

NEWS from the Catskill Watershed Corp

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CWC Approves Funding for Elevating Prattsville Town Hall

ARKVILLE, N.Y., October 19, 2022– On October 4, the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) Board of Directors approved funding for many projects under the Septic Repair and Replacement Program as well as construction costs for the elevation of the Prattsville Town Hall.

Thirty-two homeowners in 18 towns in Delaware, Greene, Schoharie and Ulster Counties were awarded reimbursement grants for septic repairs or replacements to provide functioning septic systems throughout the Watershed. Construction will be completed by contractors of the homeowner's choosing. Homeowners experiencing septic issues are encouraged to contact CWC directly.

The CWC Board also approved a grant to the Town of Prattsville in Greene County for construction costs to elevate the Prattsville Town Hall. In August, 2011, the hamlet of Prattsville experienced torrential rain and high winds from Hurricane Irene. The resulting flood destroyed numerous buildings in the northern Catskills hamlet. Floodwaters reached between 3-5 feet inside the Prattsville town hall damaging the main floor and the basement.

The Town Hall was constructed in 1842, long before flood plains were mapped. Floodwaters from Hurricane Irene caused the loss of all utilities in the Town Hall including the electric panel, hot water tank, forced air furnace, and all ductwork. The first floor consists of various offices for the town clerk and supervisor, storage areas, town court room, and restrooms. With assistance, the utilities were rebuilt but the Town Hall remained at the same elevation and susceptible to further flood damage.

In July of 2019, CWC approved a grant application by the Town of Prattsville for a feasibility study to examine elevating the Town Hall. A second grant from CWC to the Town paid for design for that elevation. At their October 4, 2022 meeting, the CWC Board approved the Town of Prattsville's application for \$276,594 for construction costs to elevate the main floor of Town Hall to a height of at least two feet above the FEMA 100 year flood level.

Tina Molé, CWC Board President and Chairperson of the Delaware County Board of Supervisors, said “all of our 39 member towns suffered from flooding due to Hurricanes Irene and Lee, but none sustained the damage that Prattsville did in the epicenter of Hurricane Irene. Immediately after Irene, CWC provided over \$3 million dollars in grants to businesses in the Watershed that suffered structural damage as a result of these two hurricanes, including over \$450,000 to Prattsville businesses. We are thrilled to be able to continue to provide assistance to make the Prattsville community sustainable, and to elevate the Prattsville Town Hall out of harm’s way before the next storm.”

Greg Cross, Supervisor of the Town of Prattsville stated that “CWC is a critical partner for this project. Without this funding the elevation of the town hall would be much more difficult. Once completed, the assets and records of the town will be better protected from future flooding events. It also will reduce our annual flood insurance premiums by thousands of dollars.”

Jason Merwin, Executive Director of CWC stated “This is what the CWC Flood Hazard Mitigation Program was created to do. CWC has assisted dozens of property owners to date to help mitigate future flood damage. Projects have included hamlet homeowners who need their homes or businesses elevated or floodproofed, floodproofing a Walton elementary school, securing residential oil and propane tanks located in the floodplain, and now the Town of Prattsville Town Hall elevation – all in an effort to make the Catskills more flood resilient.”

Property owners in hamlets and villages in the West of Hudson Watershed are encouraged to contact CWC for information regarding grants for projects to mitigate future flood damage.

The CWC is a locally based and locally staffed non-profit Local Development Corporation responsible for several environmental protection, economic development, and education programs in the New York City Watershed West of the Hudson River. www.cwconline.org