



# DIVISION OF PLANNING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## ACTIVITY REPORT

December 2024

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### I. PLANNING ACTIVITY

#### Land Use Planning & Technical Assistance:

- **GML-239 Referrals**

GML - 239 Referrals					
Date Received	Date Requested	Project Name	Action Type	Referral ID #	Legislator
12/3/24	1/15/25	Local Law #11 of 2024	Adoption / Amendment of Zoning Map	MON24-03	Ward
12/18/24	1/3/25	Local Law #6 of 2024	Adoption/Amendment of Zoning Map	LIB24-11	B. McPhillips
12/20/24	1/15/25	Liberty Pizza	Area Variance	MON24-04	Ward
12/23/24	1/2/25	Local Law	Other	LIV24-13	Alvarez
12/23/24	1/20/25	Hendrix minor subdivision	Subdivision review	COC24-04	M. McPhillips

- Exemption agreements renewals were signed by all 22 municipalities and are at the County Attorney's office for processing.
- Working with NYS DEC and the Sullivan County Partnership on a training to update our communities on changes to wetland regulations. Regulations were updated by DEC in January and Planning sent email blasts to alert the municipal boards and information on a DEC training was provided.

- Planning staff has been attending municipal planning board meetings to foster better coordination and more helpful reviews. December meetings were attended in the Towns of Fremont and Cohecton.

## **Land Use, Strategic and Comprehensive Planning**

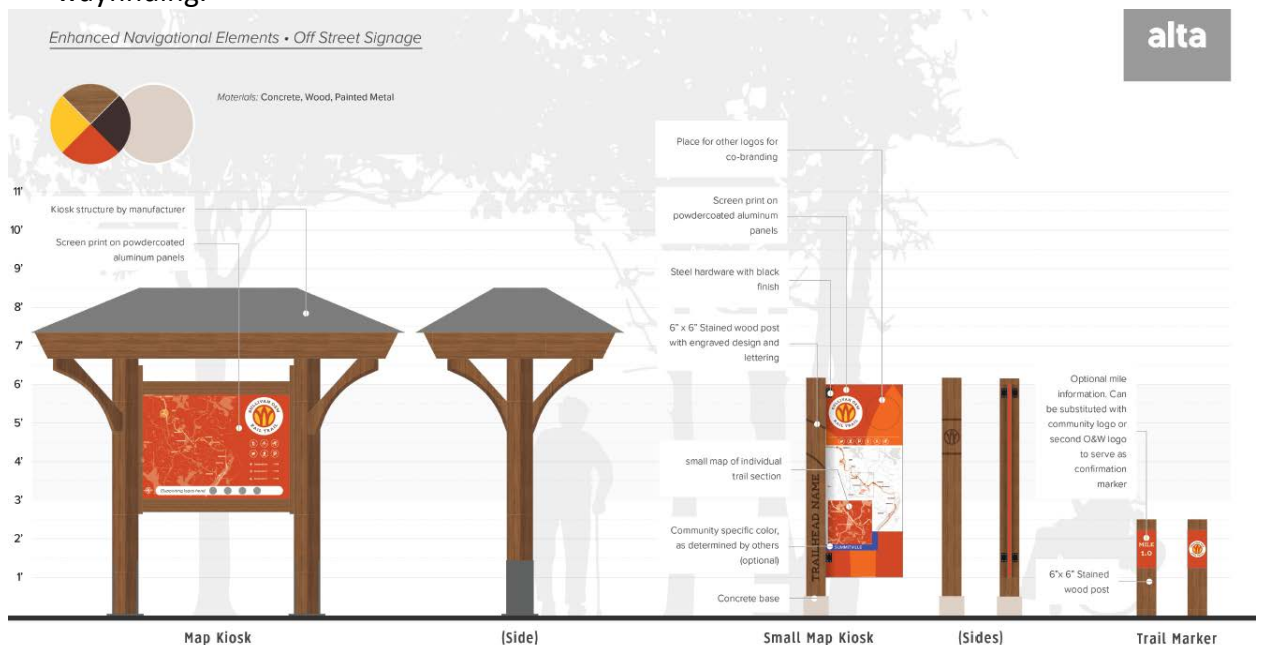
- **Water Resources and Infrastructure**
  - Planning consultant Delaware Engineering is making progress on the Countywide Infrastructure Assessment. Delaware created the framework to collect data on existing conditions and make recommendations for areas for infrastructure expansion based on current and anticipated growth. Data needed from municipalities is at 85% complete, and draft municipal summaries are due this month.
  - Planning and Delaware Engineering met with the US Water Alliance to collaborate on developing a peer learning based training that will dovetail with the assessment. Training is in development and expected to be completed in early 2025, with both system operators and municipal officials and relevant staff as the anticipated participants.
  - A separate scope of work is being developed to obtain hydrogeologic expertise in relation to subsurface conditions throughout the County to assess the County's water resources. We are actively searching for funding sources that could potentially fund this study. Assessment of available funding sources and development of the scope of work are ongoing.
  - Facilitation of technical assistance to Wurtsboro and Fallsburg from the Water Center at the University of Pennsylvania is paused as the projects are referred to the Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse University.
- **Hazard Mitigation Plan**
  - Planning is working on an RFP in anticipation of a signed contract to undergo an update of the County's Hazard mitigation plan.
  - Planning has been reaching out the municipalities to go over goals achieved from the previous plan.

