

NEWS

Are Rye's Streets Getting Dirtier?

Trash in the downtown area has been a community concern for years, but some residents argue that businesses are making the problem worse.

By [Bree Shirvell](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 13, 2010

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The streets in Rye are getting dirtier according to some local residents.

At the Rye City Council Meeting on March 24, several residents voiced concerns about downtown business owners not keeping the area clean and not responsibly disposing of trash.

Ellen D'Angelo, one of the residents who spoke up at the council meeting, says the problem has gotten worse in recent years.

"No one seems to pick up anymore," D'Angelo said. "No one has pride in where they live."

D'Angelo has lived in Rye for more than 80 years and believes businesses should hold on to their trash until pick up day. She worries about debris flowing into the Blind Brook.

According to Sally Wright, Vice President of Communications of the Rye Chamber of Commerce, complaints about businesses downtown not keeping the area clean is an issue that has been repeatedly discussed in the past.

"It is the city's responsibility to monitor business and the trash issues," Wright said.

Rye Mayor Doug French also said complaints about trash and dirty streets have been recurring.

"As a candidate campaigning downtown throughout last year, I received a number of complaints and studied past City Council minutes to see that complaints went as far back as 2000 about how dirty some of the streets are," French said. "This has been on my radar and on that of my running mates. The comments at the last Council meeting punctuated this issue for the new council."

In the past there was no formal system in place for the city to deal with businesses not cleaning up, but French says that is changing in part due to the comments at the City Council meeting.

"Since then, the City Manager [Frank Culross] and I have put through a policy where officers will notify merchants of their obligation to keep their sidewalks clean—and for the most part we expect they will do so," French said. "In addition, I will reach out to the Merchants Association with Catherine Parker, our Council liaison and even look to speak with the downtown landlords."

For D'Angelo, Sundays are the worst day to walk through downtown Rye.

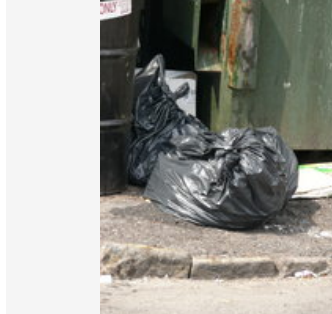
"With the street parking in the back, the stores just throw their trash in the back," D'Angelo said. "Starbucks and the apartment houses are the worst. Starbucks has their trash cans on the streets and on Sundays there are bags and bags of trash."

Starbucks Westchester County District Manager Christa Drake had not received or been made aware of any issues with trash removal. A spokesperson for Starbucks repeated Drake's comments, adding that the company trains it's employees to follow all local, state, and federal laws including those pertaining to trash disposal.

Wright had also not heard of any complaints recently, but invited anyone who is concerned about the issue to attend the next Chamber of Commerce meeting.

The next meeting, scheduled for May 5, is the annual luncheon at the Wainwright House, with a \$15 cover charge. The following meeting will be June 2. All meetings are open to the public.

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