

Pinckney Special Areas, Official Roads, and Miniplan Moving Forward

The town of Pinckney progressed in its development of long-term, priority projects at its September town board meeting, including the town's Special Areas map, official roads map, and comprehensive miniplan. At the board's October meeting, it will hold a public hearing on the two maps. If adopted, Pinckney will join all of the original Cooperative Tug Hill Council towns that have adopted their respective Special Areas maps—essentially, completing a decades-long Cooperative Tug Hill Council project supported by the Tug Hill Commission. For more information, including an interac-



tive map of adopted Special Areas, see tughill.org/projects/special_areas/ and www.tughillcouncil.com/tug-hill-reserve-act/.

Similarly, the official town roads map is a regional project supported by the commission to assist towns with the classification of town roads, including minimum maintenance roads. Pinckney's highway superintendent will be transmitting its formal letter certifying that the map reflects the current road assessment. If you would like to confirm whether your town has formally adopted its official town roads map, contact Alaina Mallette, alaina@tughill.org.

Lastly, the miniplan serves as an abbreviated comprehensive plan so that towns without a formal comprehensive plan will have a legal foundation for land use regulatory activities. Essentially, the miniplan informs others of the community's desires, with the added benefit of positioning the town favorably for loans and grants.

Above: The Special Areas map for the town of Pinckney. Areas in yellow hash marks represent gulfs; areas with green dots surrounded by a green boundary represent large contiguous forest; areas in orange represent important historic areas; areas in red represent important habitat areas for rare animal and plant species; and the major river and stream corridors are light blue lines. The faint white lines are parcel boundaries.

Construction, Renovation and Restoration of Constable Hall Video Available

Martha Constable Murry, a direct descendant of the builder of Constable Hall, takes us through the history of Constable Hall in a way only a family member can. About 75 people joined the webinar on September 22 and were treated to an evening of facts, fiction and folklore. The video is available on the Tug Hill Commission's YouTube channel at youtu.be/AtUXt5Z7W4w. More webinars will be scheduled very soon! You don't want to miss "The Constable Chronicles" webinar series!

New COVID-19 FAQ for Municipalities

Commission staff continue to field many questions from towns and villages related to COVID-19. Please see the new Frequently Asked Questions document to help answer those questions, available on our website at tughill.org/covid-19/. Have more questions? Send us an email or give us a call!

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Tug Hill Sage George Bibbins Passing

Tug Hill lost another Tug Hill Sage this past July with the passing of George Bibbins at the age of 95. George served on the Lewis County Steering Council that planned the public forums in 1974-1975 for the Tug Hill Commission. He was a 12-year member of the Cooperative Tug Hill Planning Board and was a former supervisor and justice of the town of Pinckney. He received recognition as a Tug Hill Sage in 1993.

George and his wife, Beverly, were highlighted in the Venerable Folks of Tug Hill exhibit for their community spirit. They lived their entire lives in the Pinckney/Rodman area, and gave of their time to local government, churches, and civic organizations. In an interview for Venerable Folks, George related the importance of *“belonging to an organization. You have responsibility holding office, you have a responsibility of being responsible ...”*

To the right is a painting of George done by Loretta Lepkowski as part of the Venerable Folks of Tug Hill exhibit.



Unique Strains of Brook Trout Discovered in Tug Hill Headwater Streams

In 2019, a partnership of researchers including the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT), Tug Hill Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Trout Power Inc., with technical support from the State University of New York at Albany, found that brook trout in portions of some Tug Hill headwaters streams are genetically distinct, showing little genetic evidence of introduction of non-native and/or hatchery-raised stock. The sampled fish exhibit almost no sign of genetic mixing, which means they appear to be native strains and are well suited to their habitat. The unique trout were found in the core forest of Tug Hill, an area of about 265 square miles. Tug Hill's core forest was first mapped by the Tug Hill Commission, and then incorporated in the land use planning efforts of the towns in what THTLT is referring to as the “Heart of Tug Hill”: Redfield (Oswego County), Worth (Jefferson County), Montague, Martinsburg, West Turin and Osceola (all in Lewis County).

For the full report and to learn about private land protection, go to tughilltomorrowlandtrust.org/heritagetroutfound.



Photo by D. Kohr, courtesy Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust.



Williamstown Salt Shed
Photo credit: Queens Central News



Florence Salt Shed
Photo credit: Angie Kimball

Towns of Williamston and Florence Complete Salt Storage Facilities

The towns of Florence and Williamston each completed construction of new salt storage sheds in the past few weeks, just in time for winter. Both towns were successful in securing Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grants from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation through the NYS Consolidated Funding Application process in 2018, with grant writing assistance from Tug Hill Commission staff.

Williamstown constructed a 50-foot by 70-foot Calhoun HT series building specifically engineered per local building codes by the Hybrid vendor, a women-owned business enterprise. The WQIP grant of \$214,600 covered half of the total cost of the project. The town hired Plumley Engineering to assist with grant administration. According to an article in the Queens Central News this week, the structure already contains 151 dump trucks of sand plus numerous tons of salt creating a five to one mix.

Florence's structure is a 40-foot by 50-foot rectangular fabric covered building with concrete foundation walls and a 15-foot by 28-foot opening in the front. The fabric covering is supported by a steel arch truss system. The WQIP grant of \$179,400 covered half of the cost of the project. Plumley Engineering was also hired to assist Florence with grant administration.