## **Recreation, Quality of Life & Tourism-based Economic Development**

- **Sullivan O&W Rail Trail**
  - The County, Town and Alta are working to put in place the remaining information needed for NYS DOT for Neversink Crossing project advanced design review. The current schedule anticipates a bid will be issued by the end of January 2025. The Town of Fallsburg is moving forward to start their in-kind match.
  - The use and occupancy agreement between NYS DOT and the Town of Liberty for the Parksville extension is tied with the acquisition process for multiple parcels related to the rerouting of Route 17. The engineering has started, but final scoping of the needed surveying needs to be assessed. Planning, DPW, DOT, the Town and the

consultant, Alta met and it was determined the survey and SEQR needs to be extended to include the whole parcel.

- The Town of Rockland and their engineers completed the first design draft for the Livingston Manor to Dahlia section of the trail.
- Planning is preparing a RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant application for the engineering of 28 crosswalks and a concept design for a preferred route for the Liberty Trestle. Planning is requesting over \$3M in funding. As a rural county, there is no required match. A resolution authorizing submission of this application is on the agenda for consideration by the Legislature.
- Work was completed on creating a signage family for the trail. It will allow for the community individuality while providing a framework for consistent branding and wayfinding.



- Staff continue to participate in monthly meetings of the O&W Rail Trail Alliance as well as regular meetings with the engineering firm and partner municipalities.
- Planning worked with the Sullivan Public Library Alliance and area schools to organize a daypack lending project to encourage people to use the trail. Packs were funded through Sullivan 180, and are now available for public use. A press release and associated promotion will be planned.
- The SnO&W is scheduled for Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> in Parksville.
- The 2025 multi day hike (ROAM) will take place on June 6-8 in Mamakating. Partners include Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association, Sullivan 180, Parks and Trails New York, Trout Unlimited, and Open Space Institute.



**SULLIVAN O&W  
RAIL TRAIL**

# 2025 EVENTS

SnO&W Winter Snowshoe & Walk  
Saturday, February 22nd  
Parksville Rail Trail

ROAM Multi-Day Walking Adventure  
Saturday & Sunday, June 7th & 8th  
Emma Chase Elementary- Wurtsboro

BowWO&W Summer Dog Walk  
Thursday, August 21st  
South Fallsburg Rail Trail

HO&WL Haunted History Hike  
Friday, October 24th  
Hurleyville Rail Trail

Visit us at [www.sullivanandw.com/events/](http://www.sullivanandw.com/events/) for more information

