

Monthly Report to LaFayette Town Board

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission (LACC)

June 6, 2024

Submitted by: Mark Distler, LACC Chair

These are the LACC activities between May 10 to June 6, 2024:

1. **Membership** – There were no membership changes during the period, although the new Chair, Payton Kremers began his term on June 1.
2. **Meetings** – A meeting was held on June 4.
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. **Clean Energy:** As requested of you at the May Town Board meeting, the LACC is working to certify LaFayette as a Climate Smart Community (CSC), a NYSDEC program. You had concern about the potential (unforeseen) additional State requirements for CSCs. You asked the Town Attorney to evaluate the CSC resolution for his opinion, and he will provide that at your meeting. Attached are both resolutions again.
 - b. **Maple Harvest Wind:** This is a new LACC project requested by the Supervisor to evaluate the planned wind turbine project and to provide recommendations to you about its potential impacts and actions the Town could take. Last month we submitted our evaluation of the RAPID Act along with our recommendations to address the planned project. Attached is the project's purpose and scope, which I'll review with you at the meeting. At your July meeting, we plan to present to you the key issues and recommendations on how to communicate the Town's key concerns.

Attachment: LACC Project Status Summary
CSC Pledge Resolution
CSC Task Force Resolution
LACC Scope For Wind Project

LACC Project & Program Status Summary

Projects	Objective	Project Team	Current Actions	Previous Actions
Parks	Propose concepts to increase visitor's awareness of nature and/or environment	Amy, Keith, Mark	-Consider signage for plant species and land history	<u>Bailey Park Memorial Program - COMPLETED</u> -Selected tree & bench locations, with input from Parks -Obtained TB approval to expand program -Launched program on website & via social media <u>Stafford Park Memorial Program - COMPLETED</u> -Drafted tree/bench memorial program for Stafford Park -Received Supervisor prior approval to obtain cost estimates -Worked out transaction details w/ Bookkeeper & Optimists -Designed tree and bench locations -Obtained latest cost estimates & finalized details -Got program approved by TB -Launched program on website via social media
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	Develop scope & cost for stations on Town property	Kelly, Mark	<u>On hold</u> until proper location is identified -Develop ROI with input from other pay-4-use -Submit recommendation for TB approval -If approved, apply for funding grants	-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 estimates from two contractors
Invasives	Propose approaches to manage the risk of invasives in our community	Kelly, Craig	-Repost wild parsnip posters in parks each Summer (late June)	-Discussed with Supervisor prior to identification -Prepared warning signs for installation at parks -Developed fact sheet -Wrote newsletter article highlighting 3 invasives -Reposted wild parsnip signs at parks (where found)
Clean Energy*	Earn CEC designation under NYSERDA program and CSC certification under the NYSDEC program that help identify energy reduction and clean energy projects	Mark, Craig, Keith	-Follow up on LED conversion project & check savings (1Q25) -Identify energy saving project from study to use \$10k grant at Community Center -Implement clean heating/cooling community education plan -Register for CSC after passing a pledge resolution and task force resolution -Identify another 34 CSC points so we can receive bronze certification and earn a \$40k NYSERDA grant	-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 -Recommended street lighting LED conversion for TB approval -Applied for & received \$5k CEC grant to cover LED conversion cost -Authorized LED conversion project w/ Nat Grid -Collected Town building data for benchmarking setup -Submitted NYSERDA application for high impact action for Town's community solar subscriptions -Completed set up of Town's benchmarking program, apply for NYSERDA grant credit -Applied for & received \$5k grant from NYSERDA for Comm Ctr lighting upgrades -Requested free energy study of Community Center & \$10k grant -Completed municipal fleet inventory & earned 200 points
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	Kelly, Mark, Craig, Doug, Payton	-Identify need -Create communication plan to TB -Obtain funding for study -Establish review committee -Conduct study -Draft recommendations to TB	-Developed SOW for expert consultant & requested proposals -Received proposal from land use expert
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, Darcy, Payton	-Survey experts & town residents for potential CEAs -Write description & rationale of potential CEAs -Review draft recommendations with town boards -Submit recommendations to TB	-Decided UNAs are the same as CEAs -Drafted initial list -Spoke with NYSDEC -Spoke with experts & residents about potential CEAs
Tree Program (AI 2-12)	Establish a tree planting program for Town-owned properties and public ROWS	Mark, Darcy, Doug, Keith, Gregg, Julie, Payton	-Obtain quotes for tree maintenance and submit for TB approval -Develop recommendation for new trees -Consider application for Tree City USA designation -Develop tree care program -Submit program recommendation to TB -Apply for NYSDEC funding for maintenance -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 -Worked with CCE for free trees at Stafford Park -Organized Arbor Day celebration during Stafford plantings on April 22, 2023 -Applied for & received \$1k grant from NYUFC for Arbor Day celebration -Surveyed trees on Town properties and delivered report to TB
Residential Stormwater Control	Educate about residential stormwater control (and/or habitat creation)	Amy, Darcy, Doug	-Identify control techniques	
Repurpose C&D Materials	Educate contractors working in Town how to repurpose C&D materials	Keith, Craig	-Learn about already available programs and outlets (perhaps starting with talking with Jerry Marzo) -Decide how to educate via newsletter article or	
Maple Harvest Wind	Evaluate possible environmental and human impacts from planned wind project	Darcy, Mark	-Identify possible impacts -Submit findings and recommendations to Town Board	-Learned about new NYS permitting regulations and submitted findings & recommendations to TB (May 2024)

