



## **SEQR 101 - What is the State Environmental Quality Review Act?**

Kingston Library, May 21, 2019, 5:30-7:30 PM

Presentation by Jennifer O'Donnell brought to you by KingstonCitizens.org, co-sponsored by the Kingston Tenants Union, and moderated by Rebecca Martin. Special thanks to Margie Menard and the Kingston Public Library.

### **Introductions and Welcome - 5:30 PM**

### **Presentation - 5:45 - 7:30 PM**

SEQR is a complex process. Please feel free to ask questions as we go along. Below is an outline so you can anticipate the topics and take notes. We will not discuss specific projects during this session unless they are complete and/or a matter of case law.

#### **1. What is SEQR?**

- Purpose
- Environmental factors
- What is an "Agency"?
- What is an "Action"?

#### **2. SEQR processes and procedures**

- SEQR timeline and process
- When does the SEQR process begin?
- Who starts SEQR?
- Classifying the Action: Type II, Type I, Unlisted
- Establishing Lead Agency
- Coordinated Review (and Uncoordinated Review)
- Environmental Assessment Form (EAF)
- Determination of Significance: Negative or Positive Declaration?
- Conditioned Negative Declaration
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
  - Scoping
  - Draft EIS
  - Public Comment
  - Final EIS
- Filing and Notice
- Final Decisions After SEQR
- SEQR Compliance

#### **3. Recent updates to SEQR (as of January 1, 2019)**

#### **4. Case law**

- "A Hard Look"
- Community Character

#### **5. Tools and Resources**

#### **6. Wrap-up Discussion**

## **Jennifer O'Donnell Bio**

Longtime resident of Kingston's historic downtown Rondout waterfront district, Jennifer O'Donnell is an urban planner by profession and out of her dedication to social and environmental justice. Early in her career, she worked as an architect and project manager in New York City on the design and adaptive reuse of historic structures on the Brooklyn Waterfront, in the financial district, and major cultural institutions including the Metropolitan Museum, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center. After earning her Master's degrees from Columbia University in Real Estate Development and Urban Planning, Jennifer worked for the University of Rome in Italy and the World Bank in Washington, DC on development and conservation in historic cities and regions all over the world, including France, Italy, Israel, Romania, Albania, Brazil, Georgia, Jordan and many more. Since moving to Ulster County full-time in 2004, she served as Deputy Director of Planning for Ulster County, where she led projects in economic development, historic preservation, and open space planning that have led to successful, ongoing results for her adopted home county. In 2012, she launched her own consulting firm, Hone Strategic, now a New York State Certified Woman-Based Enterprise, which specializes in planning and economic development solutions for historic cities and sites. She is also currently continuing her public service career working as a local government specialist at the New York State Department of State. Jennifer has served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Kingston Historic Preservation Landmarks Commission and the Ulster County Legislature. She is passionate about Kingston's people, its beauty, and its spirit, and continues to contribute her time to supporting its quality of life.

## **Tools and resources:**

- The Department of Environmental Conservation's General SEQR Guidance: [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/357.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/357.html)
- SEQR Handbook - [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6188.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6188.html), a practical reference guide to the procedures prescribed by SEQR and addresses common questions that arise during the process.
- SEQR Cookbook: a step-by-step discussion of the basic SEQR process. [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/cookbook1.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/cookbook1.pdf)
- Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) Workbook and Mapper: [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/90125.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/90125.html)
- Interactive Online Maps: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/42937.html>
- Citizen's Guide to SEQR: [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/seqrcitizen.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/seqrcitizen.pdf)
- Local Official's Guide to SEQR: [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/seqrofficials.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/seqrofficials.pdf)
- SEQR Flowchart and Timeframes: [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/seqrflow2003.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/seqrflow2003.pdf)