## Community Development & Revitalization

- **Housing Fund**
  - Planning staff continue to work with our consultant, Pattern for Progress, to create a program design for a local funding source/trust to support the development of affordable housing units in Sullivan County.
  - A final draft of the program will be presented to the Legislature for review and deliberation.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Master Plan**
  - The plan will focus on connecting residents and visitors in and around community centers (villages, hamlets) with safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
  - Through the RFP process, Planning entering into a contract Metropolitan Urban Design (MUD) to be the consultant. An initial meeting was held to finalize the contract's scope.
  - A steering committee has been formed and meeting dates are being scheduled.
- **RESTORE NY Round 7**
  - Actively working with NYS Empire State Development and RUPCO to implement the RESTORE NY Round 7 award received for rehabilitation of the Strong Building and Key Bank Building on Broadway, Monticello.
  - The County is working with RUPCO and the Sullivan County Land Bank to navigate a significant increase in the cost of construction based on the latest cost estimates. RUPCO is waiting for determinations on several grant applications that have been filed for this project.

## **Economic Development**

- **County Infrastructure Grant Program**
  - Working with the County Manager's Office and Grants Administration to identify potential projects for the recently released NYS County Infrastructure Grant Program, which can provide up to \$1 million in funding for buildout of infrastructure to support economic development and housing.
- **Emerald Corporate Center Economic Development Corporation (ECCEDC)**
  - We continue to work with the Town of Thompson to transfer Emerald Springs Water Company (ESWC) and all assets to the Town of Thompson, based on discussions with counsel having experience with the process.

## **Administration**

- Discussed infrastructure needs with NYS Empire State Development and potential funding sources to support local projects
- Participated in the Cybersecurity Capability Workshop organized by ITS
- Continue to participate in regular meetings with County Manager, ITS, Grants, and NYS Empire State Development with regard to Municipal Infrastructure Grant.
- Participated in monthly O&W Rail Trail Alliance meeting
- Attended the Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress "Across the Aisle" event at Marist College which focused on bipartisan efforts in the NYS Legislature to address pressing issues such as housing, infrastructure and natural resources.
- Attended quarterly meeting of the Workforce Development Board
- Met with the consultant for development of the Town of Bethel Comprehensive Plan to review County projects and planning initiatives related to infrastructure

## II. OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY (OSE)

- Sustainable Hudson Valley has facilitated creation of a Regional Climate Action Road Map and Tool Kit. With participation of over 90 experts and, this user-friendly website outlines pathways to achieving state-mandated climate action in locally flexible ways using the Climate Smart Communities program and many other resources. Sustainable Hudson Valley's Executive Director, Melissa Everett, is visiting local and county agencies and other collaborating organizations to report on projects that have come into focus as a result of the Road Map process, including partnerships to advance clean energy siting, circular economy development, soil carbon sequestration and community resilience. If there is interest from the Legislature staff can work with SHV to bring this 20 minute interactive presentation to the County.
- Staff continue to work toward updating and compiling information for recertification as a Climate Smart Community
- The Lake Goodyear small hydro facility continues to be offline due technical problems. Gravity Renewables, the operator of the plant, is troubleshooting with NYSEG to resolve the issue. There is no cost to the County for repairs.
- OSE staff have continued to review monthly utility statements, and to work with NYSEG and DPW staff to resolve ongoing issues with meter readings and monthly billings.
- OSE continues to document the County's progress toward reducing energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions while also identifying future clean energy project opportunities.

### III. PARKS, RECREATION & BEAUTIFICATION

- The department is hosting a Sullivan County Parks Photo Exhibition. Photographs must be taken at one of the departments facilities. Winning photos will be on exhibit from March 1-April 30, 2025, at the Government Center, Monticello and the Sullivan County Cultural Center & Museum, Hurleyville.
- As part of the SEQR process for the Callicoon Park, we have contracted to have a Cultural Resource Survey completed for the remainder of the park property.
- The Sullivan County Historical Society sponsored their annual Holiday Tree Display during the month of December.
- In honor of the 200th Anniversary of the D&H Canal, we are working on setting up series of canal history talks and hikes that will take place at the D&H Interpretive Center during the summer of 2025.
- Attended the County Cybersecurity Capability Workshop.

