

Monthly Report to LaFayette Town Board

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission (LACC)

December 5, 2022

Submitted by: Mark Distler, LACC Chair

These are the LACC activities between November 4 and December 5, 2022:

1. **Membership** – Rachel Zevin resigned because she is moving to the Albany area.
2. **Meetings** – A meeting was held on November 29. Attached is the meeting summary.
3. **Projects & Programs** - See attached status summary of projects requested by the Town Supervisor and programs selected to build a community conservation culture. Of note:
 - a. The LACC submitted a draft community solar campaign plan to the Town Board for review before its December 13 meeting, at which the LACC will ask it to provide comment on the plan and to approve it for submittal to NYSERDA and for launch.

Attachments: LACC Project Status Summary
LACC 11/29/22 Meeting Summary

LACC Project & Program Status Summary

| Projects | Objective | Project Team | Current Actions | Previous Actions |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Senior Center | Develop landscaping design that will connect visitors to the nature of Stafford Park | Kelly, Larkin, Mark | ON HOLD -Design ravine landscape & new park plantings in Spring '23 | -Met ESF to discuss their involvement -Received Supervisor's and Optimist's approval to proceed w/ ESF -Got construction ROM cost estimates for ravine & nature trail plantings |
| Parks | Propose concepts to increase visitor's awareness of nature and/or environment | Amy, Keith, Mark, Markus | -Decide on option for Bailey Park | -Developed list of concepts -Finalized list of plantings for ESF by September; involve Optimists & Prince -Drafted tree/bench memorial program -Received Supervisor approval to obtain cost estimates -Worked out transaction details w/ Chartrand & Marzo -Designed tree and bench locations -Obtained latest cost estimates & finalized details -Got program approved by TB -Launched program on website via social media channels |
| Electric Vehicle Charging Stations | Develop scope & cost for stations on Town property | Mark, Kelly | -Request other cost estimates -Develop ROI with input from other pay-4-use -Submit recommendation for TB approval -If approved, apply for NYSDEC ZEV grant | -Contacted CNYRPDB to learn about funding options -Got Supervisor approval to contact contractors -Met with MakeReady contractor at Town office to start cost estimate process -Discussed concepts with Supervisor -Received cost estimate from MakeReady contractor |
| Invasives | Propose approaches to manage the risk of invasives in our community | Kelly, Craig | -Remind Optimists to repost wild parsnip posters in parks each Spring -Add links to invasive educational material and remediation projects on town website | -Discussed with Supervisor prior to identification -Prepared warning signs for installation at parks -Developed fact sheet -Wrote newsletter article highlighting 3 invasives |
| Community Solar | Promote NYS Community Solar program with residents | Mark, Amy, Kelly, Payton, Larkin, Keith | -Write follow-up newsletter article -Develop community campaign plan for TB & NYSERDA approval -Launch campaign, track new subscriptions | -Wrote newsletter article -Obtained cost savings estimate for Town to subscribe to solar project -Recommended 3 opportunities to TB, all approved -Managed Town's subscription to solar project (started monthly savings) |
| Clean Energy Community | Earn CEC designation under NYSERDA program and recommend energy reduction projects | Mark | -Recommend street lighting LED conversion for TB approval -Implement LED conversion project & track savings -Apply for CEC grant to cover LED conversion cost -Manage Town's benchmarking setup | -Submitted TB's benchmarking resolution to NYSERDA -Received NYSERDA CEC designation & \$5k grant -Identified cost & energy saving for Town's street lighting conversion to LED |
| Land Use Independent Study (AI 2-1) | Conduct an independent study of regulatory techniques and land use controls to manage future development in order to preserve the Town's public vistas and critical environmental and agricultural areas | Mark, Kelly | -Obtain funding via 2024 budget -Establish review committee -Conduct study -Draft recommendations to TB | -Developed SOW for expert consultant & requested proposals -Received proposal from land use expert |
| SEQR Enhancement (AI 2-6) | Enhance understanding of the SEQR process by all review boards to protect our natural resources from the potential negative impacts of development | Mark, Kelly, Doug | -Deliver enhancement program to PB | -Evaluated needs by interviewing those conducting SEQR reviews -Developed focused enhancement purpose -Researched enhancement options to meet needs -Recommended enhancement program to Supervisor -Prepared recommendation for program with SMEs -Delivered enhancement program to Town Board & ZBA |

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| UNA & CEA (AI 2-10) | Inventory and identify sensitive environmental areas in the Town and designate Unique Natural Areas (UNAs) or Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) as defined by the NYSDEC | Mark, Amy, Larkin | -Survey experts & town residents for potential CEAs -Write description & rationale of potential CEAs -Review draft recommendations with review boards -Submit recommendations to TB | -Decided UNAs are the same as CEAs -Drafted initial list -Spoke with NYSDEC -Spoke with some experts about potential CEAs |
| Tree Planting Program (AI 2-12) | Establish a tree planting program for Town-owned properties and public ROWS | Mark, Rachel, Keith, Markus, Doug | -Inventory trees on Town properties -Develop cost estimate for new tree plantings -Research funding availability -Develop tree care program -Submit program recommendation to TB -Implement new tree planting and care program | -Decided to exclude ROWs from program since they are private properties -Identified properties and prepared maps of each |

