

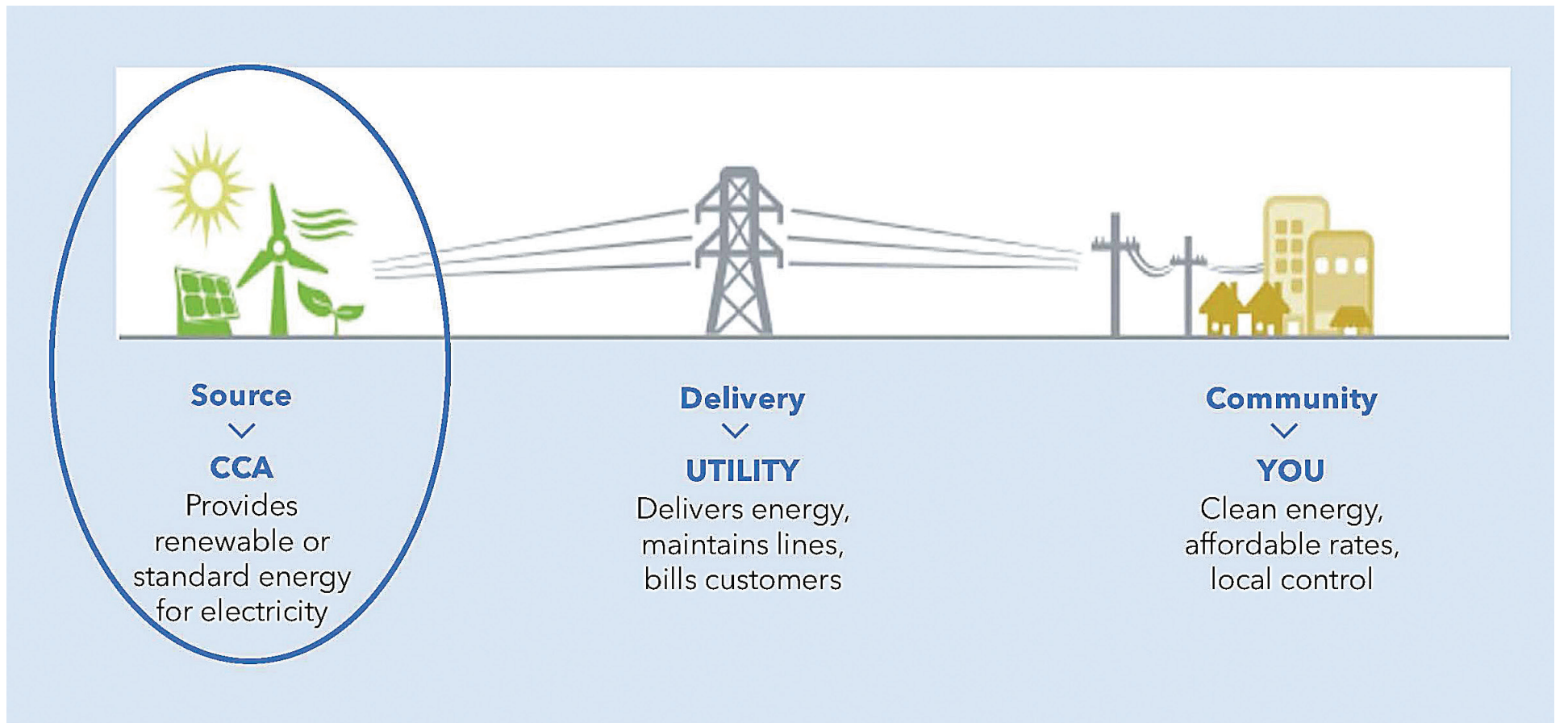
# The Southampton Press

EASTERN EDITION

www.27east.com

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024

\$2.00



CCA not only gives consumers more choice when it comes to electricity, but also provides access to renewable energy.

## Southampton Village Eyes Renewable Energy Plan

BY CAILIN RILEY

A new option for sourcing renewable energy at an affordable rate to power homes and small businesses could be on the horizon for Southampton Village residents.

Southampton Village officials are exploring the possibility of participating in what's called Community Choice Aggregation, a program that aims to provide eligible residents with a renewable electricity supply at competitive prices by allowing municipalities to gather together its residents and small businesses to act as one customer purchasing electricity.

