



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2025
ISSUE NO: 2

SOIL AND WATER

HOLISTIC SUSTAINABILITY -
A RIPARIAN BUFFER PROGRAM.

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

THE TOWN OF SOUTHPORT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

STAR EXEMPTION

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

LICENSING AND
SCHOOL SAFETY

A wooden town sign for Southport. The sign features a central illustration of a landscape with green trees, a small orange-roofed building, and a body of water. Above the illustration, a blue banner contains the text 'Est. SOUTHPORT 1822'. Below the illustration, the text 'A Safe & Caring Community' is written in a cursive font. The entire sign is mounted on a dark wooden post.

Est. **SOUTHPORT** 1822

A Safe & Caring Community

Dear Residents and Visitors,

On behalf of the town council, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to our vibrant and close-knit community. Our town is rich in history, brimming with natural beauty, and fueled by an unwavering sense of togetherness.

Whether you are a long-time resident or a first-time visitor, you will find an array of activities, local businesses, and community events that contribute to the unique charm of our town. We are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and thriving environment for everyone. Thank you for being a part of our community, and we look forward to seeing you around town!

Warm regards,

Joe Roman
Town Supervisor

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BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
Partnerships For Progress

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

The Town of Southport Comprehensive Plan

As the Town of Southport continues to grow and evolve, it's important to have a clear vision for the future. This is where a Comprehensive Plan comes in which serves as a guide that helps shape the future of our community, ensuring that it remains a great place to live, work, and play for generations to come. The Town is currently working on that Plan.

More specifically, a Comprehensive Plan is a long-term strategy that outlines the community's goals, policies, and actions related to land use, transportation, housing, parks, economic development, and more. It is essentially a roadmap that guides decisions about how the town should grow, develop, and maintain its character. It serves as a tool for both current and future leaders to make informed decisions that balance the needs of the community while preserving our unique character.

Developing a comprehensive plan is a long-term process and it will take a little over a year to complete... hopefully by March of 2026. It is a thoughtful process that requires input from residents, businesses, local leaders,

education, not for profits, and others. The plan is developed through a series of activities including:

Data Collection and Analysis: Demographic trends, land use patterns, infrastructure needs, and environmental considerations are studied.





BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

The Town of Southport Comprehensive Plan

Community Engagement: The open community survey and four public visioning sessions in August will allow residents to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas. These results are the foundation of the plan, the better the input the better the plan. The survey is accessible online on the Town's website or can be picked in paper format at the Town Hall. The sessions will be hosted every Wednesday in August at the fire halls:

Wednesday **August 6th, 2025** from 5-7 P.M., at **Pine City Fire Hall**

Wednesday **August 13th, 2025** from 5-7 P.M., at **Webbs Mills Fire Hall**

Wednesday **August 20th, 2025** from 6-8 P.M., at **Southport Fire Hall**

Wednesday **August 27th, 2025** from 6-8 P.M., at **Golden Glow Fire Hall**

Visioning and Goal Setting:

The community's long-term vision and goals are defined.

Drafting the Plan: A team of planners and a planning committee and a planning review committee work to create a draft of the plan.

Adoption: The final plan is adopted by the Town.



The plan will ultimately reflect the Town's values and aspirations, and participation is important for a successful outcome. Please try to attend public meetings or complete a survey so your voice can be heard and contribute to the Town's future.



SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SOUTHPORT'S WOOLEN AND KNITTING MILLS

Southport has a fascinating history, lumbering was the first big industry in Southport. By 1840 there were 18 sawmills. Other early businesses included tanneries, saw, woolen and grist mills, canning factory, and cheese factory. Southport was the top farming town in Chemung County with 375 farms. Tobacco became a major crop in the late 1800's, but the article shared here concerns the story of Southport's woolen and knitting mills.

Southport's woolen mill was called "Fancy Weaving" and was built by Silas Billings around 1820. The mill was located on Pennsylvania Avenue near the present Historical Society museum. The mill spun and colored woolen yarn. The yarn was then woven into carpets and float work coverlets. In 1823, the mill was passed on to Solomon Smith, then on to Charles Evans and produced coverlets and rugs until 1877.

