



Paula A. Mahan
Town Supervisor

TOWN OF COLONIE

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PRESS RELEASE

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Town Supervisor Mahan Celebrates Earth Day with new conservation and sustainability initiatives

COLONIE – Town Supervisor Paula Mahan announced a number of initiatives and accomplishments to celebrate Earth Day in the Town of Colonie. Since taking office, Supervisor Mahan has overseen a number of opportunities to promote conservation across the Town of Colonie. These next steps continue to advance both the goals of the Town’s 2019 Comprehensive Plan and Supervisor Mahan’s commitment to quality of life in the Town of Colonie.

“The Town of Colonie is a remarkable place for so many reasons. Among them are the work that we do to preserve and protect our environment,” said Town of Colonie Supervisor Paula Mahan. “It is critically important that we balance the demand our town sees for development with the need for active conservation and sustainability practices. These initiatives are yet another demonstration of our commitment to the Town’s natural beauty both today and in the years to come.”

Today’s announcement highlights initiatives that illustrate how the Town of Colonie is actively engaged in conservation and sustainability practices. They include conserving critical environmental areas, enhancing the community’s opportunity to interact with new passive open space, advancing the Town’s pledge for a sustainable community, advancements in energy efficiency, and the town’s annual tradition of distributing seedlings to residents.

Conservation of 880 Troy Schenectady Road. Last year, the Town Supervisor initiated discussions with the Albany County Land Bank to acquire and conserve 10.6 acres along the Schuyler Creek which flows north and south through the site. This site was the subject of a foreclosure by Albany County who then transferred the property to the Land Bank which had listed it for sale. After the Town received some initial calls from potential buyers, it was immediately determined that the development of this property would compromise a natural buffer to the Garling Heights neighborhood. In March, the Town Board approved of the acquisition from the Land Bank for \$1. The Town is in the process of closing on the property and by doing so, it will be protected from future development.

Sand Creek Road Park. In 2013, the Town of Colonie acquired nearly 130 acres of open space at 620 Sand Creek Road. This parcel provides residents with a remarkable opportunity to

experience a tranquil forest setting including a small pond and upland views into a natural ravine that includes a seasonal stream. In May, the Planning and Economic Development Department will conduct a public engagement meeting to share with the community its findings about the site and to ask for the public's input on how the property can be best used, and enjoyed, by people looking for a brief escape into the woods.

Climate Smart Communities Coordinator and Task Force. At the next Town Board meeting, Supervisor Mahan will ask the Board to designate Planning and Economic Development Director Sean Maguire as the Town's Climate Smart Communities Coordinator. He will be directed to recommend to the Town Board a Climate Smart Communities task force that will work to guide the town in taking an active role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. In 2018, the Town took its first step in the Climate Smart Community program by adopted the New York State Climate Smart Communities Pledge. The Town has continued to stand-by that pledge, and by naming a coordinator and task force, the Town can continue to advance the goals and objectives of the program.

LED Streetlight Upgrades. In 2021, the Town of Colonie will complete a street lighting upgrade. The project involves the conversion of its streetlights to LED which will result in long-term cost and energy savings in the Town of Colonie. Older lights, typically high-pressure sodium streetlights, are less efficient than LEDs, require more frequent replacement, and as a result higher maintenance costs. LED lighting also produces a light that is brighter making it easier for motorists and pedestrians to see obstructions and other hazards, thus increasing safety in the town.

Conservation/Arbor Day. Since 2016, the Town of Colonie has been recognized by The Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA community. This program operates in cooperation with the UDA Forest Service and provides recognition to community forestry programs. A hallmark of the Town's annual application for the Tree City USA designation is its annual Conservation Day program that provides town residents with the opportunity to receive free seedlings. This year, town residents can pick up one of this year's selected seedlings at Town Hall on Saturday, May 1 between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. Fifteen varieties of trees will be available while supplies last. Please bring proof of residency to the event.