



DIVISION OF PLANNING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT February 2024

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I. PLANNING ACTIVITY

Land Use Planning & Technical Assistance:

- GML-239 Referrals

GML-239 Referrals, December 2023 - January 2024					
Date Received	Date Requested	Project Name	Action Type	Referral ID #	Legislator
1/25/24	2/14/24	K Rubin Holdings	Other	THO24-02	Ward
1/31/24	2/6/24	74 North Main, LLC	Site Plan Review	LIV24-04	Alvarez
1/31/24	2/6/24	Ingrids Little Angels Home Daycare Babies and Kids	Site Plan Review	LIV24-05	Alvarez
2/2/24	3/1/24	Viking Estates, LLC	Site Plan Review	BET24-01	M. McPhillips
2/13/24	3/13/24	Camp Belz	Site Plan Review	FAL24-03	Ward
2/14/24	3/13/24	Bais Yaakov High School	Site Plan Review	FAL24-04	Ward
2/16/24	3/15/24	Thompson Square Mall	Site Plan Review	THO24-03	Ward
2/21/24	3/20/24	Glen Wild Homes	Site Plan Review	WOO24-02	Perrello
2/21/24	3/7/24	Local Law 1-2024	Amendment of Zoning Text	LIV24-06	Alvarez

Land Use, Strategic and Comprehensive Planning

- **Neversink Watershed Management Plan**
 - Meetings of the steering committee as well as public outreach events continue as the plan is drafted.
- **Countywide Resiliency Plan:**
 - The County's consultant, Metropolitan Urban Design Workshop (MUDW) presented the draft plan at the January Executive Committee meeting. The plan is available for review at www.resilientsullivan.com. Staff will be coordinating a community outreach event to allow an opportunity for members of the community to comment public;y.
- **Water Resources and Infrastructure**
 - A request for funding to study Sullivan County's aquifers/groundwater resources was prepared and submitted to local State representatives. The estimated cost of the study is \$500,000. In the event funding cannot be secured through the current request, Planning staff will identify other funding opportunities.
 - Met with Legislator Matt McPhillips, representatives of Jeffersonville and the owners of the Lake Jeff dam to discuss the future of the spillway.

Recreation, Quality of Life & Tourism-based Economic Development

- **Sullivan O&W Rail Trail**
 - Progress continues on the Neversink Crossing project. The Town of Fallsburg has identified a potential source of funding to cover all or a portion of the projected funding gap.
 - 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.
 - Town of Rockland will be starting work on design/engineering for the segment between Rotary Park and Sonoma Falls. The County has \$300,000 in funding allocated for this work. A resolution authorizing a memorandum of agreement with Rockland is on for consideration today.
 - Appraisals for two properties along the trail are in process via the Open Space Institute.
 - Dates have been set for 2024 events:
 - SNO&W (Sat 2/24/24): More than 105 people turned up for this event
 - National Trails Day (Sat 6/1/24)
 - BOW-WO&W (Thurs 8/1/24)
 - HO&WL (Fri 10/25/24)

Community Development & Revitalization

- **CDBG Housing**
 - Manufactured Home Replacement

- Fully subscribed, 4 applications with signed formal funding awards.
- \$625,000 total committed funding, fully subscribed: Contracts are complete and signed.
- Work on these projects has been mostly completed and we are drawing down funding from the State.
- Home Repair
 - 9 projects are currently under repair and/or finished, totaling \$250,000 of work.
 - RUPCO has conducted Contractor Outreach and implemented a new media campaign to push the information out to homeowners and local agencies. This has resulted in an additional 10 projects for the program.
 - We have secured an extension through May 31, 2024 to allow time to finish construction on the recently identified projects. RUPCO contracts have been modified to reflect the extension.
- **Housing**
 - A presentation is being provided to the Legislature on March 7, 2024.
 - In 2023 the County hired Pattern for Progress to develop a housing program to address the high cost/unaffordability of housing in the County, based on the 2022 report. The 2024 budget has funding allocated to support this initiative.
 - Pattern for Progress is also reviewing the County's Fair Housing Plan, and will be developing municipal training modules about housing friendly communities and protection of community character.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Master Plan**
 - We have received the draft contract from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The NYSDEC anticipates we will have contracts executed by March or April of 2024. Once this contract is executed Planning can move forward with a solicitation to procure a consultant to assist with and write the plan.
 - Planning staff have identified various stakeholders to serve on the Advisory Committee, as well as those which we believe are important to engage via interviews and focus groups, to assist with the development of the plan and provide feedback throughout the process. We are working with staff at Cornell Cooperative Extension to develop and

provide some training to committee members in order to properly orient them to the process and topic.

- The plan will focus on connecting residents and visitors in and around community centers (villages, hamlets) with safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Economic Development

- **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.
 - Met with the Town of Thompson to discuss next steps, timeline, and process of getting approval for the transfer via the NYS Public Service Commission. It appears that, since the water company is being transferred to a municipality from an entity which is not regulated by the PSC the transfer process should be very straight forward and can move forward more quickly than originally anticipated.