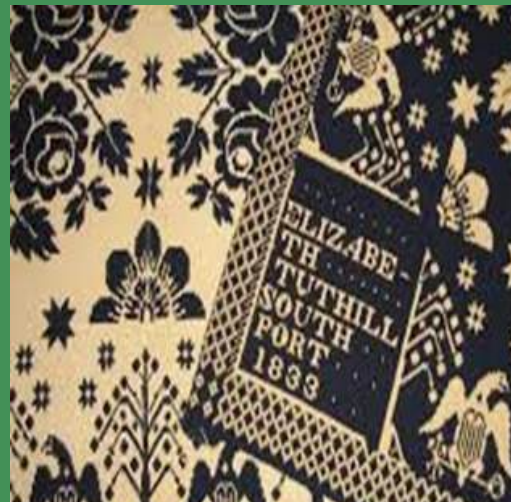


Virginia McEloy, former Southport Historian, owned one of the coverlets with the name Susan Besley woven into it. Susan Besley was Virginia's great, great grandmother. The coverlet has Southport 1837 woven in it.

The Southport Historical Society proudly owns three coverlets. Woven into the coverlets is the name Southport; one is dated 1833, one is dated 1835 and one is dated 1836. (All made right here in the Town of Southport-See one picture included here. Others are on display at the Southport Historical Society Museum, 1135 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elmira, NY).

It is interesting to note, one of the coverlets, dated 1835, was located in a historical society in California. One of the other coverlets, dated 1836 was located in Massachusetts. The coverlets were donated to the Southport Historical Society Museum and are proudly on display representing the mills of Southport.

If you find the coverlets of interest, please visit the Southport Historical Society at 1135 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elmira, NY. We are an all-volunteer staff and open on the first and third Wednesdays of the month (March-November). Look for the "Open" sign out front.



HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The Southport Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of 82.3 miles of roadway within the Town and consists of 8 full-time employees who have the primary responsibility of maintaining these roads. The Town also encompasses 30.85 miles of roadway owned by Chemung County.



Currently the Highway Department is working on High Haven and Laurel Run Roads and are in the process of assessing roads in the “downtown area” of the Town for maintenance and/or repair. We ask that during the summer season when mowing your lawn, you do not discharge any lawn clippings or debris into the roadway as these elements end up in storm drains and cause clogging. We remind residents that the Town has a brush lot located on Bob Masia Dr., residents can take household lawn clippings, small branches, leaves, small amounts of sod, dirt, and brush, free of charge to Town residents.



The Town has purchased two new trucks with delivery being this year with partial funding obtained by a grant from USDA and funding from NYS Department of Transportation Consolidated Highway Improvement Program. These trucks will replace current fleet that are over 20 years old.

Responding to the needs and concerns of the residents is a priority to Town government and we strive to address these concerns and/or requests in

a timely manner. Please be aware that all concerns are important but we need to address and prioritize projects based on urgency and impact. Additionally, a project may require authorizations and clearances from agencies other than the Town which in turn could increase wait time.

The Highway Superintendent and his staff continue to strive to improve on services provided by the Town and are committed to using taxpayer funds responsibly and efficiently.

Please visit our website at www.townofsouthport.com for further information.

Steven E. Renko
Highway Superintendent



PLAYGROUNDS & PATHWAYS

Elmer Goodwin

ANNUAL EVENTS:

- Spring (March/April)- Easter Egg Hunt at Chapel Park
- Fall (October)- Trunk or Treat at Chapel Park
- Winter (December)- Christmas Parade and Christmas Land in the Town of Southport



SPORTS LEAGUES:

- Cinderella Softball league that takes place at Chapel Park
- Southport Recreation Association Boy's lacrosse league at Goodwin Park. We are in the preliminary stages of possibly starting a Girl's lacrosse league
- Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Jr. baseball league split between Pirozzolo Park and Chapel Park



SUMMER PROGRAM:

- Six-week summer program from July-August for 5-13-year-olds. This program runs Monday-Friday from 9am-2:45pm and offers educational, recreational and enrichment opportunities to kids in our community.



SENIOR CENTER:

- Our Senior Center operates Monday-Friday at Chapel Park with various groups and activities.

FUTURE ADDITIONS TO THE PARKS:

- Draxler Park walking path coming this year!
- New fence at Roger Sterling Park.

