

Regional Efforts to Promote Clean Energy Initiatives



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Director of L I Regional Office of the NY State Dept of Public Service – a Voice for Long Island

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The Long Island Clean Energy Leadership Task Force held its annual Earth Day meeting on April 29, 2022 at the Molloy University Suffolk Center in Farmingdale. The **Task Force**, which was created in 2004 and is hosted by the *Sustainability Institute at Molloy University*, brings together Long Island municipalities with utility officials and environmental leaders to advance clean and renewable energy solutions at the local level.

Opening the meeting, Neal Lewis Executive Director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy University welcomed the **Task Force** participants. He began by reviewing the slow pace of efforts to fight climate change on the global level.

“Our goal is to advance clean energy

initiatives for the Long Island region,” Lewis explained. “Our role is to convene people in the utility, municipal and environmental sectors to share information and experiences and lift up local energy initiatives,” Mr. Lewis explained. He provided examples of past **Task Force** policy initiatives, including: HERS-based construction codes (Home Energy Rating System) for new homes; the L I Unified Solar Permit, which were both adopted by most Long

Island towns; Commercial PACE financing, now available in Nassau and Suffolk; and ongoing efforts to promote the NYStretch Energy Code. He then introduced the Sustainability Institute’s latest policy analysis white paper, which sets out the case for a “*model code*” that would require solar on all new commercial buildings. The White Paper is entitled “Should All New Commercial Buildings Be Required to Include Solar PV?”

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“The L I Clean Energy Leadership Task Force convenes leaders and advances clean energy projects, policies, and programs for our region.”

Neal Lewis, Executive Director,
Sustainability Institute at Molloy University

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Lewis concluded by acknowledging the leadership of two East End towns, East Hampton and Southampton, for their adoption of the ***NYStretch Energy Building Code***. He presented representatives and officials certificates of recognition for leading by example on this important clean energy issue. The stretch energy code was developed by NYSERDA and was adopted by the towns along with an additional requirement for third-party verification of energy performance for all new homes.

In towns where it is adopted, ***NYStretch***, requires new buildings to be approximately 11% more energy efficient than under the State's normal building code. ***NYStretch*** applies to both residential and commercial buildings. Adopting the ***NYStretch*** Energy Code is optional for municipalities, but NY State has incentivized the code by offering grants of \$5,000 for small towns and villages and \$50,000 to communities over 40,000 people—but they must act by the end of June. Of critical importance for L.I. municipalities is to also maintain the innovative requirement for third-party verification of energy performance in new homes.



“When orders come out of Albany, my office asks how is this going to work on Long Island? We are the voice that says, don’t forget Long Island.”

Carrie Gallagher, Director, NYSDPS-Long Island Office

The Keynote presentation was presented by Carrie Gallagher, Director, ***New York State Department of Public Service (DPS), Long Island Office***, who reviewed the role and responsibilities of the DPS. Those responsibilities include: Regulating investor-owned electric, gas, steam, telecommunications and water utilities; Overseeing electric service and the cable industry on Long Island; Ensuring safe, secure and reliable access to utility services at just and reasonable

rates—all while working within the unique utility structure of Long Island.

Director Gallagher discussed in detail the historic *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act* that was enacted in 2019. She explained that the process is underway for the adoption of the *NYS Climate Action Plan* that will be used to implement the CLCP Act. Director Gallagher also discussed LIPA tariff changes, PSEG-LI's *Utility 2.0 Plan*, the *Energy Efficiency Demand Response Plan*, the dramatic growth in electric vehicles and energy storage that is planned for in coming years, and lastly, PSEG-Long Island's performance metrics under their new contract.