Administration

- A municipal training was held on January 30 for Town, Village, Planning and Zoning Board members to discuss the handling of issues related to potable water and wastewater when reviewing applications. This was held in a “Roundtable Discussion” format to allow various boards from across the County to discuss best practices. Representatives from the NYS Department of Health and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation were on hand for the discussion.
- We are actively recruiting potential candidates for vacant positions including a Planner and Director in the Department of Planning.
- Attended the New York State Association of Counties Legislative Conference.
- Prepared the annual report for the Division including the Departments of Planning, Sustainable Energy, Parks, Recreation and Beautification, and Grants Administration.
- Presented to the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce Leadership class about current initiatives and the role of Planning.
- Attended Sullivan 180 Partner’s Gathering to exchange ideas on creating a healthier Sullivan County.

II. OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY (OSE)

- OSE continues to act as lead for the Resiliency Plan project. Staff are completing administrative reporting, assisting with quarterly request for reimbursement for the Countywide Resiliency Plan, and collecting documentation required by NYS DOS to enable us to close out the grant this spring.
- Staff met with Hudson Valley Regional Council representatives to discuss the new Climate Smart Communities program and Sullivan County's eventual recertification.
- OSE staff are setting up administrative and reporting tasks for the SC Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, completing paperwork needed to execute the contract with NYS DEC. Our The Planning team has begun to brainstorm potential members of the project Advisory Committee and develop a recruitment process.
- 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. Data is being collected from utility bills for use in creating the 2023 Benchmarking report.

III. PARKS, RECREATION & BEAUTIFICATION

- Callicoon Park Property: Fisher Associates have developed the scope of work for the development of an entryway, parking area, and walking path to the Delaware River. The scope includes design, engineering, required environmental survey of wetlands/watercourse, delineation and boundary/topographic surveying and permitting. Partial funding for these services will be thru a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant which was received by the Division of Planning. A resolution authorizing additional funds for the design and engineering has been prepared for consideration by the Legislature. The environmental survey will not be able to be completed until the growing season begins in the Spring of 2024. A significant portion of the property is covered with Invasive Species such as Knotweed and Mugwort. The Catskill Center (CRISP) has provided us with an Invasive Species Management Plan for the property.
- The department has contracted with Weston & Sampson to provide professional consulting services to develop a parks and recreation master plan. We have started collecting data for the firm to assist them with the plan. The plan will review the current inventory of County parks and operations and make recommendations for future projects, programming and fee structures. The plan will also provide a County-wide community needs assessment to identify locations where expansion of publicly available parks and recreational opportunities are needed most.
- The department has hired an Assistant Recreation Director. This position will oversee the summer operations at Lake Superior State Park and provide year-round programming throughout our parks and community. The person in the position is required to be certified to teach lifeguarding certifications. This will be a terrific asset to help offset the lifeguarding shortage that the entire county faces.
- The department is still actively recruiting potential candidates for vacant seasonal positions for Lake Superior State Park, D&H Canal Interpretive Center and the Sullivan County Clean Team.
- This year marks the 175th anniversary of the first crossing of the Roebling Aqueducts over the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers. The first crossing occurred on April 26, 1849. Various community organizations are planning a celebration at the Delaware Aqueduct and the Inn at Lackawaxen on Saturday, April 27, 2024.
- On Sunday, March 3rd, at 2:00pm, the Frederick Cook Society will present an exhibition of Mount Denali photos that Dr. Cook scaled in Alaska along with a brief talk of this expedition. A performance by Little Sparrow and friends will follow. The event is free and takes place at the Sullivan County Cultural Center 265 Main Street, Hurleyville, New York.

IV. GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

- Activity/Technical Assistance
 - Since January 22, we have received two funding resource requests: one related to small business start-up and one related to home repair. DGA met with one community stakeholder related to historical arts programming for local youth.
- In-County Grant Readiness
 - Assistance has been provided to departments requiring support with the grant process, including the District Attorney's Office, ITS, Community Resources, Public Health, Planning, Public Safety, and Public Works. Of note:
 - DGA submitted the sixth and final project under FEMA / NYS DHSES – Public Assistance for Disaster Declaration DR#4480 for COVID-19 Emergency Protective Measures Projects. This project allowed the County to recoup up to 5% of Administration Time (Management Costs) and received approval from NYS Department of Homelands Security and Emergency Services – Disaster Assistance Representative to submit the application onto FEMA staff via FEMA Portal. The anticipated total reimbursement for the Project 6 submittal is \$30,587.13 (5% of Projects 1-5 Total Award).
 - DGA worked with Planning staff related to submit an application for RAISE funding in the amount of \$3,155,000 to improve safety and connectivity along the O&W Rail Trail.
- Administrative Activities
 - Statewide Financial System Transition: DGA has been collaborating with Treasurer's Office related to grant-management within the SFS. All Grants Gateway users and contracts should have migrated to the SFS. DGA has been following the process closely; it was noted that contracts appear to have migrated over to the new platform. However, it remains to be determined how Grants Gateway users will be migrated and/or what roles might be assigned. DGA awaits additional information related to system users, and is on standby to perform manual entry if necessary.
 - DGA staff participation in County leadership training is ongoing. Staff avail themselves of additional professional development opportunities via funding agency webinars and professional grant-related platforms as time permits.
 - Grants Best Practices trainings for Planning Division and Department of Public Health are pending scheduling of training dates and times. Meeting with Compliance Office requested to discuss proposal for roll out of County-wide training.
 - DGA staff participation in County leadership training is ongoing. Staff avail themselves of additional professional development opportunities via funding agency webinars and professional grant-related platforms as time permits.

V. AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION

- CCE January 2024 Ag report attached