## IV. GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

- **Activity/Technical Assistance**

- DGA responded to 3 funding resource inquiries since the end of November. Requests included inquiries related to public safety, the County Infrastructure Grant Program, and funding for business equipment.
- DGA staff conversed with SUNY Sullivan Workforce Development related to priority areas and to discuss the role of the County's Department of Grants Administration, available resources, etc.
- Animal Welfare Resources: In light of a concern related to animal welfare raised by Legislator Scott, DGA staff generated a list of 25 animal welfare grants for which non-profit entities are eligible to apply. The list is posted on the DGA website under "Helpful Resources" along with several other funding categories within the resource library.
- DGA staff prepared and sent information about grant writing careers to local Career Fair at Sullivan West.
- Assistance has been provided to departments requiring support with the grant process.

Of note:

- *Community Resources:*
  - DGA staff continues to research funding opportunities related to Workforce Development needs, including funding for a financial literacy training module. DGA identified a few potential private charitable funding sources; further research and vetting is pending confirmation of project description by the Center for Workforce Development.
- Health and Human Services:
  - DGA staff provided assistance to HHS DSS as needed related to the DASNY SAM pre-application for the renovation of Family Visitation Spaces. Resubmitted pre-application, pending further instruction from NYS Ways and Means.
  - Supported Public Health with preparation of Rural Health Network Development Program grant application and NACCHO Medical Reserve Corp. Operational Readiness application both due first week of December. Monitoring of Public Health grant/allocation programs are ongoing.
- *ITS:*
  - DGA staff working in collaboration with MIP team to provide input on ESD Incentive Proposal and Archtop Term Sheet. Next steps pending response from Archtop Fiber and NYS Connect ALL Office.
  - DGA staff attended Cybersecurity Conference on December 11. The conference was well-organized, engaging, and informative.
- *Planning:*
  - The County received notification of award for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant in the amount of \$112,500 in order update the County Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.



- DGA staff attended the County Infrastructure Grant Program (CIGP) informational webinar on December 17th and is on standby to offer assistance as needed. The Planning Commissioner is having discussion with the County Manager on potential projects for submission.
- *Parks and Recreation:*
  - DGA conferred with NYS DOS related to the status of the NY SWIMS application; the contract should be forthcoming within a month's time.
  - DGA and Parks Director participated in an informational meeting with DASNY representative, Matthew Stanley, related to the SEQR process on December 6th. Matthew provided a thorough description of the process and equipped DGA staff with a set of "step by step" instructions, which may be shared with other County staff as appropriate.
- *Public Safety:*
  - Assisted Public Safety staff with research material on development of the National Qualifications System (NQS) Implementation Plan for review. Public Safety staff have developed the NQS Implementation Plan and it's been submitted onto NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services staff for review.
- *Public Works: SCIA* – DGA participated in conference call with Michael Broomes, USDA Rural Development Office, related to potential funding support for needs at the SC International Airport (SCIA) via the Community Facilities Program for ARFF and other equipment needs. Staff continues to review various private charitable sources as well.
- *District Attorney:*
  - DGA assisted the OMB Fiscal Analyst working w/ the DA Office staff in the provision of information on the COSSAP grant and addressing any additional questions at that time.
- **In-County Grant Readiness**
  - Grants Best Practices Training was provided to 11 members of the Division of Public Works in December.
  - Staff reached out to the District Attorney's Office to offer training for new staff to be involved with administering grants. A copy of the Grants Best Practices Guide was provided to the DA's office to be shared with the Special Assistant upon hiring.

## **V. AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION**

- CCE November 2024 Ag report attached