Discussing the role of the DPS and the ambitious goals under the CLCP Act, Director Gallagher noted, “One of the challenges we always have on Long Island, when someone's talking in Albany, ... the presumption is that we are a wealthy enclave of the state and we can figure out how to pay for all of this stuff ourselves. The types of incentives that may be offered and funded in other parts of the state are not necessarily offered here. This perception is something we are always battling against. When orders come out, my

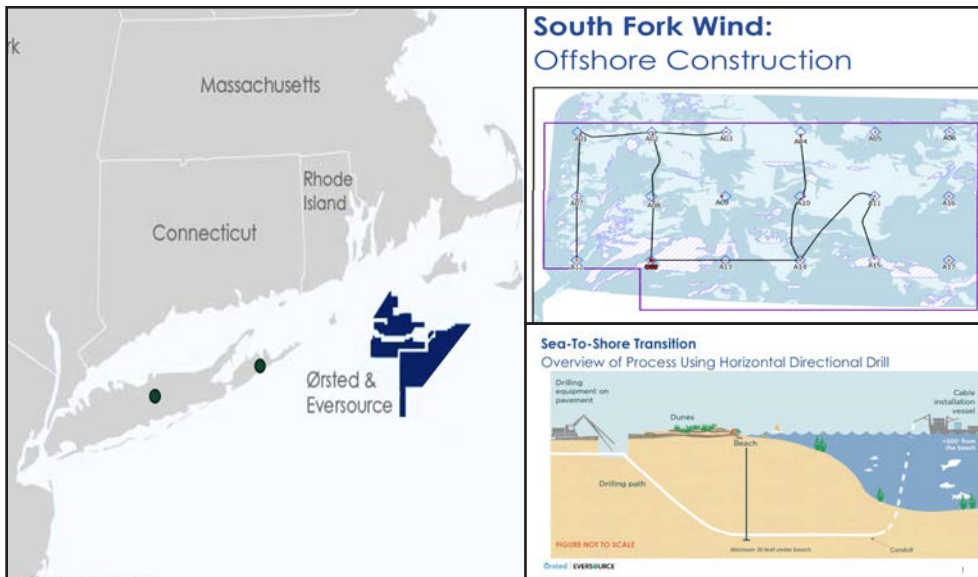


Two Towns Recognized for Leadership: From left to right: Andrew Manitt, Sustainability Institute at Molloy University; Sarah Oral, Cameron Engineering and Clean Energy Communities; Councilman John Bouvier, Town of Southampton; Michelangelo Lieberman, Town of Southampton; Samantha Klein, Melissa Winslow, Kimberly Shaw, East Hampton Department of Natural Resources; Gordian Raacke, Renewable Energy Long Island; Neal Lewis, Sustainability Institute at Molloy University; Carrie Meek-Gallagher, director NYS Department of Public Service, Long Island Office.

office asks how is this going to work on Long Island? We are the voice that says, don't forget Long Island."

Following the keynote, Brian Tymann, Asst. Development Manager at **Ørsted** presented: New York's First Off-shore Wind Projects – South Fork Wind and Sunrise Wind. He emphasized Ørsted's reputation, history, and leadership on offshore wind.

Ørsted's South Fork Wind is poised to be New York State's first every wind farm with onshore construction having already begun in Wainscott. Mr. Tymann outlined the project timelines for the State's first two wind farms - **South Fork Wind's** twelve turbines will provide enough power for 70,000 homes when it becomes fully operational sometime next year, and **Sunrise Wind** which is scheduled to be fully operational in 2025, producing 924 MW of power, enough for nearly 600,000 Long Island homes. One particular image of note that Brian shared, showcased Ørsted's wind farm service operation vessel (SOV). The vessel, currently being built in shipyards in Louisiana with components built in twelve other states will be the first American-made vessel of its kind. The vessel, ECO EDISON, will be delivered in 2024 and operated out of Port Jefferson. The vessel will be over



Ørsted has leases in place for two offshore wind projects. They have completed extensive community outreach, addressing environmental concerns by utilizing directional drilling around environmentally sensitive areas, and a plan for wide separation between turbines in a grid pattern, to address the fishing industry's concerns.

