

April 10, 2020

COVID-19 New and Updated Information Sources

The board and staff at the Tug Hill Commission sincerely hope all of our communities and partners are well and making the best of things during these unusual times. We are impressed every day with the positive spirit and cooperative nature on display throughout the Tug Hill region. It has been a pleasure to “see” many of you on Zoom meetings as we all work hard to keep our essentials services and tasks operational until the situation resolves. Again, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us via email or cell phone if there is assistance we may be able to provide. We look forward to seeing everyone in person again soon.

Several of our informational sheets have been updated at www.tughill.org/community-resources-concerning-covid-19/. Additional useful links have been added as well. These include information about municipal employees, holding public meetings, court matters, land use applications, and Zoom meetings.

New York State has several useful websites and hot lines, many listed below.

coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home – Comprehensive source for the latest on New York State’s response, updated daily.

covid19tracker.health.ny.gov – Mapping and data of the current cases by county.

Sign up for email updates at now.ny.gov/page/s/coronavirus-updates.

1-888-364-3065—Statewide COVID-19 hotline, or ask a question at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/form/ask-us-a-question.

1-844-863-9314—Mental health counseling.

1-800-942-6906—Domestic violence hotline.

Ambulance Service in Rural NYS Issue Paper Released

With the importance of health and emergency response highlighted as we live through the COVID-19 pandemic, the commission released a new issue paper this week, **Ambulance Service in Rural New York State**. The paper discusses how ambulance services provide critical first-response care in rural communities in NYS, and the challenges these services face in the light of volunteer and staffing changes, a dysfunctional funding model, and increasing training requirements. The issue paper explores each of these challenges as experienced with municipalities and ambulance services in the Tug Hill region. It is intended to add to the statewide conversation about this important topic. You can view the issue paper on our website at:

www.tughill.org/publications/technical-issue-papers/

In This Issue

- COVID-19 Information
- THC Meeting, April 20
- Ambulance Service Issue Paper
- Accelerated Renewables Act
- Land Use Applications
- BRWS Conference Postponed
- NYStretch Energy Code-2020 Webinar, April 21
- Siting Utility-Scale Solar Projects Webinar, April 22
- ‘Reserve Funds and Long-Term Planning’ Webinar, April 28
- DOS 2020 Webinar Series

Tug Hill Commission Meeting April 20

The Tug Hill Commission board will meet remotely via Zoom on Monday, April 20, 2020 from 10 am to 11:30 am. The agenda will include routine business of the commission, a draft of a new Tug Hill region brochure and map, review of the 2020-21 NYS budget, and updates from the region on community needs related to COVID-19.

The meeting can be accessed at us04web.zoom.us/j/945843214, or by phone (929) 205-6099, with meeting ID 945 843 214. Call-in number users, note this is a long-distance call so please plan accordingly.

Accelerated Renewables Act Passes in State Budget

The Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefits Act was finalized in the 2020-21 state budget adopted last week. The Act became effective immediately and sunsets December 31, 2030. Below are bullet points with some highlights of the Act. The full text of the new law can be found on the commission's website.

- Amends Public Service Law to exclude renewable energy from Article 10
- Projects in Article 10 (even at draft Public Involvement Program stage) can shift to new process if greater than 20 MW
- Creates the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (Office) in the Department of State to oversee new process
- Renewable energy projects greater than 25 MW and co-located storage can go through
- Uniform standards and conditions for siting design, construction and operation must be set within one year. Four public hearings will be held to gather public input.
- Applications submitted to Office must show proof of consultation with municipality. Office has 60 days to review and deem complete. If no determination in 60 days, application is deemed complete.
- Within 60 days after application is complete, Office meets with other State agencies and publishes draft permit conditions for 60-day public comment with notification to municipality and public notice.
 - ⇒ Projects must adhere to all local laws unless the law is found to be unreasonably burdensome. Office can override local law if unreasonably burdensome in light of Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals & environmental benefits
- \$1000/KW for intervenor fees for local governments and community intervenors
- Amends Article 8 of Public Authorities Law to add Title 9-B: Clean Energy Resources & Development Program at NYSERDA
- New program includes identifying sites, establishing protocols (including for notification to local government), under taking work to acquire land control and permits, running a competitive program to transfer projects to private developers, providing community incentives, etc.
- Requires Department of Public Service (DPS) to complete a power grid study within nine months.
- Authorizes New York Power Authority to build identified bulk power projects identified in the DPS study that are needed to expeditiously achieve CLCPA targets
- Public Service Commission will commence a proceeding to determine utility bill discounts or other benefits for residents of clean energy project host communities.
- Public Service Commission must complete Article 7 (transmission) reviews within 12 months of complete application.
- Amends Environmental Conservation Law to authorize DEC to use funds to implement Endangered and Threatened Species Mitigation Plan.
- Removes requirement that municipalities consult with NYSERDA on PILOTs made in the initial proposal

Land Use Applications and COVID-19

Local government boards that are forced to postpone or cancel meetings due to the COVID-19 crisis may be concerned about land use applications before them that are subject to certain time constraints imposed by Town and Village Law. Of particular concern may be default approval of land subdivision applications that are not acted on within the required time limit. The NYS planning statutes allow for these time limits to be extended by mutual consent of the applicant and the reviewing board. It is recommended that boards attempt to extend time limits in this manner, if need be. Holding public hearings and meetings by videoconference is another option.