SUMMER PARKS PROGRAM IS UNDERWAY:

- Program starts July 7th-August 15th

THANK YOU,

Juan Puribay

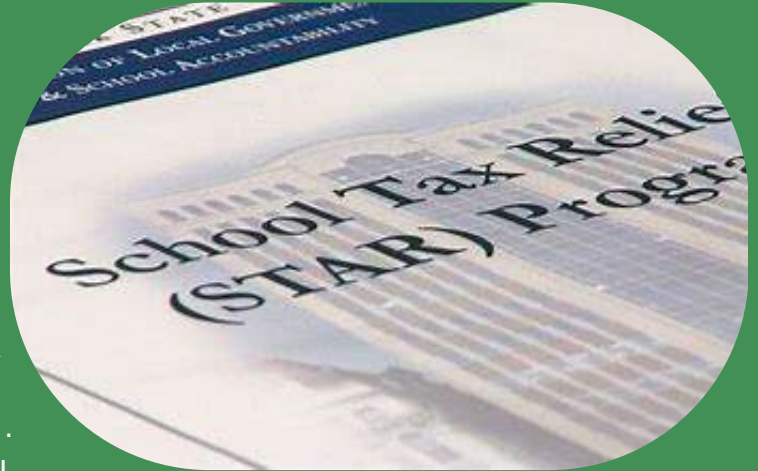
Director; Parks and Recreation
Town of Southport

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STAR BENEFIT

Homeowners should be aware of the 2 types of STAR programs.

- **STAR credit.** If you are registered for the STAR credit, the Tax Department will issue your STAR benefit via check or direct deposit. You can use your STAR benefit to pay your school taxes. You can receive the STAR credit if you own your home and it's your primary residence and the combined income of the owners and the owners' spouses is \$500,000 or less.
- **STAR exemption:** a reduction on your school tax bill. If you've been receiving the STAR exemption since 2015, you can continue to receive it for the same primary residence. As long as you remain eligible, you'll see a reduction on your school tax bill for the amount of your STAR exemption. Note: The STAR exemption is no longer available to new homeowners.



New homeowners are encouraged to visit www.tax.ny.gov and register for the STAR credit. If you are an existing homeowner receiving the STAR exemption you are strongly encouraged to switch to the STAR credit. Switching from the STAR exemption to the STAR credit means more savings on your school taxes as the STAR exemption is locked in at 2019 rates.

If you have questions, please log on to www.tax.ny.gov or call the STAR Hotline at 518-457- 2036.

Please note that the STAR program is a New York State run program. The



assessor's office is no longer able to assist homeowners in registering for STAR or Enhanced Star (over 65 years old). This must be done by the homeowner by contacting New York State directly.

If you have any questions please contact your assessor, David Reger at the Town of Southport (607-734-4424) or dreger@townofsouthport.com

CODE ENFORCEMENT

BUILDING PERMIT

Summer Safety Tips

As summer approaches, this department is urging homeowners to take the time to check outdoor areas for potential safety hazards. Proper inspections now can help to keep your family and friends safe in the future.

Porches, Decks and Balconies

Porches can be at risk of collapsing if they are not properly constructed or if they are old. The Town of Southport has building codes in place that homeowners must follow when building or repairing porches. A common safety hazard occurs when porches are nailed to buildings rather than being attached with proper anchors or bolts. Nails are a poor method for attaching porches to buildings because they work their way loose over time. Other safety hazards to look for include split or rotting wood; wobbly handrails or guardrails; loose, missing or rusting anchors, nails or screws; poor end support of the porch deck, joists or girders; excessive movement of the porch when walked on and swaying or unstable porches.



If you find any of those problems with your porch or balcony, you should get a professional inspection. Building Permit is required when building or repairing a porch to make sure the structure meets building safety codes and is inspected by our office before it is used.