If Southampton Village decides to pursue the CCA option, it will do so by essentially piggybacking off Southampton Town's plan to bring CCA to its nearly 70,000 residents. Because Southampton Village has only around 4,500 residents, it lacks the strength in numbers to participate in the program on its own.

Southampton Town currently has an open competitive bid for electricity supply and is looking to launch a CCA program later this year. The town's CCA administrator, Joule Community Power, is preparing to receive pricing from electricity suppliers.

The town held its second informational session about CCA in late April 2023, and Deputy Supervisor Frank Zappone said at the time that it has been pursuing the CCA option for a while, because it believes CCA has the greatest potential to bring renewable energy into the community in a relatively short period of time without the disruptive infrastructure improvements that might otherwise need to take place. CCA has also been touted

for the opportunity to provide electric cost savings to residents, although cost savings are not a guarantee for every resident.

Lynn Arthur is the founder of Peak Power LI, and a local organizer for CCA. Both Arthur and Glenn Weinberg of Joule were on hand at the most recent Southampton Village Board meeting on February 8 to explain what CCA is and how it could benefit residents.

During their presentation, they touted the benefits of CCA as opposed to the retail market, emphasizing how it allows for major climate impact by a community, cost savings as a group and potential cost savings for individuals, strong consumer protections — there are no individual contracts or exit fees, and the rates are stabilized — increased consumer choice, and an accelerated transition to renewable energy.

Southampton Village Mayor Bill Manger explained during an interview prior to the presentation why the village was getting involved.

"Since the town had started to move on it, we thought it would be good if the village could also get CCA," he said. "We really want residents in the village to understand what CCA would mean for them, and to get the public educated on what it is and what the program means so they could help in voicing their thoughts on whether the village should adopt this program for all village residents."

"What we're looking at is an alternative energy source for electricity," he said. "It would give residents the option of having another supplier aside from PSEG."

CCA, an energy purchase program, was authorized by the Public Service

Commission in 2016. Since the adoption of the first CCA pilot program in the state, more than 160 communities have decided to participate in CCA. By 2021, just five years in, CCA programs made as much as a quarter of the renewable energy purchases in the voluntary renewable energy market.

Under the CCA model, the CCA program supplies the energy, but the local utility — in this case, PSEG Long Island — still delivers the energy, maintains the lines, and bills customers.

In communities where CCA is adopted, most residents and small businesses are automatically enrolled, but can opt out at any time, without any penalties or fees.

### Proposed Code Updates Target Pickleball and Padel

The Village Board held three public hearings at the February 8 meeting all related to an effort to address the increasingly popular racket sports of pickleball and padel in village rules and regulations that govern tennis. The proposed code changes would restrict the ability to change a tennis court into a pickleball court at will, and created different setbacks and requirements for pickleball courts, including new laws that would address noise concerns related to pickleball.

Notably, the proposed code change includes a stipulation that any new pickleball or padel court has to be set back 30 feet or more from any lot lines, and must also be surrounded on three sides by a 6-foot-high "sound attenuation" wall.

The proposed legislation would also impose limits on the number of courts on a piece of property, regardless of the property size.

Doug DeGroot, the owner of Triangle Tennis Club in Southampton Village, was at the meeting, and said he took issue with that portion of the proposed code changes. He pointed out that padel — which is like a combination of tennis and squash and is played on a partially enclosed court with glass rebounding walls — is a lot quieter than pickleball, and even brought tennis, pickleball and padel rackets and balls to demonstrate.

"What I'm always worried about is knee-jerk reactions to stuff," he said, in defense of both pickleball and padel and their rapid increase in popularity. "It's an incredible phenomenon that's a really healthy thing that's happened. Instead of people sitting at home on their computer, they're going outside to play. It's a really easy game to pick up."

The board ultimately decided to keep the public hearings open, adjourning them to the next meeting.

### New Committee Established

The board approved the establishment of an environmental and sustainability committee at the meeting. The committee will be overseen by Trustee Robin Brown, and will include Sheila Pfeiffer and Rob Coburn as co-chairs, along with Scott Rose and John Halsey.

Manger also appointed architect Nina Edwards Anker to the Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation, with a term commencing on February 8 and expiring June 30, 2026, to fill the vacancy left by John Gregory. Cathy Buxton will serve as an alternate member with a term commencing on February 8 and expiring on February 7, 2025.