

# 2020 Ellen Rettus Planning Achievement Awards

Each year the Greene County Planning Board and Greene County Legislature partner to present the Ellen Rettus Planning Achievement Awards. Ellen Rettus was a long-term County Planning Board member who served for several years as Chairperson of the Greene County Planning Board and Chairperson of the Town of Durham Planning Board. As Chairperson of these boards, Ellen worked to promote sound and thoughtful planning throughout Greene County.

The awards recognize outstanding planning, community and economic development activities that have taken place in Greene County, and the role these individuals and organizations have contributed to their realization.

For 2020, we have three projects being recognized with Ellen Rettus Planning Achievement Awards.

## **1. Cairo Town Board** is recognized for their work on hamlet sidewalks and a bike path - creating a more walkable and bikeable community.

**Category:** Community or Main Street Revitalization

**Nominated by:** William B. Lawrence

**Legislator:** William B. Lawrence

**Accepting Award:** John Coyne – Supervisor



*(Pictured from L to R are: Greene County District 8 Legislators William B. Lawrence and Harry A. Lennon, Cairo Town Supervisor John Coyne and Greene County Planning Board Chair Jim Dymond)*

More than a decade ago, the Cairo Town Board began discussing the construction of a sidewalk/bike loop in Cairo from Main Street up to the Route 32 intersection. This project has been worked on by many Town Boards in order to relieve the inherent danger of walking along this stretch of road.

In 2015, the Town was awarded a NYSDEC Smart Growth award in the amount of \$75,000. Then in 2016 the Town received a NYS DOT grant to construct a sidewalk/bike trail along this well-used road. The funds awarded did not cover the full cost of construction, so the Town of Cairo partnered with the Town of Greenville in getting a bid within

the limits of the available funding of both Towns to complete two projects more cost-effectively. The construction of the new sidewalk started this year and will be completed by the end of this month.

In addition to the sidewalks, a loop from Main and Bross Streets, William Dinger Road and Route 32 was completed independently of the sidewalk by the Town of Cairo Highway crew. This loop is popular for walking and bicycling.

This project serves the greater good of the community, has created a nice amenity for the Town and furthers community revitalization.

## **2. Village of Catskill Comprehensive Plan Committee** is recognized for the Village Comprehensive Plan update.

**Category:** Planning

**Nominated by:** Patrick McCullough, Village of Catskill Planning Board Chair

**Legislator:** Linda H. Overbaugh

**Accepting Award:** Greg Smith



*(Pictured from L to R are: Greene County District 1 Legislators Matt Luvera and Linda Overbaugh, Catskill Village Trustees Peter Grosso and Greg Smith, Greene County Planning Board Chair Jim Dymond and Greene County District 1 Legislators Michael Bulich and Jack Keller)*

The Village of Catskill appointed a Comprehensive Plan Committee to guide the preparation of a Draft Comprehensive Plan. The Village retained 'Crawford & Associates Engineering & Land Surveying, PC' and 'Planit Main Street' to assist in Plan preparation.

The Committee is to be commended for addressing many important issues, including:

- Vacant and/or dilapidated housing stock.
- Main Street revitalization.
- Restoring tree-lined streets and developing a tree planting program.
- The walkability of the community.
- Community resiliency during storm events and waterfront revitalization, and
- Enhancing infrastructure to address deficiencies and accommodate new growth.

The Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Village Trustees in February 2020, prepares Catskill for the next ten years with the broad goals of enhancing its social and economic vitality. Catskill's challenge and planning vision is designed to accommodate new growth while retaining its unique heritage and enhancing the Village's character and quality of life.

The Village Plan identifies and prioritizes strategies, a timeline and the party(s) responsible for implementation. The Committee encouraged active public participation in the drafting process in order to solicit public input on the draft Plan.

The adoption of the Village of Catskill Comprehensive Plan is not the end of the planning process, but rather the beginning of implementation of recommendations over time to enhance and improve the community.

**3. Hickory Hill Market** is recognized for the creation of a new locally-owned market, with outstanding architectural, mountain style design.

**Category:** Community Design/Improvement

**Nominated by:** Windham Supervisor Tom Hoyt

**Legislator:** Jim Thorington

**Recipients/Accepting Award:** Jim Miltenberger, Charley McGuffog



*(Pictured from L to R are: Jim Miltenberger and Charley McGuffog of Hickory Hill Market, Greene County Planning Board Chair Jim Dymond and Greene County District 6 Legislator Jim Thorington)*

Along with its design, Hickory Hill Market fills a market niche in the community and also helps the local economy through the creation of approximately 30 full and part-time jobs. With a significant investment from Mr. Mitenberger and Mr. McGuffog, an older building was removed, the site improved and Hickory Hill Market has been a welcoming and refreshing addition to the community. It is a locally-owned store, clean, and bright, staffed with familiar faces and friends where everything inside and out went above and beyond those required for a traditional convenience store.

This recently constructed upscale convenience destination opened in the Fall of 2019 and not only provides fuel, but offers travelers and residents a variety of quality fare at an entirely higher level than one would expect, including fresh vegetables, specialty cheeses, crackers, and fruits. You can even enjoy your purchase with friends in the spacious table seating area.

Additionally, the Catskill Watershed Corporation provided funding for a state of the art stormwater collection system to collect and treat stormwater runoff to protect water quality in the watershed.

Congratulations to all three Ellen Rettus Planning Achievement Award winners on their work that benefits Greene County and its residents.