

CHENANGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT 2018 Accomplishments



Planning Staff:

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Grants and Programs

Chenango County Designated a “Clean Energy Community”

Starting in December 2017 and running through all of 2018, the Planning Department coordinated the process of having Chenango County designated as a “Clean Energy Community”.

To receive the designation, and be eligible to receive a \$150,000 grant from NYSERDA for Clean Energy Upgrades to the County Office Building, Chenango County needed to complete four “High Impact Action Items.”

The four High Impact Action Items completed were:

1. Benchmarking: The Planning Department, in coordination with the Clerk of the Board, Public Facilities and Public Works Departments, collected the electric usage of all County-owned buildings over 1,000 square feet and entered the data into a Portfolio Manager.

This Portfolio Manager will be updated once a year to track how upgrades to County-owned buildings are reducing energy consumption.

2. Unified Solar Permit: The Code Enforcement Division of Public Health worked on and adopted the unified solar permit by County resolution. The Unified Solar Permit is intended to streamline the process of approving solar facility permits in Chenango County.
3. Solarize: Through a partnership with Southern Tier Solar Works, the Planning Department assisted with a Solarize Campaign in Chenango County. A total of ten residents signed up for Community Solar through the campaign which allowed us to complete this action item.
4. Energy Code Enforcement Training: The Code Enforcement Division of Public Health worked with L+S Energy Services, contracted by NYSERDA, to train Chenango County Code Enforcement Officers on permitting facilities in relation



to solar. The Planning Department attended the meetings as part of the local official's requirement.

In 2019, we will be working with Julie Gates from Public Facilities and Terry Carroll from Cornell Cooperative Extension to apply for the \$150,000 and bring energy upgrades to County facilities.

Housing Grants Implemented

In 2017, Chenango County was awarded \$750,000 in funding through the NYS Office of Homes and Community Renewal to implement two programs; Chenango County Homeownership VIII; and Chenango County Manufactured Housing Replacement III. These programs are implemented over a two year span using Opportunities for Chenango, Inc. as our sub-recipient.

Having accumulated \$200,000 in Program Income from past housing programs, Chenango County needed to spend these funds prior to March 2019 or be forced to return them to NYS. Chenango County, again with sub-recipient Opportunities for Chenango, Inc., implemented the Chenango County Program Income Program, a program similar in structure to the Homeownership Programs undertaken in the past. Prior to the deadline, all of the funds have successfully been spent, allowing qualified first-time homebuyers to pay a down payment and closing costs on their new homes.

Due to the program income, we were delayed in implementing the Homeownership VIII program but feel confident we will complete all of the requirements within the timeframe allowed.

The Chenango County Manufactured Housing Replacement III Program has nearly spent all of the funding allotted within the first year of the program, having replaced four homes. We will be utilizing recaptured funds from previous years to replace one additional home in 2019.

Chenango County, with sub-recipient Opportunities for Chenango, Inc., submitted a NYS Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for a Well and Septic Replacement Program. Should we be awarded, this grant will provide needed infrastructure improvements to eligible families.

These housing successes would not have been possible without the hard work by the staff at Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.

Fair Housing Plan Updated

As part of these housing programs, Chenango County must demonstrate efforts to further Fair Housing in Chenango County. To that end, Chenango County revised the Chenango County Fair Housing Plan and adopted the final version in June.

For more information about housing and the Fair Housing Plan, visit our website:

<http://www.co.chenango.ny.us/planning/housing/>.

Improving Transportation in Chenango County

In 2017, the Planning Department responded to an RFP by the Rural Health Network of South Central New York to provide Support and Development of Rural Transportation and Mobility Services in Chenango County and was awarded \$18,000 in funding through 2018.

To that end, we developed an inventory of transportation providers in Chenango County, implemented a transportation survey, coordinated transportation meetings with various organizations, and disseminated information about the Getthere Call Center.

The survey was clear that something more needed to be done. When asked if they had ever quit/lost a job or missed appointments due to lack of transportation, 53% stated they had. When asked what the maximum amount they would be willing to pay for a one-way ride to or from work/appointments, 15% stated they could not pay, 25% stated they would pay \$1.00, 20% stated they would pay \$2.00, and 29% stated they would pay \$3.00. When asked if a volunteer driver program were to be reinstated, would they be interested in volunteering their services, 19% stated they would.

Based on those survey results, we began coordinating with Getthere to implement a Volunteer Driver Program. This program utilizes volunteer drivers who are reimbursed for their mileage to provide transportation for qualified services. The benefit of working with the Getthere Call Center is that if no volunteers are available at that time, they will coordinate other transportation options with the individual. It is anticipated that the volunteer service will begin operation in early 2019 once the volunteer drivers have been trained.

