

## 2023 Annual Report to LaFayette Town Board

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission (LACC)

April 4, 2024

Submitted by: Mark Distler, LACC Chair

2023 LACC Members:

Doug Anderson	Carole Dwyer	Darcy Sachs	Gregg Shinneman
Amy Roe	Julie Liebman	Keith Terrell	Payton Kremers
Kelly Wypych	Craig Archer	Isabella Shenandoah-Kurtz	

In accordance with the Town of LaFayette code Chapter 15 (Local Law 1-1971), this the 2023 annual report of the activities and work of the LACC. Monthly reports were submitted to the Town Board for review at its monthly meetings.

1. **Membership** – Mark Distler continued as LACC chair throughout 2023. New members in 2023 are Darcy Sachs, Gregg Shinneman, and Julie Liebman. No new student members were nominated. At the end of 2023, LACC had 7 appointed members, 1 student member, and 3 auxiliary members.
2. **Meetings** – The LACC met four times (February, May, September, December). Meetings focused primarily on initiating and checking on the LACC’s projects and programs identified below. Meeting summary documents were produced for each meeting. There were also project team meetings, scheduled as needed.
3. **Projects & Programs** - The LACC develops and completes projects that advance the Town’s conservation efforts and culture. There are currently 9 active projects, including two added in 2023. These are the project highlights completed in 2023:

### Energy Reduction

Jan	By agreeing to benchmark its energy consumption, our Town was designated by NYSERDA as a Clean Energy Community (CEC) and awarded a \$5k grant.
Mar - Nov	The \$5k CEC grant was used to cover all the Town’s cost to convert its street lights to LED lights, saving ~\$7,700 per year on electricity costs. The Town reduced its energy consumption and received more points toward another NYSERDA grant.

### Renewable Energy

Jan	After subscribing its electric accounts to a local solar project, our Town reduced its carbon footprint (its use of fossil fuels), started saving \$4,700 per year on electricity costs, and earned more points toward another NYSERDA grant.
Jan - Mar	Our Town launched its Community Solar campaign with a mailing that informed its residents how they can save on their electric bill. The residents’ response to the

campaign was the highest the broker ever saw. Because of that, our Town was awarded a second \$5k NYSERDA grant. The grant will be used for the Community Center lighting upgrade. The upgrade will reduce our Town's electricity consumption and earn our Town more points toward another NYSERDA grant.

### **Trees**

- Apr The LACC and the Optimists organized an Arbor Day Celebration where 22 new trees were planted by ~50 residents at Stafford Park. The trees were donated and our Town was awarded a \$1k grant from NYS Urban Forestry Council.
- Sep The LACC completed a survey of trees on all Town-owned properties and submitted its recommendations for maintenance of existing trees and for planting new trees. The Town Board approved the recommendations, which will begin to be implemented in 2024.

### **Parks**

- Jun The LACC posted warning signs at wild parsnips locations at Stafford Park. Wild parsnips are hazardous plants that are invasive in our Town.
- Jul - Sep In coordination with the Optimists, the Stafford Park Memorial Tree & Bench Program continued its second year with the installation of 8 new benches and planting of 4 new trees. Seven memorial trees were planted so far. You will find in this newsletter an announcement that the memorial program has been expanded to include Bailey Park.