FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Penfield provides public electric car charging station
- Innovative pilot a first in Monroe County; April 28 ribbon-cutting -

PENFIELD, N.Y., APRIL 20, 2012 – In keeping with the Town of Penfield’s efforts to incorporate sustainable practices into its operations and encourage sustainable practices in the community, the town’s Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (EEAC) and Town Board have installed a free public electric car charging station at the Penfield Community Center and Penfield Library, 1985 Baird Road.

This charging station is the first publicly available charging station in Monroe County. The project was the idea of Bob Kanauer, an electrical engineer, member of the Town of Penfield’s Energy & Environment Advisory Committee and owner of LTHS Solar. Kanauer donated the charging station equipment and project engineering; the town installed the fully handicap accessible enclosure, providing labor and materials including wood, pavers and conduit. A meter for the charging station is located inside the Community Center.

The result of this collaboration is a free public charging station for electric cars like the Chevy Volt, Nissan Leaf and a soon to be available Ford Focus Electric. The cost of electricity for the charging station is about 33 cents per hour. A one hour charge while visiting the Penfield Library would typically yield about 14 miles of charge to a car’s battery. It would take roughly three hours to fully charge a vehicle.
Supervisor Tony LaFountain said, “While electric car use is still in the early adopter phase, this is a perfect time for us to understand what it would take to help support an infrastructure for these vehicles. When Bob Kanauer proposed the project to me it made a lot of sense. We ran it by the EEAC and they favored this trial. We’ll track use and costs to help us plan for the future in Penfield.” He added the pilot will also help the town understand the benefit of adding electric vehicles to the town fleet in future years. Electric cars may become ideal for short trips around town and between facilities when demand rises and vehicle costs come down.

The charging station will be highlighted at the town’s upcoming “Penfield Cleanup Day” Saturday, April 28, 9 a.m. to noon at the Community Center. Bob Kanauer and members of the New York State Electric Auto Association will be there with a variety of vehicles to share information and answer questions. A ribbon-cutting for the charging station will take place at approximately 11:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

“In the next five to ten years more electric cars will be on the road,” said Bob Kanauer. “Car prices will come down and the infrastructure to support the vehicles will grow. For example, right now on the west coast you can travel from the state of Washington down through California with access to charging stations the entire distance. Technology and ‘driving distances per charge’ will constantly improve as adoption increases.”

“The cost to the town for this pilot is minimal,” said Supervisor LaFountain. “What we learn from this experience will help us make informed decisions regarding sustainable practices for the town in the future.” The town will monitor use of charging station use the project as a stepping stone towards more ambitious use of renewable energy at town facilities.

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