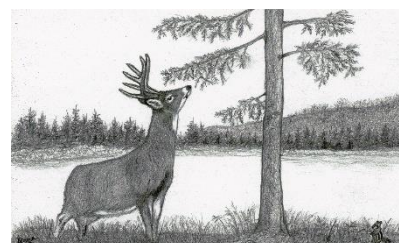


***St. Lawrence County Planning Office***  
***STAFF WORK REPORT***  
***November 2024***



Drawing by Donna Reed

**ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORT**

***County Planning Board (CPB).*** The CPB met on November 14<sup>th</sup> in the Conference room on the second floor of the HSC Building. One full review project was discussed; a site plan review for a Stewart's Shop in the Village of Massena (conditionally approved).

***Environmental Management Council (EMC).*** The EMC met on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. in the HSC Building. A representative from DEC and APA came to discuss amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. The plan is to be updated every five years and this is the first thorough update in a long time. Concerns about provisions to accommodate American Disabilities Act will allow for motorized vehicles in wilderness areas of the Park. The practice of allowing motorized vehicles for handicapped individuals was already in place, the updates are formalizing this practice. There is a statewide burn ban in effect because of drought like conditions throughout the state. City of Ogdensburg waste water treatment plant is being updated under DEC oversight. An incident of chronic wasting disease detected in a captive deer in Herkimer County. DEC and Ag and Markets are investigating and DEC is surveying for the disease. Hunters that want their deer tested can send a sample to Cornell Wildlife Lab. Next meeting will occur January 15, 2025.

***Fair Housing Task Force.*** The Fair Housing Task Force met on November 19<sup>th</sup> in the One Stop Career Center Classroom A at the Human Services Center. Preston presented his work to date on the County's Exclusionary Zoning ArcGIS Story Map. This included a preview of the Story Map introduction with maps, tables, graphs, charts, and additional analysis. The next step includes an analysis of individual population centers; a future discussion with Vecino Group regarding their Village of Canton Midtown Plaza project; and the July 1<sup>st</sup> adoption of the Fair Housing Assessment. Preston also discussed coordination efforts that are underway to schedule a panel discussion on resources to address housing complaints. The next meeting will be February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room at the HSC.

**BOARD OF LEGISLATORS**

***Countywide Broadband Assessment.*** Staff facilitated one committee meeting and continues working closely with ISPs on ARPA-funded projects.

***OCF Repurpose Committee.*** Staff have been assigned to the County's Ogdensburg Correctional Facility Repurpose Committee. The group last met in August.

***SLC Water/Waste Water Infrastructure American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Initiative.*** The BOL allocated \$3 million for municipal water and waste water projects. Twelve municipalities have been awarded a total of \$2,969,563. To date, disbursements have been made totaling \$2,195,263.48. Eight municipalities have expended all their awarded funds and/or completed their project: Colton, Brasher, DeKalb, Hermon, Heuvelton, Lisbon, Louisville, and Parishville. The remaining four municipalities have drawn down a portion of their awarded funds, with two projected to draw down their remaining balance this year.

**County Snowmobile Grant.** St. Lawrence County Planning Office is the local sponsor for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Places Snowmobile Grant. The County was awarded \$293,840.00 in snowmobile trail maintenance for the 2024-2025 grant year. Staff processed payment from the State and is in the process of submitting the 70% award of funds to the Trail Maintenance Entities.

**County Budget Preparation.** Staff is again assisting with the annual preparation of the County Budget.

## **COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).** Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program #5 (CHRP 5) is underway. The Development Authority of North Country (DANC), the subrecipient, and the Planning Office have been meeting regularly to discuss progress. Phase I consisted of five projects for low to moderate income households, and all five projects have been completed. Phase II consists of four more projects. DANC visited the sites to create scope of work, and now are arranging to test for radon, lead, and asbestos. Sam mapped the projects to demonstrate no impact on wetlands and not within a flood plain. Sam has been working on a form that both DANC and the County can use to manage the waiting list for the program and to help guide future housing rehab programming. Sam and DANC have begun to review the waiting list to identify Phase III projects.

**Rural Preservation Corporation Discussion.** Staff met with Community Development Program (CDP) staff to discuss an opportunity to apply to become a Rural Preservation Company. A meeting between Staff and the Rural Housing Coalition to further discuss this opportunity occurred on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **GRANTS**

**U.S. EPA Brownfields Program Community-Wide Assessment Grant.** Staff worked with consultant selected by the County Attorney's office to complete and submit this application.

**Septic Repair Program.** All projects completed and funds spent under this program since "Round One" have been combined to align the County's program benchmarks with NYS. To date, 84 systems have been repaired/replaced; \$595,583.89 has been expended; and \$1,004,416.11 in program funds remain available. A number of projects are pending and are anticipated for completion before the ground freezes.

**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.

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

**GIS.** Public Health requested assistance to develop a web-based dashboard for Overdose data in the County. Staff has been meeting regularly with public health to implement the dashboard to their specifications. The Overdose Dashboard officially launched to the public in mid-November. Staff updated the Solar Development Mapping Tool with additional information and the addition of new projects.

***Village of Heuvelton Comprehensive Plan.*** After a final public hearing on November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Village Board officially adopted its Comprehensive Plan. Staff would like to thank the Village for its dedication in making this project possible.

***Town of Hammond Comprehensive Plan Update.*** Public input gathered since the October public meeting has been incorporated into final draft plan; staff working on document format.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

***County Transit System.*** On the 6<sup>th</sup>, Matilda met with newly hired Operations Manager Mark Ladison to review: Public Transit revenues and operating expenses; records management requirements; and upcoming fleet technology investments. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, Matilda met with County Buildings and Grounds staff to mark the proposed location for replacement tree planting in front of the Harold B. Smith building. Afterwards, Matilda called NY Digs to confirm the planting location would not interfere with existing underground infrastructure. On the 13<sup>th</sup> Matilda met with mobile wifi vendor Kajeet to obtain quotes for the purchase mobile tablets so that the operator can transition to digital preventative maintenance records management. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, Matilda participated in a virtual meeting with Passio and VTC staff to review how to resolve GTFS validation errors and warnings. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, Matilda and Jason participated in a virtual overview of the 2025 operating budgets to VTC and The Arc staff. On the 21<sup>st</sup>, Matilda attended the Public Transit Task Force meeting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room of the Human Services Center. Operations Manager Mark Ladison was introduced to the membership; Matilda reviewed the preparation of a 2024 Accelerated Transit Capital (ATC) funding application; receipt of DOT capital and operating contracts; and completion of 5311 program audits. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, Matilda and County Highway Engineer Ryan Herron reviewed and finalized a scope of work and project budget for the installation of a bus shelter along the north elevation of the Human Services Center. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, Matilda participated in a FTA-sponsored webinar on Uniform Act construction requirements for transit facilities. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, Matilda met with St. Lawrence Nurseries staff to observe the planting of the replacement tree in front of the Harold B. Smith Building. Throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the month, Matilda participated in virtual meetings with Kajeet staff to revise and finalize quotes for the 2024 ATC funding application. On the 26<sup>th</sup>, Matilda participated in a virtual meeting with camera vendor Vestige and The Arc staff to discuss preparations for the installation of camera systems in buses 632, 635, 636 and 637 on December 5<sup>th</sup>. During the final week of November, Matilda and Jason processed First Mile Last Mile and Mobility Management invoices for payment.