Laird Petrie to Present Town and Village Budget Webinar on October 20

The Herkimer-Oneida Local Government Education Committee is hosting a webinar featuring Laird Petrie from the Office of the State Comptroller's Syracuse Regional Office on the topic of town and village budgeting during a fiscal crisis. The webinar will be held on **Tuesday, October 20 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** There is no fee for this workshop but you must register in order to receive the link to the webinar. Please visit www.lgec.org/workshop to register by Friday, October 16.

Local government leaders are faced with unprecedented challenges in the wake of the pandemic, including simultaneously managing the public health response and the budgetary impacts of the financial crisis. This workshop will provide an overview of budgetary responsibilities of local government officials and how to develop a structurally balanced budget using available fund balance, reserve funds and other resources. We will discuss various strategies that can be employed to adjust for revenue shortfalls and unexpected public health expenditures brought on by the pandemic. Sufficient time will be provided for questions and answers.

Town and Village of Lowville Commence Comprehensive Plan Updates

The town and village of Lowville have begun joint their comprehensive plan update process. A comprehensive planning committee has been created and will meet on October 7 to begin evaluating the progress made since the last plan was created in 2008 and 2009 by the town and village, respectively. The committee will also discuss a survey instrument for reaching the residents and homeowners within the two communities. If you have any comments or would like to participate in the comprehensive planning process, please reach out to Alaina Mallette, alaina@tughill.org.

Tree Ordinance Webinar October 16, 9 a.m.

Join Central NY ReLeaf for a community forestry webinar all about tree ordinances - creating new ones or updating the ones you have! The city of Ithaca has recently improved their site plan review ordinance, and Jeanne Grace will talk about the process, the preservation of existing trees, and the creation of suitable infrastructure for new trees. Next, Jim Maloney of National Grid will present "How we can use Mary Shelley's Frankenstein to Build Our First Tree Ordinance" - a review of learning experiences gained from developing initial tree ordinances. Lastly, Laura Ayers will present on legal concerns for easements, infrastructure, and management of urban forests.

ISA and CNLP credits are pending. **Registration is required:** [click here to register in WebEx](#)

Office of Renewable Energy Siting Releases Draft Regulations

On September 16, 2020 the [Office of Renewable Energy Siting](#) (ORES) issued draft regulations and uniform standards and conditions for public comment. ORES was established by the April 2020 NY Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, aimed at improving the siting and construction of large-scale renewable energy projects. ORES is designed to consolidate the environmental review of major renewable energy facilities. Once regulations are established, all large-scale, renewable energy projects 25 megawatts or larger will be required to obtain a siting permit from ORES for new construction or expansion. Projects already in the initial phases of the current Article 10 siting process through the State's Siting Board may remain in Article 10 or opt to transfer into the new siting process. New projects sized between 20 and 25 megawatts may also elect to apply for a siting permit. ORES has the authority to issue a single permit for the construction of major renewable energy facilities from both a state and local law perspective, but applicants will still be required to obtain any approvals necessary under federal law, including federally-delegated permits.

Seven public hearings will be held in late fall. The closest in-person hearing will be in Clayton on November 19 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Two virtual hearings will also be held. See ores.ny.gov/events for more information and to register.

A good overview of the new proposed regulations can be found at www.hodgsonruss.com/newsroom-publications-12735.html.

New NYS Public Employer Mandatory Emergency Plan Webinar October 7, 1-2 p.m.

The Association of Towns of the State of New York (AOT) has joined with Tim Riecker of Emergency Preparedness Solutions LLC (EPS LLC) to present a webinar discussing the new mandate for public employers to have an emergency plan in place in case of future public health disasters.

On Labor Day, Governor Cuomo signed legislation requiring all public employers to create contingency operations plans to protect public workers in future health emergencies.

The plan requirements include:

- A list and description of positions and titles considered essential
- Protocols which will enable non-essential employees to work remotely
- A description of how work shifts may be staggered to reduce overcrowding
- Protocols for procuring, storing, and distributing PPE
- Protocols to prevent the spread of disease if an employee is exposed, symptomatic, or tests positive
- Protocols for documenting hours and work locations of all employees for contact tracing
- Protocols for coordinating with applicable government entities for temporary emergency employee housing

Developing meaningful plans that meet these legal requirements can be challenging. In this webinar, Mr. Timothy Riecker, Partner and Principal Consultant with Emergency Preparedness Solutions, LLC, will review the legal requirements and provide guidance to help towns navigate the planning process and meet this requirement. The webinar will include a Q&A and attendees will receive a free template to support developing this plan. Registration is required at register.gotowebinar.com/register/2607752819152195856.

Cornell Local Roads Fall Virtual Workshops

To register, visit cornell.app.box.com/v/CLRP-2020-Fall.

Roadway and Roadside Drainage: November 10

Powers and Duties of Local Highway Officials: November 3

Snow and Ice Control: November 24

Running Your Highway Department: September 29, November 17

Local Roads Done Right: September 30, November 18

Tools for Practical Communication: October 8; November 19

Dollars and Sense of Municipal Operations: October 1; November 12

Webinar Recording on Open Streets Available

Communities across the US and around the world are remaking their streets, sidewalks, and outdoor space in response to COVID challenges. On August 27, 2020, a webinar on “Open Streets in the Capital Region, Opportunities out of COVID Challenges” discussed how two Capital Region communities were able to quickly pivot and provide “streeteries”, recreation, and public art on their local streets. Open street possibilities also exist for NYS routes with NYSDOT’s permitting process and were discussed.

Post COVID will this popular activity continue? The potential for permanent activities in the future were also highlighted. Presenters included: Katie Hammon, Executive Director of the Troy BID, Chris Spencer, Commissioner of Development and Planning for the City of Albany and Liz Kormos, Village of Ballston Spa Trustee.

A link to the webinar video [is available here](#).

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