Commission staff are monitoring this situation and will continue to keep our local governments up to date. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any land use planning questions.



2020 Black River Watershed Conference To Be Postponed

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic, we have decided to postpone the in-person conference originally scheduled for June 3 & 4 in Watertown. We will be closely monitoring the situation to determine if we can either reschedule an in-person conference or hold virtual online presentations. Thank you for your patience! We look forward to seeing you very soon!



NYStretch Energy Code-2020 Webinar April 21

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 - 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

[Click here to register](#)

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board will be hosting a webinar about the new NYStretch Energy Code-2020 on Tuesday, April 21 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. NYSERDA's regional NYStretch experts will present on the details of NYStretch, what it means for your community, how to adopt it, and why.

NYStretch Energy Code-2020 (NYStretch) is a voluntary stretch energy code that has been developed by NYSERDA as a statewide model code for New York jurisdictions to use to meet their energy and climate goals by accelerating the savings obtained through their local building energy codes. For jurisdictions that adopt it, NYSERDA has estimated that NYStretch will provide savings of roughly 11% over the 2020 Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State (2020 ECCCNY) when that energy code is released by New York State Department of State.

NYStretch can be downloaded at <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Energy-Code-Training/NYStretch-Energy-Code-2020>.

To request assistance from the CNY RPDB regarding NYStretch, contact Amanda Mazzone at amazzone@cnyrpd.org or Chris Carrick at ccarrick@cnyrpd.org.

Siting Utility-Scale Solar Projects Webinar April 22

Wednesday, April 22, 2020 – 1:30-3:00 pm

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_P7or5bm5SZO_sXPj1EEUkg

As solar energy becomes more viable, some municipalities have discovered their zoning codes do not address all the issues that may arise. The siting of a utility scale solar facility often requires that the solar developer apply for a zoning variance or a special use permit. In addition to engineering and environmental review, boards should consider the various legal aspects of such applications, including the necessity for decommissioning bonds and security, landowner authorizations, timing requirements and the sensitivities of neighboring property owners. Towns may also wish to explore the requirement of a Payment in Lieu of Tax Agreement (PILOT) for the various taxing jurisdictions. This presentation will focus on the unique factors that should be thoroughly evaluated in the SEQRA, zoning and legal review processes.

SPEAKERS:

Stephen LeFevre, Senior Managing Hydrogeologist, Barton & Loguidice, www.bartonandloguidice.com and **John Langey**, Esq, Costello, Cooney, & Fearon, PLLC, www.ccf-law.com

OSC's Laird Petrie to Present 'Reserve Funds and Long-Term Planning' Webinar April 28

Laird Petrie, of the Office of the State Comptroller's Syracuse Regional office, will host a webinar to discuss reserve funds and long-term municipal financial planning on April 28, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Reserve funds are an effective planning tool for local government officials to assist them with their long-term operating and capital needs. This training will discuss the most popular reserve funds including capital reserves, repair reserves, retirement contribution reserves and others. Laird will present the legal and proper methods to establish reserves, expend from a reserve, and account and budget for reserves.

To join this webinar, please follow the link below and enter the password when prompted.

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m7f0e4ce6a7d5883382f00fd8876b936d>, Password: Reserve1

Join by phone: 1-844-633-8697 US Toll Free, 1-518-549-0500 Local, Access code: 610 453 024

This training was originally scheduled for the March 26 Local Government Conference. Once completed, the webinar will be added to other presentations scheduled for that day and can be found here: <https://www.tughill.org/services/training/local-government-conference/2020-conference-presentations/>



Department
of State

Division of Local Government Services

Spring 2020 Webinar Series

When:

April – June 2020

Where:

Attend from wherever you are. You will need a computer with speakers or a mobile device.

Courses:

Affordable Housing, Public Meetings and Hearings, Land Use Moratoria, Comprehensive Planning, and Blight: Strategies and Tools for Local Governments.

Who:

Planning Board Members, Zoning Board of Appeals Members, Governing Board Members, Planning Staff, Code Enforcement Officers, Other Local Officials

More Training Information:

<http://www.dos.ny.gov/lg/lut/index.html>

To Register:

Click on each course below that you want to attend to register.

Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email from WebEx with instructions for joining each session.

April 15, 2020

Affordable Housing
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
2 hours training credit

April 29, 2020

Public Meetings and Hearings
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
1.5 hours training credit

May 13, 2020

Land Use Moratoria
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
1.5 hours training credit

May 27, 2020

Comprehensive Planning
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
2 hours training credit

June 10, 2020

Blight: Strategies and Tools for Local Governments
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
2 hours training credit

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Visit us at:

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For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).

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