Technical Assistance



2020 Census – LUCA Update

Realizing it would be a daunting task for our municipalities to use paper maps, our department decided

to undertake the task of updating addresses using our ArcGIS system. Over the course of 120 days, our office made approximately 1,043 suggested changes to the US Census Bureau.

Over the next two years, the Planning Department will continue to respond to requests by the US Census Bureau for assistance in updating information to accurately collect census data.

Planning Board Training

Members of our local Planning and Zoning Boards are required to have at least four hours of training each year to serve on their respective boards. In an effort to train as many members as possible, the Planning Department invites Local Government Trainers from the NYS Department of State to come to Chenango County and provide four hours of training on a variety of planning topics. Each year we try to pick three unique topics relating to experiences our Planning and Zoning Board members may encounter.



This year's training covered three topics; Planning Board Overview, Land Use Moratoria, and Regulating Telecommunication Facilities. We had 36 people from across the region attend the training!

General Municipal Law 239-Reviews

General Municipal Law 239-m requires the referral of certain proposed city, town and village planning and zoning actions to the county planning agency or regional planning council. Certain actions include adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan, adoption or amendments of a zoning ordinance or local law, issuance of special use permits, approval of site plans, use or area variances, or other authorizations under provisions of a zoning ordinance or local law, so long as those actions are within 500 feet of certain parameters including but not limited to State or County roads or highways, municipal boundaries, county or state parks, or the boundary of any farm located in an agricultural district.

The Planning Department coordinates this review process by accepting the applications from municipal boards, referring to outside agencies for feedback if necessary, creating aerial maps of the location, sending application to County Planning Board members, providing professional input, and sending corresponding decisions by the County Planning Board back to the referring municipality.

2018 had the highest number of 239-reviews in the last eight years, or more, with a total of 59 reviews.

Events

Airport Community Day a Success

With beautiful weather brought an amazing event!

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1204 in Norwich took 69 youths, ages 8 to 17, for Young Eagle flights. Each were handed a certificate and information about an aviation scholarship our EAA Chapter 1204 awards to one individual every year to attend an aviation camp.

The Buffalo Heritage Squadron brought their SNJ-4, a 1943 WWII era trainer. At least three Veterans took a ride in the plane including Al Nassar. Mr. Nassar is 93 years old and actually trained in an SNJ-4!

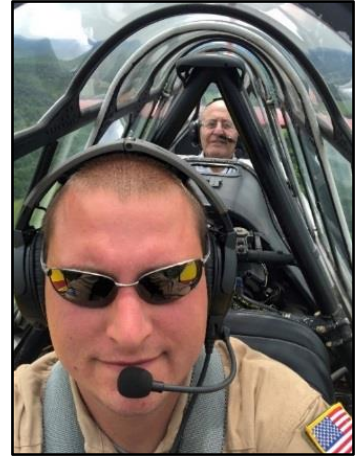


Photo 1: Mr. Nassar on his ride.

Other organizations at the event included the Civil Air Patrol, LifeNet Helicopter, Mohawk Valley Community College, GE/Unison, Norwich First Robotics and more!

Ag Tour for Legislators

The Chenango County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board hosted their 8th Annual Chenango County Ag Tour for Legislators event on July 27th and included stops at The Wetland Trust in New Berlin, the Hanehan Family Farm in Guilford, and Quality Hardwoods, Inc. in Bainbridge.

There were 35 in attendance including four representatives from New York State, four Town Supervisors, three from the Future Farmers of America, and four from Chenango County 4-H, among other local and regional representatives from agriculture and farm related agencies.

The first stop on the tour was The Wetland Trust in New Berlin. The Wetland Trust is a 501c3, not-for-profit, New York Corporation, whose mission is to use the best science available to protect and restore wetlands and unique wetland biodiversity with special interest in amphibians and reptiles (herpetofauna). As part of this mission, one current project at their location in the Town of New Berlin is raising Hellbender Salamanders. There are currently only five known Hellbender breeding grounds in the state. The Hellbenders are raised at the Bronx Zoo until they are about two years old, and then



Photo 2: Listening to the Hanehan's talk about their farm operation.

raised in New Berlin until they are four years old, where they will be released to their native habitat. The Wetland Trust has students from SUNY Oneonta assisting with this project.

The second stop on the tour was the Hanehan Family Farm in Mount Upton (Town of Guilford), a locally owned satellite to their dairy farm in Saratoga Springs. Attendees

toured the brand new milking facility which includes a robotic milker and 1600 foot long free-stall barn. One concern of the Hanehan's, along with many other dairy farmers in Chenango County and across the Country, is the fluctuating milk price.

