

MAY 5, 2017

Tug Hill Commission Releases

“The Roads Less Traveled: Minimum Maintenance Roads” Issue Paper

The commission has provided technical assistance to towns on minimum maintenance road designation for over two decades. To provide support to the region’s councils of governments, the commission recently compiled an issue paper on the topic, available on the commission’s website at www.tughill.org.

Town roads make up the majority of the transportation network in many rural areas of New York State. Towns are challenged to balance road maintenance that meets access requirements for residents and landowners, with keeping costs low, and therefore property taxes low, for those same residents and landowners. Minimum maintenance road designations, based on recommendations of the NYS Local Roads Research and Coordination Council, are an important tool used to strike that balance. Laws designating minimum maintenance roads have been adopted using home rule provisions. Recent legal challenges have prioritized the need for such designations to be authorized in state Highway law.

There are approximately 158 miles of minimum maintenance roads on Tug Hill, 100 miles of which serve as snowmobile trails in the winter. Total mileage of snowmobile trails on Tug Hill is approximately 925 miles. In a worst-case scenario, if towns lost the ability to designate minimum maintenance roads and had to convert all those roads to year-round vehicle accessibility, 15% of the snowmobile trails on Tug Hill would be closed.

Fifty-nine miles of minimum maintenance roads on Tug Hill are located in the sparsely populated, environmentally unique core forest. Limiting year-round access to roads in the core reduces land fragmentation and conversion. The Tug Hill core forest is a regional priority in the NYS Open Space Plan for both NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Regions 6 and 7, is an Important Bird Area by Audubon New York, and is identified as a key wildlife habitat connected to the Adirondack Park.

Many of Tug Hill’s minimum maintenance roads are a legacy of Tug Hill’s original settlements in the early 1800’s, with were more highly and densely populated than they are now. Roads were built to standards never meant to accommodate passenger vehicles year-round. By allowing the minimum maintenance designation, towns can maintain access for recreation, agriculture and forestry, at the same time following NY’s Smart Growth principles.



Minimum maintenance roads make up the backbone of snowmobile trails on Tug Hill.

In This Issue

- Minimum Maintenance Roads Issue Paper
- 2017 CFA Opens
- Project Review Workshop May 23
- CTHC Holds Meeting
- Land Use Training Workshop June 8
- Wind Power Workshop Held
- Shared Services Seminar
- Drinking Water & Wastewater Grants Available
- Highway Department Workshop May 24

Commission to Meet

The next Tug Hill Commission meeting will be held May 15 at 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall, 6606 School Road, Boonville, NY 13309 .



A town snow plow on a minimum maintenance road in the town of Martinsburg demonstrates the difficulty of winter plowing.

2017 CFA Opens, Workshops Scheduled

A seventh round of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) has been announced for 2017. The CFA, a single application for multiple sources of state funding, is soliciting applications for funding to advance priorities of the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC).

This year, there are over 30 programs available through 12 state agencies, including Empire State Development; NYS Canal Corporation; NYS Energy Research and Development Authority; Environmental Facilities Corporation; Homes and Community Renewal; Department of Labor; New York Power Authority; Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; Department of State; Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Agriculture & Markets, and Council on the Arts.

Training workshops will provide an overview of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process, plus informational breakout sessions on specific areas of funding available for economic development projects. Workshops are open to local economic development officials, municipalities, non-profits, businesses and members of the public. Training available closest to Tug Hill are below:

Central NY	5/8/2017	2:00pm - 4:30pm	Auburn	Cayuga Community College	May 8 th Auburn RSVP
	6/15/2017	1:30pm - 4:00pm	Syracuse	Syracuse Center of Excellence	June 15 th Syracuse RSVP
Mohawk Valley	5/9/2017	1:00pm - 3:30pm	Herkimer	Herkimer County Community College	May 9 th Herkimer RSVP
	6/14/2017	10:30am - 1:00pm	Oneonta	SUNY Oneonta	June 14 th Oneonta RSVP
North Country	5/19/2017	2:30pm - 5:00pm	Potsdam	Clarkson University	May 19 th Potsdam RSVP
	6/23/2017	2:30pm - 5:00pm	Lake Placid	ORDA Lake Placid Convention Center	June 23 rd Lake Placid RSVP

Full solicitations, application materials, and details for CFA workshops are available online at www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov. The funding solicitation opened on Monday, May 1, 2017 and applications will be accepted through the CFA until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28, 2017.

Project Review Workshop in Constantia

The town of Constantia will host a workshop on project review on Tuesday, May 23, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Constantia Town Hall, 14 Frederick Street, Constantia. The workshop will be conducted by Tug Hill Commission Director of Planning Phil Street, and will cover planning board review of site plans and subdivisions. This workshop will be worth two hours of training credit toward the annual training requirement for planning boards and zoning boards of appeals. All are welcome to attend this workshop, including municipal board members, municipal attorneys, and code enforcement officers.