260 feet long and capable of housing 60 crew members. It will be utilized for operation & maintenance (O&M) of the Long Island wind farm projects, serving as an at-sea base of operations to accommodate and transfer technicians, tools and parts safely to and from the wind turbines.

Zack Dufresne, Executive Director of the **New York Solar Energy Industries Association (NYSEIA)** discussed: Distributed Solar Industry Trends and Policy Priorities. He gave **Task Force** attendees an overview of the New York

State solar policy landscape, and the role of NYSEIA in advancing solar energy in the New York Legislature. He summarized New York's Climate Law, its Renewable Energy Program and electric sector goals, the extension of the NY-Sun Incentive Block program, and the Distributed Solar Roadmap, while recognizing that the Long Island region plays a significant role in the state's solar accomplishments. Mr. Dufresne as the new executive director, and David Schieren as the new president of their board, both offered to collaborate more closely with the **Task Force** on solar policy issues in the near future.



Ørsted provided an offshore wind progress report, which included securing a new operations HQ, and procuring the first American-made assembly and service vessels.



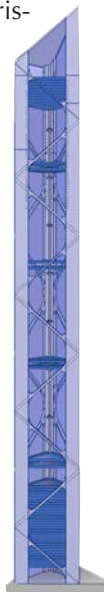
David Schieren of Empower Solar is the newly appointed president of the state-wide board of directors of NYSEIA.



Ramuel Maramara, CEO and inventor at L.I. startup, **Cold Volt**, rounded out the day's presentations with a discussion of *Gravity Energy Storage Solutions* and the opportunity the technology represents to store clean energy when the wind is blowing and the sun is shining, to be used when it is needed.

Storage is vital as governments adopt ambitious renewable energy goals, because wind and solar are intermittent.

Mr. Maramara started with a surprising fact, despite the millions of chemical batteries in the world, the largest category of grid energy storage is pumped hydro. His concept is to use renewable energy to raise weights up a tower. The potential energy of the weights, like pumped hydro, is then stored until needed. The towers could be co-located with and store energy generated from large solar projects.



Maramara identified advantages of gravity over the use of chemical batteries, which work well for cars, but have disadvantages for large-scale grid applications. Utility-scale storage of renewably generated energy from solar PV (and perhaps other renewables) would address the intermittency of renewables. He discussed pros and cons of gravity storage, and how the emerging technology could fill an important role as society moves towards a clean energy future.

Updates & Reports:

The meeting included reports by members of the *Task Force* about ongoing projects and coalitions that are advancing clean energy on Long Island. **Citizens Campaign for the Environment** and **Wind Works Long Island** hosted a community meeting at Long Beach City Hall on May 3 to provide information about the proposed *Empire Wind* and *Empire Wind 2* planned for off Nassau's south shore. A virtual event is planned for June 2nd. Register here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84461212701>

Vision Long Island's Annual Smart Growth Awards will be on June 10. *Main Street News* offers interviews with community leaders who are making Long Island downtowns vibrant and strong. <https://visionlongisland.multiplescreensite.com/>

The **USGBC-Long Island** and *Drive Electric Long Island* are hosting EV 101 events. If you are curious about EVs, you can get your questions answered by experienced EV owners. <https://drive-electriclongisland.org/events>

Clean Energy Communities – The towns of East Hampton and Southampton became eligible for Action Grants for adopting *NYStretch*. Southampton is the first Long Island community to become eligible for a point based grant – \$30,000. We hope this will be the first of many for Long Island towns. Learn more about CEC programs here: <https://www.nysersda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities>



The **L.I. Clean Energy Leadership Task Force**, is a project of the *Sustainability Institute at Molloy University*. Since 2004, the mission of the *Task Force* is to convene leaders, facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, and foster collaborations to identify regional leadership that advances plans, policies, and programs to mitigate climate change, reduce our carbon footprint, cut local air pollution, create green jobs and build a clean energy sector on Long Island.



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