

## September Notes from the Supervisor

We've now completed three public meetings for feedback on review and revisions to our Subdivision and Site Plan Review Local Laws in order to enhance water conservation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. We'll now be rolling up our sleeves to make improvements in these two local laws that will clarify the process and insure that developers are well aware of the opportunities and responsibilities at hand. We plan to have draft revisions ready for introduction at our November Town Board Agenda Meeting. A Public Information Session will follow, as well as the required Public Hearing prior to a vote by the town board expected in December.

On September 5th NYSERDA officially designated Caroline as a Clean Energy Community with our completion of four High-impact Action Items: we conducted a community Solarize Program, established a Benchmarking Policy for town buildings, adopted New York State Unified Solar Permit, and completed Energy Code Training for new construction. By being among the first municipalities in our region to accomplish this designation, we have qualified for a \$100,000 grant. We now have 90 days to submit a proposal for an innovative project that will substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We are now working on that. Please let us know if you have an idea!

At our September business meeting we passed a resolution joining a challenge to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) permitting of a new shaft in the Cargill Salt Mine without requiring an Environmental Impact Statement. By limiting the scope of project review strictly to the mine shaft without considering that the project is connected to further expansion of salt mining under Cayuga Lake, the DEC made a negative declaration of environmental impact, thereby eliminating the requirement for an Environmental Impact Statement. Permitting disarticulated parts of large projects is called segmentation and is discouraged by the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) because it can neglect the overall magnitude and scope of risk presented by a project. We have an excellent case study from the collapse of the geologically comparable Retsof Salt Mine 75 miles west of us in the Genesee Valley. In 1994 its roof collapsed, flooding the mine with fresh water from an overlying aquifer. Private wells became salty or went dry. Flooding of the Cargill mine would lead to salinization of Cayuga Lake. Segmentation of the permitting process avoided any consideration of the likelihood and magnitude of environmental impacts like this. We concluded that the environmental review process was flawed and that the evidence at hand warrants a full Environmental Impact Statement to protect Cayuga Lake and the public welfare.

On Saturday, September 16th, the stars aligned for two enjoyable gatherings to celebrate and learn about Caroline's history. In the morning we dedicated the new Tompkins County Bicentennial Marker at the town hall. It was a really fun gathering of residents with long memories and interests in Caroline history. County representatives Mike Lane and Dan Klein, and county historian Carol Kammen, joined us as we shared stories and enjoyed Melissa's Tompkins Swirl ice cream on a gorgeous fall morning at the town hall. This was followed in the afternoon by a historical trip down Six Mile Creek led by Susan and Tim Larkin, and Kim Haines-Eitzen. They presented their photographic project of historic changes at sites along Six Mile Creek. The Slaterville Fire Hall was packed and we were treated with first-person accounts from Caroline residents who had seen it all. The project can be viewed at: [toursixmilecreek.org](http://toursixmilecreek.org).