

St. Lawrence County Planning Office
STAFF WORK REPORT
November 2019



ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORT

County Planning Board (CPB). The Planning Board met on the 14th in Canton and heard a presentation by 2019 Planning Office intern Katie Buck on the collection and analysis of the qualitative impact of the County's Direct Homeownership Assistance Program on project participants. There were no full review projects for the Board to consider. The Board unanimously voted the following members to serve as officers of the Board: Brian Murray as Chair, Kitty O'Neil as Vice-Chair, and Eric Alan as Secretary. Their terms will be effective January 1, 2020.

Environmental Management Council (EMC). At the EMC meeting in November, the speaker was Brian Washburn, EMC member and Professor Emeritus of Chemistry and Environmental Science at SUNY Canton; he presented the St. Lawrence River Watershed Revitalization Plan, a project that has been funded at \$225,000 by the NYS Department of State Office of Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. There will be a public meeting regarding this plan; it will be held on December 4th, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Gouverneur Community Center, 4673 NY-58, Gouverneur, NY 13642. See <https://fcsxcd.org/partnerships/st-lawrence-river-watershed-partnership-slwrp/> for more information.

The Emerald Ash Borer Task Force (EABTF) met in November. There were several new reports of EAB infestations in St. Lawrence County, including in Ogdensburg. Other notable reports of EAB infestations came from Jefferson County, where EABs have been found in Watertown, Alex Bay, and Southwick State Park.

Fair Housing Task Force (FHTF). The FHTF did not meet in November. The next meeting of the FHTF will be held on Thursday December 12.

BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

Census 2020. John Tenbusch is working with local officials to organize the County's Complete Count Committee, or to set up their own community Complete Count Committees.

Jones & Laughlin (J&L) Site.

- Staff provide project oversight and management for redevelopment activities at J&L.
- Staff participated in a DEC technical (clean-up) conference call on November 26th 2019. The DEC's remediation feasibility study is anticipated to be made available by the end of 2019. The site has been prepared for winter; 10,000 gallons of oil have been recovered to date; the PCB IRM has been finalized.

Space Study. This initiative has been on hold recently, but future work is anticipated.

COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Abbé Picquet Trail Project Management. Final close out of this project is anticipated in the next several months.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The Planning Office administers three open grants: the Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program, Round 2 (CHRP 2) for housing rehabilitation; the Septic Tank Replacement Assistance Program (STRAP); and the 23rd round of the Direct Homeownership Assistance Program. On Nov. 4th, John Tenbusch held a second public hearing for the County's Housing Rehab grant; this is required near the completion of the grant to tell the public what was accomplished with the grant funds.

Last month, the NYS Office of Community Renewal (OCR) announced another round of CDBG funding. Applications will be due on December 18, 2019. The Planning Office intends to write an application for 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) will provide lead-based paint stabilization, or abatement assistance, to up to 52 households throughout the county. The grant award also includes funds for the County Public Health Department to raise public awareness about the dangers of lead-based paint hazards through community outreach and education. During November, the Planning Office worked with partner agencies at SLC Public Health and the North Country Housing Council to get started with program implementation.

NYS EFC Septic Repair and Replacement Program. Work on this program continues with several new participants securing engineering work for septic replacement. The Soil and Water Conservation District has contributed an additional \$20,000 to help cover administrative and program delivery costs.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

County Mapping Upgrades. County staff continue to discuss a re-tooling of GIS software for the County.

Route Maps for Public Transit. Matilda continues to draft route maps for the County's Transit system as time allows. She is starting with the most heavily traveled routes first and they will be posted on the transit website as they are finalized.

Town of Fowler Development District Map. Matilda drafted and finalized a Development District Map to depict a Shoreline District 300' around Chub Lake, Sylvia Lake and the Oswegatchie River, and a Residential-Agricultural District for all other lands outside these water bodies.

GRANTS MANAGER

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. Up to \$225,000 in funding was awarded for a required five-year update of the SLC Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan; the County is in receipt of the State contract; the RFP for contractual services is under development. Staff participated in a kickoff webinar conducted by NYS DHSES for PDMC 2018 Hazard Mitigation Planning Grantees on November 20th.

Miscellaneous. Attended the 17th Annual North Country Symposium at St. Lawrence University; participated in a panel discussion regarding newcomers and returnees to the North Country. Participated in a walking tour of the Gouverneur Street corridor as part of the Canton BOA.

PLANNING MATTERS

Town of Morristown Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Morristown adopted its Comprehensive Plan on November 14th. Final hard copies were provided to the Town.

Town of Brasher Zoning Revisions. Jamie Alexander from the County's Highway Department is assisting the Planning Office with entering new text and formatting Brasher's revised zoning regulations when she is in the office. Many thanks to Jamie and the Highway Department for their assistance with this project.

Town of Potsdam Comprehensive Plan. In November Matilda provided technical assistance to Project Chair Rose Rivezzi through phone conversations and email communications as the Town finalizes its Plan for referral to the County Planning Board.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

County Transit System. In November Matilda drafted a resolution for a Budget Modification to account for scholarship funds awarded to the County and its Mobility Manager in order to receive training and technical assistance with the planning and management of the County's transit system. On the 5th, Matilda participated in a teleconference with the Mobility Manager and representatives from SUNY Potsdam to finalize the university's College Connector schedule and prepare a budget for the next contract.

On the 8th, Matilda assisted the Mobility Manager with the scheduling of a stakeholder meeting in Star Lake to help local residents identify how the transit system could be used to access a nearby grocery store in light of the Great American's announcement that it would be closing its doors at the end of the month. As a result of this meeting, Matilda prepared a resolution and DOT applications to extend bus service into Harrisville, Lewis County so that residents could shop at Chuck's Market, the nearest supermarket to Star Lake.

On the 15th Matilda conducted a monthly review of randomly selected daily trip bus sheets at The Arc's Transit Office. On the 20th Matilda spoke with a vendor about her timeframe to prepare static route maps for the transit website, and the goal to hire a consultant who can create of on-demand status maps that inform riders when a bus is arriving or departing a stop.