

Monthly Report to LaFayette Town Board

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission (LACC)

May 4, 2023

Submitted by: Mark Distler, LACC Chair

These are the LACC activities between April 5 and May 4, 2023:

1. **Membership** – No membership changes.
2. **Meetings** – No meeting was held. The next one is scheduled for May 23.
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. **LED Conversion:** LACC received the revised cost estimate from National Grid to add 10 new outlets and 1 new street light in the LaFayette Hamlet. You have been asked to approve or disapprove the revised cost estimate. If approved, we will formally request National Grid to proceed with the work to convert to LED and install the new outlets and street light.
 - b. **Tree Planting:** The Town's Arbor Day celebration on April 22 was a huge success where 21 trees were planted by about 50 residents and Cornell Cooperative Extension's arborists and tree stewards. Thanks to the Optimists and the LACC for organizing the event and all their help the day before and the day of. Thanks also to the Highway Department who augered the holes, moved the trees and provided the water. Special thanks to Dave Prince for pitching in for two days straight.

Attachments: LACC Project Status Summary

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, Markus | -Develop a memorial tree and bench program 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 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 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 |
| Clean Energy Community* | Earn CEC designation under NYSERDA program and recommend energy reduction projects | Mark, Craig, Keith | -Implement LED conversion project & track savings -Collect Town building data for benchmarking setup -Consider next CEC action (e.g., clean energy audits) | -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 |
| 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 |
| 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, Darcy, Doug, Keith, Markus, Gregg | -Survey trees on Town properties -Develop cost estimate for new tree plantings -Consider application for Tree City USA designation -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 -Worked with CCE for free trees at Stafford Park -Organized Arbor Day celebration during Stafford plantings on April 22 -Applied for & received \$1k grant from NYUFC for Arbor Day celebration |

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|---------------------------------|--|------------------|---|---|
| Town Newsletter Articles | Provide communications that increase resident's awareness to nature and environmental conservation | Rotating authors | -Write 23Q3 article on invasives, due June 6 -Future topics: new recycling rules | 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 -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 Law | 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 |
| 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 | -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 |
| Community Solar | Promote NYS Community Solar program with residents | Mark, Amy, Kelly, Payton, Larkin, Keith | COMPLETED | -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 |