout Southeast Asia as a way for office workers to eat home-cooked, or even restaurant-delivery meals, though they have different names in different regions. As the “zero-waste” movement catches on in North America, people are looking to the tiffin carrier as a convenient way to bring their own lunches and to cut back on the unnecessary waste associated with take-out food. Tiffins are reusable, dishwasher safe and therefore easily sterilized, and if ever necessary, fully recyclable. Tiffin style carriers are great at keeping the foods separate, in a structured container, to prevent your meal from getting soggy or squashed before you can eat it. They come in 2, 3 or 4 layer styles and are typically made with stainless steel.



New Paltz Climate Smart is beginning a three phase program called the New Paltz Tiffin Project. In this first phase we are encouraging individuals to buy a tiffin and bring it to restaurants both for take-out and for to-go containers used at the end of a meal you can't finish. In this first phase we are introducing the tiffin to both fellow restaurant goers, restaurant staff and owners. In the next phase we would like to feature New Paltz restaurants that are willing to promote the use of tiffins. **Will you help us launch the New Paltz**

**Tiffin Project?** We now have high quality stainless steel tiffins for sale at cost – they are only \$15. Please contact Janelle to buy a tiffin or to help with this project by emailing [newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com](mailto:newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com).

## New Paltz Repair Café Returns!

**Saturday, September 18, 2021**

**10:00 AM 2:00 PM**

**Location: New Paltz United Methodist Church  
1 Grove St in New Paltz**



There was a beautiful article in the Hudson Valley One last week on August 26<sup>th</sup> with numerous great pictures regarding the return of Repair Cafés in the area. *“Among the many things mid-Hudson residents love that temporarily vanished off the map in March 2020, because they require humans to congregate and risk transmission of an airborne virus, was the phenomenon known as Repair Café. These gatherings of do-it-yourselfers who offer their talents at fixing “beloved-but-broken” objects for free originated in Amsterdam in 2009 and migrated to*

*California by 2012. The first Repair Café in the Hudson Valley was organized in New Paltz in May 2013, spearheaded by a solar energy activist named John Wackman. By the time COVID shut them down, there were close to 40 Cafés happening at regular intervals throughout the region.”* The article goes on to tell us more about the incredible legacy of John Wackman, the recent Repair Café in Gardiner and the resumption of Repair Cafés in Newburgh, Kingston and New Paltz.

For more information, please read the article in [Hudson Valley One](https://hudsonvalleyone.com/repair-cafe/) and visit the website <https://repaircafehvh.org/> for more details on dates, times and location.

## National Drive Electric Week 2021

National Drive Electric Week, September 25th - October 3rd this year, is a nationwide celebration to raise awareness of the many benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more. Are you considering going electric? Join us for an in person outdoor event here in New Paltz on **Saturday October 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm** to learn from owners who have done so! There will be an informal motorcade through New Paltz and we will have a variety of electric vehicles on display at the New Paltz Community Center at 3 Veterans Drive where you will be able to talk to owners, ask questions, and compare your options. For more information please email Samrat at [samratpathania@protonmail.com](mailto:samratpathania@protonmail.com) or Janelle at [newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com](mailto:newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com)

### Why Consider An EV?

It's a performance vehicle that will save you money!

#### Benefits:

- Instant torque allowing you to quickly speed up and merge
- \$1.24 per eGallon (U.S. Average) An eGallon is the cost of fueling a vehicle with electricity compared to a similar vehicle that runs on gasoline. On average, it costs about half as much to drive an electric vehicle.
- Latest technology such as driver assist lane tracking, emergency braking, and over-the-air updates
- Less maintenance
- Safer. EVs are ten times less likely to catch fire than conventional cars
- The efficiency or MPGe (miles per gallon equivalent) well exceeds 100 for most vehicles
- And, of course, they're better for the environment, even when accounting for their manufacturing carbon emissions and when using electricity from coal plants.



# Climate Related Volunteer Opportunities in New Paltz

**We need more volunteers working on climate related issues for the Town and Village of New Paltz, not just within the Climate Smart Task Force but on all boards!** In the town of New Paltz, look at the various Committees, Commissions and Boards listed under the 'Committees' tab. Attend a meeting, contact the Chair and/or contact your Town Councilpersons to find out more. **Here are committees and boards that for the Town of New Paltz had openings as of July and clearly relate to the Climate Smart mission:**

**Bike-Pedestrian Committee** Joint Town/Village committee; reviews issues regarding bicycle and pedestrian safety

**Clean Water Open Space Protection Commission** is a voluntary program available to landowners in the Town of New Paltz. The goal of the program is to provide interested landowners with options and funding sources for completing conservation projects that are a priority to the Town of New Paltz

**Community Improvement Team (CIT)** Beautification committee maintaining public gardens and spaces in the Town and Village. Coordinates Clean Sweep with SUNY and other service organizations

**Environmental Conservation Board** Reviews Planning Board site applications for environmental impact, addresses other general environmental concerns

Anyone interested in volunteering is asked to submit a letter of interest and a resume to [assistant@townofnewpaltz.org](mailto:assistant@townofnewpaltz.org) or mail to the Supervisor's office, Town of New Paltz, PO Box 550, New Paltz, NY 12561.

**Here are committees and boards that clearly relate to the Climate Smart mission for the Village of New Paltz that have current openings:**

**Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee** Joint Town/Village committee; reviews issues regarding bicycle and pedestrian safety.

- **Environmental Policy Board** – Guides the Village Board and Planning Board on environmental issues, research and propose policies, educate residents, preserve green spaces, collaboration

**Planning Board** reviews land use issues that pertain to the Code of the Village of New Paltz including proposed Site Plan Reviews, Special Use Permits, and Subdivisions as well as general planning and zoning throughout the Village.

**Zoning Board of Appeals** reviews land use issues that pertain to the Code of the Village of New Paltz including proposed variations from the zoning code and appeals of an action or decision made by the Building Inspector.

Anyone who would like to volunteer for these Village of New Paltz opportunities should email your letter of interest to [assistant@villageofnewpaltz.org](mailto:assistant@villageofnewpaltz.org) Include any relevant experience or a resume if you have one handy. The Village Board may conduct an interview at one of their regular meetings on either the 2nd or 4th Wednesday of each month. Interviews usually take place around 7:30pm.



## New Paltz Climate Smart September Calendar

**Tuesday September 7th 6:00 pm** Climate Solutions Meetup – Synthetic Turf

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84949317067?pwd=VjJraWhSd1lrWVQvcisrZmRYd0pJUT09>

**Saturday September 18<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am to 2:00 pm** Repair Café at New Paltz United Methodist Church

**Monday September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm** monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting

[Link to Zoom Meeting of Task Force](#)

**Tuesday September 21st at 7:00 pm** Climate Smart Book Club – Overstory

[Click here for Zoom link to Climate Smart Book Club](#)

**Monday September 25th at 7:00 pm** Ulster County Climate Smart Committee

<https://zoom.us/j/94174947702>

**Saturday October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the New Paltz Community Center Parking Lot**

Celebrating National Electric Vehicle Week Approximate time - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please contact Janelle Peotter, Climate Smart Coordinator at [newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com](mailto:newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com)



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