

2014 ANNUAL REPORT – PLANNING DEPARTMENT

A Brief Summary of Activities and Accomplishments

Agricultural District Reviews: The Planning Department is responsible for Agricultural District management including required eight-year reviews. Parcels were added to various districts during the annual “open” period. The GIS coordinator kept agricultural district maps up to date.

Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan: The Planning Director applied for and received a grant from NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets to update the County’s Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. The plan must focus on economic development projects that can be readily submitted to the Regional Economic Development Council for funding, as well as farmland protection recommendations. A consultant team was selected, and, working with various agencies, substantial progress was made to complete the plan.

Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board: The Planning Director provided assistance to the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board. The Board met to approve agricultural district modifications and discuss farm related matters. Board members also served on the Project Advisory Committee for the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

Boards & Committees: Staff served on numerous committees and boards: Southern Tier Central Regional Planning & Development Board (STC); Steuben County Conference & Visitors Bureau (SCCVB) Board of Directors; Finger Lakes Resource Conservation & Development District Board; Schuyler / Steuben Rural Transportation Committee; Steuben County Coordinated Transportation Committee; Steuben County Traffic Safety Board; Steuben County Water Quality Coordinating Committee; NYS GIS Association and regional user group; NYS Association of County Planning Directors; Bath Economic Development Committee; and the Steuben County Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee.

Building Code Administration: The department administers the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, through a contract with a certified code enforcement officer (CEO), for County projects and buildings, and the Town of Addison, the only municipality that does not administer the Code locally.

Economic Development and Tourism: The Planning Director communicated regularly with the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Director to provide information and the status of local regulations and activities. The IDA has committed matching funds and is a partner in the development of the new Steuben County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. The GIS Coordinator provided mapping services. The Planning Director, as the County Manager’s designee on the SCCVB Board, served as liaison between the County and the SCCVB staff. The SCCVB continued to implement marketing strategies to increase tourism.

Flood Map Amendments: The Planning Director participated in FEMA’s “discovery process” to assess the need for updated flood mapping in the Keuka Lake Watershed.

Geographic Information Systems: The GIS Coordinator supplies mapping and location-based services to county departments, including customized mapping, census information and data layer creation. In 2014, the GIS Coordinator produced maps for the County Treasurer’s tax sale; maps and posters for the 2014 election; supplied Board of Elections with maps and data to help them update their voter files; provided maps to Public Health Nursing for large-scale inoculation planning purposes and a Map-of-the-Month for the County Bulletin Board. In addition to county-government activities, the GIS Coordinator provides various services to municipalities. The GIS Coordinator produced customized mapping for municipal boards and assessors; provided data and advice for municipal projects; and was a GIS advocate when needed. The GIS Coordinator provided mapping for comprehensive planning in Wayne, Cohocton, Corning City, Lindley, Pulteney and the Arkport Central School; served on the Bath Economic Development Committee; and provided to the Mossy

Bank Park Committee a new park map. The GIS Coordinator developed a GIS presence on the Internet that will be constantly added to and produced a Capital Project for 2015 to update our software and our GIS skills.

Grant Preparation / Administration: In addition to writing and administering grants for the department, the Planning Department provides grant writing and administration assistance to other departments, local governments, and agencies. The Director administered a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to provide funds for low and moderate income homeowners to repair failing wells and septic systems. These grants are implemented through a contract with Arbor Housing and Development, Inc. The department administered the county's grant for snowmobile trail development and maintenance and supplied maps and data for several municipal grant applications.

Information: The Planning Department is a clearinghouse for FEMA floodplain information, Census data, labor statistics, etc. Information requests from all levels of government, banks, real estate agencies, and citizens were fulfilled. Links to local land use regulations were added to the webpage.

Local Planning Boards and ZBA's: Local Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members must have four hours of training annually. The Planning Director helped Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board's (STC) annual Local Government Conference by serving on the conference planning committee. The Planning Department hosted one evening of training about farmland protection and kept local boards informed of other training opportunities in the region. In addition to training, the Department assisted multiple municipalities with comprehensive plans, zoning law amendments, site plan review laws, and procedural issues. We also worked with STC planners who provide assistance to several municipalities. General Municipal Law Section 239-m requires certain local zoning actions be referred to the County Planning Agency for review, to identify and address county-wide or inter-municipal impacts of the action. The department reviewed 30 referrals.

Public Transportation: The Planning Director administers the contract with First Transit, Inc., operator of the Steuben County Transit system that provides bus service between Bath and Corning, around the Village of Bath, and between Bath and Hammondsport. The department continued to coordinate service with other transportation entities through the Steuben Coordinated Transportation Committee. In 2014, the Director worked on capital grants purchases, a Title VI plan, and the impacts of Medicaid transports on the public system. The GIS coordinator produced a three-county map of public transportation routes for a new tri-county brochure.

Special Projects: The Planning Director began working with STC planners and local government officials to explore the concept of a walking and biking trail along the Cohocton River from the Town of Campbell to the Town of Cohocton. The Planning Director served on the advisory committee for the Hammondsport-Urbana Waterfront Development Plan.