

St. Lawrence County Planning Office
STAFF WORK REPORT
June 2021



ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORT

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board. After the County Board of Legislators' meeting on the 7th, Matilda finalized and mailed in the County's annual agricultural district report to the State Department of Agriculture and Markets for certification. On the 10th, Matilda virtually participated in Cooperative Extension's Local Food Advisory Board meeting and received an update on CCE's "Fruition" program and activities scheduled for the summer. On the 11th, Matilda virtually met with Nick Hamilton Honey from Cooperative Extension to prepare a poster sized map of recent satellite imagery of the agency's Learning Farm on State Highway 68.

County Planning Board (CPB). The Planning Board met via Zoom on June 10th. Staff presented on two topics: Cannabis Law and 5G Towner Rollout. Several projects were returned for local action (RFLA). Also, the Town of Potsdam's zoning map change was discussed and RFLA.

Environmental Management Council (EMC). The EMC did not meet during the month of June.

Staff is assisting Michelle Gallagher, Black Lake Association (BLA) board member, with regards to milfoil management. Gallagher is working to secure grant and local funds to help with their plan to ask the County for additional funding to help with management.

Fair Housing Task Force (FHTF). Throughout the month, Matilda forwarded information to FHTF members and interested organizations about rent and mortgage relief programs that are (or will be) administered by the State of New York. On the 18th, John provided a letter of support for the Justice and Law Center's funding application for judiciary civil legal services grant. On the 22nd, Matilda forwarded a letter from a renter about an ongoing dispute between the tenant and property manager to the Legal Aid Society of Northern New York's Canton based office.

BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

Countywide Broadband Assessment. Staff are working with DANC and a consultant to assess the deficiencies throughout the County. The assessment has been completed and a final report is pending. Staff is actively evaluating opportunities for infrastructure funding and in discussion with internet service providers and neighboring Counties regarding buildout strategies.

COVID Response. Staff assisted at three vaccination PODs (Points of Distribution) during the month of June. Mapping of COVID cases continues on a daily basis (see below).

Jones & Laughlin (J&L) Site. Staff participated in a technical conference call with DEC on June 24th.

COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The Planning Office administers three open grants: the Septic Tank Replacement Assistance Program (STRAP); the 23rd round of the Direct Homeownership Assistance Program, and the third round of its Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program (CHRP 3).

Lead Hazard Abatement Program. This \$1 million award from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is providing lead-based paint stabilization, or abatement assistance, to low- and moderate-income households throughout the county. In June, the Planning Office is pleased to announce that 7 units have been completed, and 7 units are in process.

North Country Symposium. Staff participated in and assisted moderating a session entitled “Moving In, Moving Out and Moving Over – The Future of Rural Housing.”

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

County Enterprise GIS.

- <https://gis.stlawco.org/portal/home/index.html>

COVID-19 Mapping. Since March 31, 2020, Dakota and Matilda have prepared daily maps for the County’s Public Health Department to track positive, active, and regional cases of COVID-19.

Parks & Trails New York (PTNY). Staff recently submitted GIS data for Greenway trails in the County. This data is to become part of the [New York Statewide Greenway Trails Plan](#).

Emergency Management Services. On the 17th, Matilda and Dakota assisted EMS with the preparation of a search and rescue map for a man missing from the Village of Rensselaer Falls. Staff continues to provide GIS assistance to this department as their GIS workflows evolve.

GRANTS

BridgeNY. Working with County Highway, staff submitted three applications: \$4,817,592 for the Lazy River Road bridge over the Grasse River in the Town of Russell; \$2,549,230 for the CR 35 bridge over Trout Brook in the Town of Potsdam; and \$4,826,285 for the CR 27 bridge over the Oswegatchie River in the Town of Fine. Only two of three applications can be funded. The County secured over \$9.4 million in the last round (2018).

Grants Notice Distribution. The Grants Notice is distributed to County Department Heads, Legislators, Superintendents of Schools, local municipal officials and approximately 350 additional individuals representing organizations throughout the North Country.

Hazard Mitigation Plan, 5-Year Update. Staff are assisting Emergency Services with the required five-year update of the SLC Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Staff participated in two

stakeholder Zoom sessions on June 8th and a project meeting on June 10th.

Septic Repair Program. The County has been awarded \$340,000 to repair or replace deficient septic tanks along specified waterbodies in the County. In June, the subrecipient agreement was signed; the fully executed NYS contract was received on June 22nd, and an outreach plan was developed.

2021 Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). The 2021 CFA round was announced in May with a deadline of July 30th. Staff will work with County Highway to prepare and submit an application to the NYSDEC's Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) and remains in discussion about other possible projects.

Other. Staff assisted County Highway with NYS Grants Gateway data input for the 2019 WQIP grant award of \$400,000 for the Russell Outpost Salt Storage Project. Staff participated in NYPA's Revitalization Working Group June meeting and a follow-up discussion with a local developer on June 17th.

PLANNING MATTERS

CLEAR: Staff participated in the Coastal Lakeshore Ecological and Resiliency (CLEAR) initiative Steering Committee meeting on June 16th and a public workshop on June 29th. The goal of this initiative is to help municipalities along the St. Lawrence River shoreline be better prepared to manage high and low water levels.

North Side Energy Solar Project. Staff participated in a meeting with a Northside representative and several County Legislators and Officials on June 22nd. The Group also toured the project area. The proposed 180 MW solar installation in the Towns of Brasher, Massena and Norfolk is scheduled to start construction in late 2022.

Town of Fowler Solar Law Update. Staff conducted a preliminary review of the Town's updated solar law. Several changes were recommended and the Town is reviewing with their lawyer before they submit for full CPB review.

Town of Hammond Land Use Regulations Revisions. Staff continues to make progress on an update to the Town and Village's land use regulations. Staff completed the final drafts (Single District and Dual District) and shared them with Town and Village officials to post publically in preparation for their first public informational meeting on July 13th. Staff created an online comment form for the public to use during the comment period. A public hearing is scheduled for August 11th during the monthly Town Board meeting.

Town of Rossie Land Use Regulations Assistance. After CPB review and conditioned approval, staff continue to assist the Town's Planning Board Chair with targeted edits to their land use regulations.

Village of Waddington. Staff reached out to the Village of Waddington to discuss the possibility of Staff assisting the Village with a revision to its land use regulations. Staff will attend the Village's Board meeting on July 6th to discuss next steps.

Website. Lisa and Dakota, with staff input, continue to work on updating/editing the Planning Office page on the County's new website.

- Updates were made for events, meetings and content on some pages.
- Updates were made to the Public Transportation page which updated contact information and repaired broken links to current transportation services.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

County Transit System. This month, St. Lawrence University Public Interest Corps Summer Intern Aubrey Ahern began working with Matilda on developing a survey questionnaire; riding the system's older routes; interviewing drivers and passengers; and assisting with the preparation of the 2022 operating budget. On the 4th, Matilda submitted the system's monthly COVID impact report to the State Department of Transportation. During the week of the 7th, Matilda and Mobility Manager Frank Doldo finalized a Corrective Action Plan in response to findings from a 2018 STOA audit. The Plan was submitted electronically to the Department on the 17th. On the 14th, Matilda and Heidi virtually met with Volunteer Transportation Center staff to discuss possible funding sources that could be accessed to help close a funding gap in response to significant demand for charitable trips during the ongoing presence of COVID19. On the 15th, Matilda and Aubrey resumed the Office's monthly review of The Arc's monthly STOA spreadsheets with driver and vehicle logs. On the 21st, Matilda and Aubrey met with Frank to identify operating costs that Aubrey will update for the 2022 operating budget.