Other Culture Building Programs

Town Newsletter Articles	Provide communications that increase resident's awareness to nature and environmental conservation	Rotating authors	-Write 24Q3 article on heat pumps -Future topics: future of clean heating & cooling, Tree program, land use needs, stormwater control techniques	24Q2 - air quality trends 24Q1 - 2023 accomplishments 23Q4 - Recycling rules 23Q3 -Spotted Lanternfly 23Q2- Honey bees 23Q1 - Community solar campaign 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 -Updated monthly

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	COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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, PB & ZBA
Agritourism	Recommend approaches to create a Town initiative	Isabella, Larkin, Markus	COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Discussed possible scopes with Supervisor -Discussed possible projects with Palmer & McConnell
Solar Farms Law	Propose recommendations to revise and update the solar farms law (§290-32 (H))	Carole, Kelly, Doug	COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conducted noise evaluation during concert, submitted report -Recommended revisions to noise ordinance
Community Solar	Promote NYS Community Solar program with residents	Mark, Amy, Kelly, Payton, Larkin, Keith	COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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) -Developed community campaign plan for TB & NYSERDA approval -Launched campaign -Submitted documentation to NYSERDA & receive more grant points -Presented at local group meeting -Held webinar on February 28 -Tracked new subscriptions & applied for CEC grant points
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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

TOWN OF LA FAYETTE
2577 ROUTE 11
P.O. BOX 193
LA FAYETTE, N.Y. 13084



PHONE: 315-677-3674
FAX: 315-677-7806
WWW.TOWNOFLAFAYETTE.COM

IN THE MATTER

OF

THE TOWN OF LAFAYETTE ADOPTING NEW YORK STATE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES PLEDGE **RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Town of LaFayette (hereinafter “local government”) believes that climate change poses a real and increasing threat to our local and global environments and is primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the effects of climate change will endanger our infrastructure, economy and livelihoods; harm our farms, orchards, and ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations; spread invasive species and exotic diseases; reduce drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and pose health threats to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, we believe that our response to climate change provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to save money, and to build livable, energy-independent and secure communities, vibrant innovation economies, healthy and safe schools, and resilient infrastructures; and

WHEREAS, we believe the scale of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions required for climate stabilization will require sustained and substantial efforts; and

WHEREAS, we believe that even if emissions were dramatically reduced today, communities would still be required to adapt to the effects of climate change for decades to come,

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that Town of LaFayette, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, adopts the New York State Climate Smart Communities pledge, which comprises the following ten elements:

- 1) **Build a climate-smart community.**
- 2) **Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action.**
- 3) **Decrease energy use.**
- 4) **Shift to clean, renewable energy.**
- 5) **Use climate-smart materials management.**
- 6) **Implement climate-smart land use.**
- 7) **Enhance community resilience to climate change.**
- 8) **Support a green innovation economy.**
- 9) **Inform and inspire the public.**
- 10) **Engage in an evolving process of climate action.**

The adoption of the foregoing Resolution was moved by _____, seconded by _____

_____, and duly put to vote, which resulted as follows:

Willian McConnell, Town Supervisor _____
Carole Dwyer, Town Councilor _____
Jerry Marzo, Town Councilor _____
Melanie Palmer, Town Councilor _____
Nathan Laughlin, Town Councilor _____

THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

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IN THE MATTER

OF

**THE TOWN OF LAFAYETTE TO IMPLEMENT
A CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY TASK
FORCE AND APPOINT A CLIMATE SMART
COMMUNITY COORDINATOR**

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Town of LaFayette adopted the New York State Climate Smart Communities Pledge by Resolution on (date resolution was adopted); and

WHEREAS, the Town wishes to obtain Certification under the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Program by taking proactive steps towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change; and

WHEREAS, a Climate Smart Community Task Force serves as a central body of leadership that promotes and supports climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within the community and will act as an advisory group to the municipality on any community issues related to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the CSC Task Force will meet at least twice a year and maintain meeting minutes and attendance records for each meeting; and

WHEREAS, the CSC Task Force will consist of community members, municipal representatives, and other relevant stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, a CSC Coordinator is responsible for convening and managing the task force as Chair, serving as a liaison between the CSC task force and the chief executive officer and other officials, and interfacing with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on the CSC program as needed.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that a Climate Smart Community Task Force be initiated with the initial membership list below; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of LaFayette appoints Mark Distler, Deputy Supervisor, as the Climate Smart Community Coordinator.

Initial Membership for LaFayette CSC Task Force:

Name	Affiliation
Keith Terrell	Resident
Mark Distler	Town of LaFayette
Craig Archer	Resident

The adoption of the foregoing Resolution was moved by _____,
seconded by _____, and duly put to vote, which resulted as
follows:

Willian McConnell, Town Supervisor _____
Carole Dwyer, Town Councilor _____
Jerry Marzo, Town Councilor _____
Melanie Palmer, Town Councilor _____
Nathan Laughlin, Town Councilor _____

THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission's Project

Maple Harvest Wind Project

Purpose: The Town of LaFayette requested its conservation commission (LACC) to evaluate the possible environmental and human impacts from the Maple Harvest Wind project currently being planned for the Towns of LaFayette, Otisco and Tully.

Scope: The LACC will assess the wind project's possible impacts and present the potential impacts to the Town Board along with recommendations about how the Town should communicate its concerns, if any, to the public, elected officials, and the future wind project applicant.