

August Notes from the Supervisor

Alex Jochym, Bill Podulka, and Charles Eldermire were appointed to the Planning Board. Thank you all for stepping up to help with this important town work.

We held our first public meeting on August 16th for a community discussion of revisions to our Subdivision and Site Plan Review Local Laws that might enhance water conservation, energy efficiency, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and development of renewable energy sources. We'll meet again on August 30th to look at the mechanics of our Local Laws and consider changes.

We've now completed four of NYSERDA's ten "High Impact Action Items" for the Clean Energy Communities Program. Each of these actions is helping us transition to a sustainable energy future. Our Solarize Tompkins SE Program in 2013-2014 resulted in a 10-fold increase in residential solar installations in Caroline, Danby, and Dryden, and was followed by the county-wide Solar Tompkins and HeatSmart Programs. The Unified Solar Permit will make permitting for solar projects more efficient. Benchmarking will help us monitor energy use in our municipal buildings to identify opportunities for energy improvements. And the Energy Code Training is helping us understand the requirements of New York State's new Energy Code and the code enforcement process. We have now qualified for a sizable NYSERDA grant and we are looking for original projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, can be transferred to other municipalities, that mobilize private funds, and that build local jobs, among other criteria. We welcome your ideas.

We are also moving forward with two additional High Impact Action Items. The first is conversion of our 79 municipal streetlights to LED fixtures that I wrote about last month. LEDs use 75% less energy than sodium fixtures and because they last a long time they require far less in maintenance costs. LED street-light conversion was identified by Tompkins County's Shared Service Panel as a important cost-savings initiative and that work is already underway.

The second additional Action Item is installation of an electric vehicle charging station at the Town Hall. Our Town Hall was identified as a potential site because it is a public Park-N-Ride lot. The plan is to install the charging station at perpendicular parking along Midline Road. Few of us now have electric vehicles, and that is the point. This is part of a wider initiative to support the transition to a renewable energy future. The project cost will be offset by a \$1,000 NYSERDA incentive and an additional NYSERDA award of \$2,500 for adoption of the Unified Solar Permit.

The Town Board unanimously endorsed a resolution offered by Ms. Weiser requesting that the 2018 town budget include contingency funds of \$5,000 to support a professional consultant for countywide Emergency Services should such a need be identified by the TCCOG Emergency Services Task Force and endorsed by the Town Board. The Task Force expects to complete its work by early 2018.

We committed 10% (capped at \$32,000) to Haefele TVs Round II and Round III grant applications to the New York State Broadband Program to promote broadband in the less accessible parts of Caroline. These funds will come from generous donations from the Park Foundation and Tompkins County to support high-speed broadband in Caroline after Caroline was cut out from the New York State broadband grant to the county several years ago. Haefele received a Round II Award for build-out of fiber-to-the-home broadband service in Caroline and is submitting another proposal for Round III funding.