Preregistration is requested for this workshop, so that adequate quantities of meeting materials are available, and in the event that the workshop needs to be rescheduled. Please register by e-mail at tughill@tughill.org, or via the Commission's toll free number, 888-785-2380, with your name, e-mail address and phone number. Preregistrations are requested on or before Friday, May 19.

CTHC Spring Meeting Well Attended

On Thursday April 27th the Cooperative Tug Hill Council (CTHC) held their annual spring meeting at the Alpine Restaurant in Constableville. Fourteen of the 18 CTHC municipalities were present, along with several Tug Hill commissioners and staff, as well as other guests. A total of 45 people enjoyed the excellent meal and meeting.

Following approval of the previous meeting's minutes and the current financial report, the election of officers for the year was conducted. The election results have Roger Tibbetts returning as Chairman; Doug Dietrich as Vice Chairman; Carla Bauer as Secretary and Ian Klingbail, Steve Bernat, Rosalie White and Paulette Skinner returning as Directors.



Chairman Roger Tibbetts announced that two of the four villages in the council's area, Port Leyden and Lyons Falls, have decided to join CTHC. The council's website update was discussed, work goals for 2017 were approved, and upcoming renewal of the council's inter-municipal agreement also was discussed.

Staff from the commission reviewed minimum maintenance road issues and presented a new issue paper recently prepared on the subject. Also discussed was an upcoming display at the NYS GIS Association's Map Day in Albany which will demonstrate the use of GIS analysis on the issue. The council also approved a new resolution in support of this vital legislation. Mickey Dietrich, GIS Specialist from the commission gave a presentation on various options for handling the presentation of the council's special areas maps. The meeting was closed with several supervisor topics discussed.

Land Use Training Workshop

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program is offering a land use training workshop on June 8, 2017 at Mohawk Valley Community College, Information Technology Building, Schafer Theater from 5:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.

- SEQR basics : 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.
- Intermunicipal planning: 7:15 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Cost is \$10 payable to Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program. Registration deadline is June 1st. Registration forms are available on the commissions website at <http://www.tughill.org/2017/04/26/land-use-training-workshop/>.

For more information call 315-798-5710 or email landus-conference@ocgov.net.

Wind Power Workshop Held

Over 60 local officials attended a workshop at JCC on Monday, April 24th that discussed the technical aspects and recommendations for zoning of utility scale (wind turbine farm) and private (residential/small commercial) wind energy conversion systems (WECS).

Also presented were changes in the wind power industry and drivers for development since the early 2000's.

John Collins, P.E. Project Manager, MRB Group in Rochester, NY, was the speaker. He is an expert in structural and civil engineering, construction inspection, and project management and has a strong background in the electric utility and hydropower industries. He has specialized knowledge of energy-related regulatory requirements, including wind energy facility permitting, SEQR processes, and site plan review. His presentation is available on the commission's website at <http://www.tughill.org/presentations/>.



AOT to Hold Regional Countywide Shared Service Seminars

The NYS Association of Towns (AOT) will be presenting a two-hour seminar on the new Countywide Shared Service mandate from the state on May 19 from 10:00 a.m. - Noon at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Syracuse, Dewitt. In addition to an examination of the legislation, there will be discussions of local issues and strategic considerations town officials may want to consider.

To register for a seminar, please AOT's office at (518) 465-7933.

For those unable to attend the live events, a video version of the seminar will be available online in the next few weeks. Please check AOT's website at www.nytowns.org in the next couple week for this video.

AOT has also written three memoranda on the Countywide Shared Services Plan. For copies of these memoranda, go to the AOT's website at www.nytowns.org.

The first provides a brief overview of the elements in the Countywide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan, along with the Association of Towns' perspective on the state budget process.

The second discusses what town officials need to know about proposed shared services and transfers of function.

The third provides an overview of the data on shared services: what services are shared, obstacles faced and revenue earned.

Grants for Drinking Water and Wastewater Improvements

\$225 million is available through the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2017 (WIIA) with one half allocated for drinking water projects and the other half allocated for wastewater infrastructure projects. There is also \$30 million available for the new Intermunicipal Grant Program (IMG), which will provide grants for water quality infrastructure projects to be undertaken by two or more cooperating municipalities.

EFC will host webinars to present the WIIA and IMG programs on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. and Thursday, June 1, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. You may register for either webinar on EFC's website at: www.efc.ny.gov/NYSWaterGrants.

Applications along with any required supporting documentation must be submitted to NYSWaterGrants@efc.ny.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 23, 2017. Municipalities with questions are encouraged to call EFC at 518-402-6924.

Contact Us

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If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically please email your request to gwen@tughill.org or call 1-888-785-2380.

Electronic versions appear in full color!

Highway Department Legal Liabilities Workshop

The Cornell Local Roads Program is holding a "Highway Department Legal Liabilities" workshop on **May 24** from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Oswego County Cooperative Extension, Amboy Education Center located at 748 Route 182, Williamstown.

Cost is \$50. For more information and to register go to www.clrp.cornell.edu or call 607-255-8033. Registration deadline is May 8th.