

Monthly Report to LaFayette Town Board

LaFayette Advisory Conservation Commission (LACC)

June 9, 2022

Submitted by: Mark Distler, LACC Chair

These are the LACC activities between May 6 and June 9, 2022:

1. **Membership** – No changes.
2. **Meetings** – No meeting was held. The next one is scheduled for September 27.
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. As reported last month regarding our Senior Center project, the Optimists has decided to postpone the design of the ravine and nature walk until 2023 but proceed with the tree and bench memorial program this year. So the LACC and Optimists are proceeding with a design of locations for the new trees and benches. Michael Grimm Services has agreed to help. A description of the proposed tree/bench program is expected to be shared with the Town Board next month.
 - b. Regarding the SEQR Enhancement project, the LACC, in coordination with the Town Attorney and Town Engineer, submitted a draft recommendation to the Town Supervisor to address one of the Town's Comprehensive Plan action items. Tentatively, a training session is being planned for the Town Board's August meeting.
 - c. Not shown on the attached summary because it's a singular task rather than a project, at the request of Supervisor McConnel, the LACC has asked the broker for the Sentinel Heights solar farm for an estimate of savings the Town could expect on its National Grid bills if it subscribes to the solar farm. The savings comes about from a NYS program called Community Solar (see the LACC's article about it in the next newsletter). The LACC is likely to submit a recommendation to the Town Board later this summer.

LACC Project & Program Status Summary

Projects	Objective	Sub 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	-Obtain cost estimates for trees & benches and decide with Optimists on program details -Design tree and bench location -Roll-out program to Town -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
Bailey Park Upgrades	Support Optimists about 2022 upgrades for the Park by helping them communicate with Cardiff Hamlet	Amy	-Provide community input on suggested upgrades	
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	Develop scope & cost for stations on Town property	Mark, Rachel	-Confirm NYSDEC ZEV grant funding for 2022 -Receive cost estimate from MakeReady contractor -Provide cost estimate and ROI to TB & recommend grant applications	-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
Agritourism	Recommend approaches to create a Town initiative	Isabella, Larkin, Markus	-Consider farm products census	-Discussed possible scopes with Supervisor -Discussed possible projects with Palmer & McConnell
Invasive & Hazardous Plants	Propose approaches to manage the risk of invasive & hazardous plants at our parks	Claire, Kelly, Craig	-Repost wild parsnip posters in parks in Spring -Recommend offer to educate residents on identifying & reporting	-Discussed with Supervisor prior to identification -Prepared warning signs for installation at parks -Developed fact sheet

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invasive species -Develop educational materials about 3 invasive species 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Receive proposals from land use experts -Obtain funding -Establish review committee -Conduct study -Draft recommendations to TB 	-Developed SOW for expert consultant & requested proposals
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prepare program with SMEs -Deliver program to Town Board first 	<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
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Survey experts & town residents for potential CEAs -Write description & rationale of potential CEAs -Review draft recommendations with review boards -Submit recommendations to TB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Decided UNAs are the same as CEAs -Drafted initial list -Spoke with NYSDEC
Tree Planting Program (AI 2-12)	Establish a tree planting program for Town-owned properties and public ROWS	Mark, Rachel, Keith, Markus, Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inventory trees on Town properties -Work with OCSWCD to conduct tree risk assessment & estimate new trees -Research and apply for funding -Develop tree care program -Submit program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Decided to exclude ROWs from program since they are private properties -Identified properties and prepared maps of each

			recommendation to TB -Implement new tree planting and care program	
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Culture Building Programs

Town Newsletter Articles	Provide communications that increase resident's awareness to nature and environmental conservation	Rotating authors	-Write 3Q article on community solar, due June -Future topics: glass recycling, invasive plants	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
Resident Experts	Use volunteer resident experts to address conservation-related needs of Boards, as they come up	Mark	Speak with Supervisor about program and ways to eliminate liability concerns for volunteers	
NYSACC Newsletter	Write article about LACC for NYSACC's quarterly newsletter	TBD	-Write article about LACC due ~June -Take photos of LACC, Bailey Park, Wild Parsnip, Stafford Park tree planting	

Completed Projects (since April 2021)

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

				<p>items for 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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