

St. Lawrence County Planning Office
STAFF WORK REPORT
December 2022



ADVISORY BROAD SUPPORT

County Planning Board (CPB). The CPB met in person on December 8th. Staff delivered a one-hour land use training session, and the Board reviewed a 19-lot waterfront subdivision off Iroquois Dam Road in the Town of Waddington. The Board unanimously voted to disapprove the subdivision as proposed.

There are several vacancies on the CPB. If you, or someone you may know, is interested in working on county planning issues, please contact the Planning Office at 315-379-2292.

Environmental Management Council (EMC). The EMC did not meet in December. The next scheduled meeting will be January 18, 2023 at 6:00 PM in the 2nd-floor conference room of the Public Safety Complex (our usual meeting place).

There are several vacancies on the EMC. If you, or someone you may know, is interested in working on environmental issues as a member of an advisory board to the Board of Legislators, please contact the Planning Office at 315-379-2292.

Staff have created a Facebook page for the EMC. Please check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/St-Lawrence-County-Environmental-Management-Council-105829918672342>

EAB Task Force. The Emerald Ash Borer Task Force did not meet in December. The next meeting of the Task Forces will be on January 20, 2023.

Fair Housing Task Force. The Task Force did not meet during December. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 9:00 AM in the 2nd-floor conference room of the Public Safety Complex (our usual meeting place).

BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

SLC Water/Waste Water Infrastructure American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Initiative. In December, funding recommendations were made to the ARPA Committee and County Administrator by the review team. 15 applications from 14 municipalities were received for this program. \$3 million in funding has been allocated by the BOL; requests totaled \$6.9 million. Funding recommendations are anticipated to be presented/discussed at the January Finance Committee meeting.

Countywide Broadband Assessment. Staff continue to work with a BOL committee to develop an implementation plan for the completed broadband study. In December, a committee meeting was not held; considerable time was spent developing a new RFP to be issued early in 2023 and addressing the newly-released FCC National Broadband Map. The County anticipates submitting a “Bulk Challenge” to the map’s accuracy (the FCC has encouraged both individual and bulk challenges to improve its data).

Jones & Laughlin (J&L) Site. No DEC technical conference calls have been held since March 24th 2022.

COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

The Planning Office currently operates two awards that address housing rehabilitation needs:

- SLC-CARES award to conduct housing rehabilitation for populations vulnerable to COVID-19. During October, the Planning Office requested, and was granted, a six-month extension until mid-March 2023 in order to complete the grant.
- The fourth round of the Countywide Housing Rehabilitation program (CHRP 4).

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. By the end of December, the Planning Office reports that 19 units have been completed, 1 unit is under construction, and 14 clients are in an application phase.

GRANTS

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 (HMP). In December, a resolution adopting the HMP was passed. The next and final step is to have each participating jurisdiction also adopt the HMP by resolution.

Septic Repair Program. The County has funds from the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) to repair or replace deficient septic tanks within 250 feet of the St. Lawrence River in communities west of Ogdensburg, and along the lower portion of the Raquette River (from Norfolk through Massena) and the Little River (Towns of Clifton and Fine). To date, 21 projects have been completed.

PLANNING MATTERS

Homeless Housing Working Group. In December, John attended the third meeting of an ad-hoc group working to address issues of homelessness in St. Lawrence County.

Large Scale Solar. Staff are monitoring two projects in the County: [Rich Road Solar and Storage](#) and [North Side Energy Center](#). The latter has been denied an appeal to rehear the application by the State Siting Board and has an unsure future.

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

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

County Transit System. On the 1st, Matilda participated in a webinar by the Department of Transportation about the new round of Accelerated Transit Capital (ATC) funds. On the 2nd, Matilda presented an overview of the County's draft proposal to spend these funds on: Increased costs to install a bus shelter installation at the Department of Social Services; offset the local match when ordering six Lot G buses; and purchasing technology to install in the County Public Transit bus fleet. Throughout the remainder of the month, Matilda prepared and submitted reimbursement requests to the Department of Transportation for the purchase of two bus shelters, six lot G buses, and mobile column lifts that were delivered in 2022. Matilda also reviewed VTC's First Mile Last Mile invoice for November, and reviewed year to date operating expenses with The Arc's accounting office. During the week of the 19th, Matilda and Lisa calculated the year-end pass thru payment for bus advertising to The Arc. On the 24th, bus operations ceased for the day due to a blizzard and limited visibility.