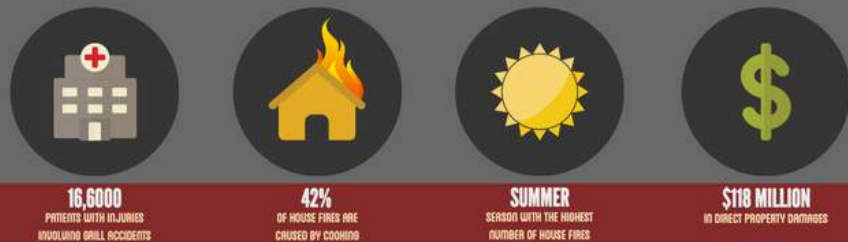
CODE ENFORCEMENT

Summer Safety Tips

Grilling on or near combustible areas can be a fire hazard. It not only puts your family and visitors at risk but your neighbors as well. The most common grilling hazards are open flames and heat generated in the grill base that can be transferred to the wood of a porch, deck or siding, causing a fire. When grilling, follow these safety tips: Place the grill away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches ---Periodically remove grease or fat buildup---Use only proper starter fluid and store the can away from heat sources---Check propane cylinder hoses for leaks before use---Do not move hot grills---Dispose of charcoal properly, keeping ash containers outside and away from combustible construction.

....GRILL SAFETY.....

THERE ARE **8,800** GRILL FIRES EVERY YEAR



GRILL SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Only use your grill outside. Keep it away from siding and deck rails
- ✓ Open grill first before turning it on
- ✓ Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from the grill when in use
- ✓ Never leave your grill unattended
- ✓ Take off the gas when not being used
- ✓ Clean your grill after each use to avoid grease build up that can start a fire



BERGEN MIREJOVSKY
4220 Van Kaman Ave, Suite 200
Newport Beach, California 92660

The use of charcoal and gas grills and other open burning devices on combustible porches or within 10 feet of combustible construction is prohibited. There are exceptions for one- and two-family homes and where buildings and porches are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.

Please call with questions or concerns at 607-737-5268 extension 3 or e-mail procchi@townofsouthport.com

Peter Rocchi
Code Enforcement Officer

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Summer is here and we are soaking up every minute of it! In this addition of the newsletter, we will be touching on a little bit of summer information and a little bit of fall information.

Dog Licensing

Every dog, regardless of age, owned or harbored in New York State for longer than 30 days must be licensed in the town, city, or village where the dog is being harbored. The following are the only license exemptions:

- Dogs under four months - If the dog is under four months of age and not running-at-large (off the owner's premises).
- Non-resident dogs - If a non-resident brings a dog into New York State for less than 30 days and the dog is licensed according to the resident state's licensing laws.
- If you are over the age of 65 please let staff know so that we may apply the senior exemption to your license.

is your dog
licensed?



Residents of the Town may license their dogs in person at the Town Clerk's office with the required documentation of a spay/neuter certificate and proof of current rabies vaccination. Rabies clinics are offered throughout Chemung County, please check the Town's website for upcoming clinics.

For our hunters and fishermen, the new season for DEC hunting license sales will begin on or about August 1st, our current hours through October 10th are Monday – Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Friday 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

The first day of school for the Elmira City School District is Thursday, September 4th. The Town employs a handful of School Traffic Officers who are a dedicated group of people and take their job of crossing the children of our community very seriously. The goal for everyone involved is the safety of the students and the school traffic officer. Just a reminder that fines can be doubled for tickets received within these zones.



Beginning in the fall the Town Clerk's office begins the collection of listings of escrow accounts from banks and mortgage companies for properties located in the town of Southport for Town & County Taxes. If you pay off your mortgage, re-mortgage your property or purchase property during the months of November and December, please contact our office so we can ensure that your tax bill makes it to its proper destination.

Please reference our website at www.townofsouthport.com for the most up-to-date information.

Carolyn Renho
Southport Town Clerk



JUSTICE CORNER



I would like to take a moment to introduce myself as your new Southport Town Justice. My name is Nicolas DeMuth. I was appointed to the Town Justice position in January 2025 following the retirement of long time Town Justice Joseph W. Holly. I was born and raised in Elmira, and have lived in Pine City since 2014. I retired from the Chemung County Sheriff's Office in 2022 following a 26-year career in law enforcement. I started my career in law enforcement in 1996 as a police officer in the Village of Penn Yan, N.Y., and began working for the Chemung County Sheriff's Office in 1998. I worked in the Patrol Division as a deputy sheriff prior to transferring to the Criminal Investigations Division where I worked as a Criminal Investigator for seventeen years, retiring as a Lieutenant overseeing the division. I attended classes at Keuka College earning my Bachelor's of Science degree, and attended Boston University where I completed my Master's in Criminal Justice. In addition to my work at the Sheriff's Office, I have previously worked as an Adjunct Instructor for Keuka College and teach in a Career Technical Education program at GST BOCES. In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family, spending time in the woods and on the water, experiencing everything nature offers.