The third and final stop was Quality Hardwoods. Quality Hardwoods is locally owned and operated second generation sawmill located in the Town of Bainbridge providing a wide variety of wood products including rough cut lumber, molding and trim, flooring, wood chips and more. While there, attendees were able to look at all aspects of the business and how the operation runs day to day.

Looking to 2019

This year will be another busy year for the Planning Department. Along with any other unexpected projects popping up throughout, our main projects will be:

- Administering current and proposed housing programs with Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.
- Creating a Coordinated Transportation Plan for Chenango County
- Assisting Getthere on a Volunteer Driver Program
- Finding a consultant and beginning work on the Chenango County Multi-jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan update (Grant has been submitted)
- Applying for and receiving \$150,000 from NYSERDA through the Clean Energy Communities Program and implementing the project with Public Facilities
- Assisting with the Greater Chenango Cares IRT in July 2019
- Organizing a diverse Ag Tour for Legislators Event
- Continuing to provide our regular services to the communities and associated committees and boards we serve

Workforce Development

Consultant: Steve Palmatier

RoboRave

The concept of bringing RoboRAVE to Oxford was brought to us by Mark Muller, the Biology Teacher in Oxford, NY. Mark had worked under Russel Fisher Ives, the director of RoboRAVE when Russ was an administrator at a school in New Mexico where Mark taught.

It took us less than 6 months to organize our first event at the Oxford school where over 40 teams composed of students from 2nd to 12th grade from schools in the region. All of this was done using some school resources, volunteers and donations from community sponsors. That event was held in April, 2018.



Photo 3: RoboRave event held in Oxford. Photo credit by RoboRave NY

Since then, teams from Oxford have traveled to New Mexico to compete in the international championship round and to Kaga, Japan where they competed in the Sumo Robot competition placing sixth out of over 40 international teams.

We will be running RoboRAVE NY in Oxford the first weekend in April of 2019 and have teams registered from 11 NYS districts, 7 foreign countries and several other states as of today.

This is an example of what we are capable of here in Chenango County.

Career Destinations

On June 8th, DCMO BOCES, GE Aviation, the Chenango County IDA, and the Greater Norwich Foundation, held an Aviation Career Day at the Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport.

Assisting with setting up the event, and being a presenter during the event, was a very rewarding experience. Students from across Chenango County and beyond were able to learn about aviation careers in the military, drone piloting, engineering and manufacturing, and more. Colleges and local employers were present to talk about local job opportunities and careers relating to aviation, advanced manufacturing and engineering.

Overall, the event was a great success!

International Visitor Leadership Program (US Department of State)

For the second year in a row, Mr. Palmatier brought individuals from the US Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program to Chenango County.

The Department of State has outlined the following specific objectives for the project:

- Examine U.S. policies and programs related to agricultural trade, food safety and sustainable agriculture;
- Analyze the political, social, environmental, and economic forces that influence U.S. agricultural trade policies;
- Explore how U.S. food commodities are regulated and marketed, from farm-to-table and for international export; and
- Assess how federal, regional and local programs for agricultural research, inspection, trade promotion and resource conservation help ensure U.S. agricultural competitiveness in the global marketplace.



Photo 4: 2017 International Visitor Leadership Program Visitors

Individuals representing the Ministry of Agriculture from various countries including Estonia, Macau SAR, Nepal, Nigeria, Serbia, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay took a tour of Norwich Meadows Farm, Kutiks Honey, and Chobani. They also had lunch of 100% local foods at the Wild Owl Café while also having a Q&A session with the Chenango County Department of Public Health and Chenango County Department of Planning & Development.

Additional Projects Worked On and Meetings Attended

- Support of the Innovative Community Collaborative (IC²) Program
- Developed the Mobile Advanced Manufacturing Training Lab Model. This training lab could be used at companies including Corning, Chobani, Raymond, Alvogen, Kerry, Golden, Amphenol, ACCO and other potential partners.
- Development of Pathways and Badging Programs for Local School Districts along with Individualized learning experiences
- Manufacturing Career Day - Presenter – Batch vs Pull Production Modeling
- Natural Gas to Sherburne / Smyrna
- NYSEG Infrastructure Upgrade
- NYSDEC – Regional Point Person for Softwood Sawmill
- NYSDEC – Regional Point Person for Processing Facility for Low Grade Wood
- IDA – Attend all Meetings and Provide Insights on Regional Issues
- Export Program at SUNY Binghamton – 5 Days of Course Work 6 Hours per day
- Attendance at Numerous Regional and State Conference's on Economic Development
- CMH Hospital – Board Member – Planning, Finance and Audit Committee
- Chenango County United Way – Impact Teams
- Provide Advice to Numerous Chenango County Communities – Broadband, Transportation, Infrastructure etc.
- And much, much more....