Culture Building Programs

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|---------------------------------|--|------------------|---|--|
| Town Newsletter Articles | Provide communications that increase resident's awareness to nature and environmental conservation | Rotating authors | -Write 23Q1 article on community solar campaign, due December -Future topics: honey bees, glass recycling, invasives | 22Q4 - Invasive species 22Q3 - Community solar 22Q2 - Solar farm law 22Q1 - People & plastics 21Q4 - LACC update, plastic recycling 21Q3 - LACC update, tick safety |
| Town Website | Post conservation topics on a LACC web page | Mark | -Continually update content | -Obtained Supervisor & IO approvals -Added existing content to the site page -Monthly updates |
| NYSACC Newsletter | Write article about LACC for NYSACC's quarterly newsletter | TBD | -Write article about LACC -Take photos of LACC, Bailey Park, Wild Parsnip, Stafford Park tree planting | |

Completed Projects (since April 2021)

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|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------|---|
| Agritourism | Recommend approaches to create a Town initiative | Isabella, Larkin, Markus | COMPLETED | -Discussed possible scopes with Supervisor -Discussed possible projects with Palmer & McConnell |
| Solar Farms | Propose recommendations to revise and update the solar farms law (§290-32 (H)) | Carole, Kelly, Doug | COMPLETED | -Researched other towns' guidance -Drafted recommendation edits to current law -Completed internal review -Submitted recommendations memo to Supervisor -Submitted recommended edits to Town Attorney -Present proposed recommendations to Town Board |
| Comprehensive Plan Goal #2 | Lead the execution of the 12 action items listed under Goal #2 of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan | Mark | COMPLETED | -Prepared plan to complete Goal #2 action items -Identified volunteers and subject matter experts needed to conduct 5 action items for 2022 -Held kickoff meetings |
| Comprehensive Plan Update | Participate on Tiger Team to update 2012 Comprehensive Plan | Carole, Kelly, Mark | COMPLETED | -Submitted input on vision, goals, objectives, action items -Provided input on land use approaches -Wrote FAQs for public communication -Prepared for public open house & hearing (10/28) -Provided input on revisions to CP based on public input -Define and organize the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) |
| Bailey Park Tree Planting | Coordinate planting of trees at Bailey Park to replace those removed | Amy, Mark | COMPLETED | -Obtained cost quote to plant 5 trees -Received Supervisor's approval -Coordinated planting & residents' donation |
| Apple Valley Park Noise | Provide technical support of noise & noise ordinance | Mark | COMPLETED | -Conducted noise evaluation during concert, submitted report -Recommended revisions to noise ordinance |



LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission

Meeting Summary – November 29, 2022

Attendees

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Mark Distler, Chair | Craig Archer | Payton Kremers |
| Larkin Podsiedlik | Doug Anderson | Kelly Wypych |
| Isabella Shenandoah-Kurtz | Carole Dwyer | |

Introductions

Mark Distler shared the news that Rachel Zevin is moving out of town and therefore has resigned. Attendees shared the things that they do with their spare time. Doug Anderson led a safety moment about falling.

Projects & Programs

Each of the LACC's projects and programs were discussed, as shown in the attached status summary. Below are some of the highlights:

Senior Center – On hold

Parks – Mark said the memorial tree & bench program now has 6 tree and 6 bench sponsorship requests. He said the project team should now consider a similar program for Bailey Park.

EVCS – Mark said he had not made progress on getting another quote from a EVCS contractor and on finding another municipality that has pay-for-use DCFC (fast charge) so an ROI can be derived. He asked for a volunteer to help out; Kelly Wypych volunteered.

Invasive & Hazardous Plants – Kelly said they made no progress on the educational materials for the Town website but they still plan on it. There was discussion about educational topics, and possibly joining Prisms if a mitigation project is taken on. It was decided that the next newsletter article (April 1) will be on invasives.

Community Solar – Mark said the project team wrote and reviewed a community campaign plan, which is going to be submitted to the Town Board for approvals for submittal to NYSERDA and to launch the campaign. He described the proposed campaign activities. He also thanked all for reviewing the next newsletter article about the campaign.

Clean Energy Community – Mark introduced this new project that began with the Town's recent designation as a CEC due to its approvals of the community solar campaign and benchmarking program. He said he is working on developing a project to convert the Town's street lights to LEDs, which would be eligible for reimbursement under the CEC \$5k designation grant. He asked for help with the benchmarking program; Craig Archer volunteered. Isabella mentioned that the school's eco program may be interested in a clean energy project and will check into it.

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Land Use Independent Study – Mark said the consultant’s cost was not approved in the 2023 Town budget. Kelly said she would inform the consultants. Mark mentioned a new bibliography he received from NYSACC that provides links to other NYS codes, including open space. Kelly said she will look into what other municipalities use to protect open spaces.

Enhancement of SEQR – Mark said he is still trying to schedule the training session with the Planning Board.

CEAs – Mark and Larkin Podseidlik explained they and Amy are making progress in their outreach to local subject matter experts.

Tree Planting Program – On hold until the Spring

Newsletter article – As mentioned earlier, invasives will be the topic of the 1Q23 newsletter article.

New Business

Natural Landscaping – Larkin discussed a possible project that would encourage the use of natural landscaping and stormwater mitigation. Examples of each were discussed. Larkin will look into the new online bibliography for possible examples of related code. More work is needed to define the project’s objective.

Wind Farm Law – Carole Dwyer discussed a possible project to review the current code for wind farms (non-residential). There was a discussion about which aspects of the law would be considered for revision, and what size of farm can be regulated. Kelly, Doug, and Payton volunteered to be on the project team. Carole said she work with the team to write the objective and steps. Mark will then discuss it with the Supervisor.

Next Meeting

February 21, 5:00-6:30 PM, Community Room