As your Town Justice, I feel it is important to help educate and inform the public about changes in the Criminal Justice system as it relates to the Courts. In this publication I would like to address two topics that have created some confusion and questions.

The court has seen numerous cases involving people operating their vehicles with no insurance. The legal consequences for operating your vehicle without insurance are significant. In New York State, operating a motor vehicle without insurance is a serious offense under the Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL) § 319.1. A conviction for driving without valid auto insurance results in the mandatory



JUSTICE CORNER

revocation of the driver's license and vehicle registration for at least one year. The revocation is automatic, regardless of the driver's prior record or reason for the lapse in coverage. The law emphasizes public safety and financial responsibility, ensuring that all drivers can cover damages or injuries in the event of a crash. To reinstate driving privileges, the individual must pay civil penalties, provide proof of insurance, and reapply for a license. Additionally, the court may impose fines of up to \$1,500, and a mandatory \$93 court surcharge.

The public should be aware of new changes in the New York State Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) point system for certain Vehicle and Traffic Law violations. New York has significantly overhauled its DMV point system, extending the look-back period from 18 to 24 months, meaning violations now stay relevant longer and raise suspension risk. Certain violations now carry points for the first time, and others have increased values: DWI, DWAI, and aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle now each carry 11 points. Speeding in any construction or work zone now automatically results in 8 points, regardless of speed over limit. Passing a stopped school bus has increased from 5 to 8 points, and leaving the scene of a personal-injury crash now carries 5 points instead of 3. Participating in speed contests, careless driving, and aiding aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle now each carry 5 points, up from zero or lower values. Further information regarding these changes can be found on the NYS DMV website.

In future publications, the court will provide further information regarding changes in laws that may affect the public. I look forward to serving the community as your Town Justice.

Honorable,

Nicolas DeMuth



CHEMUNG COUNTY SOIL & WATER



By Jake Sullivan - District Technician

In the fall of 2024, the Chemung County Soil and Water Conservation District expanded its countywide riparian buffer program. With the assistance from the Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC), the district was able to implement a riparian/upland forest buffer within the town of Southport.

This project has enhanced the ecological service previously underutilized within a Southport landowners' 20-acre parcel. This project area encompassed the head waters of 2 unnamed tributaries to Mudlick Creek. Portions of the land on this project had been farmed in recent history, and before the property was restored, it was left fallow for an extended period. Due to this, autumn olive, honey suckle, and multiflora rose became the predominant species, leading to the USC Wetland Team to removing nearly 15+ acres of these 15ft to 20ft tall invasive trees and shrubs from the planting area.



The project is situated between two summits, and a large National Wetland was identified as feeding an unnamed tributary to Mudlick Creek. When planting the site, tree species that could withstand seasonal subsurface hydrology, while also being drought tolerant, were carefully selected to best restore a native forest to the property. By installing these 5,550 native plants and multiple engineered wetlands within this project, it will improve water quality, flood retention, stabilize fragile soils, strengthen climate resiliency, and provide habitat for wildlife.

With the 2025 buffer program still expanding, the district is looking to grow the Riparian buffer program throughout the county with assistance from the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and is looking forward to working with both public and private landowners.





SOUTHPORT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Southport Business Association serves as a collective co-op where companies and professionals within the Town of Southport can come together to collaborate, network, and advocate for common interests. The primary purpose of such associations is to foster a supportive business environment through various means, including organizing events, providing educational resources, and facilitating industry-specific training.

The Southport Business Association is proud to announce two new annual fundraisers! In April of this year we held our first Bowling Tournament, which raised money to help families to pay for the out-of-pocket expenses for the Southport Parks & Rec summer program. We were able to cover the expenses of attending the program for 16 children. We had a great time and appreciated everyone who joined us for the event!



We are also taking sign-ups for our First Annual Cornhole Tournament. This will be held at Champions Sports Grille on September 14th at 10:00 am. The Champions will have their names engraved on the Trophy which will be displayed in Champion's for the year! This fundraiser will help support Southport Christmas Land. If you would like to register a team, please call Bryan Gilbert at 607-733-6623!



Lastly, we are in the process of rolling out our new website SouthportBusinessAssoc.com which we will be using to better serve our members and the Southport community!