

# as seen in

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## A Green Letter Day for Fire Island

by Shoshanna McCollum

Perhaps it was just by chance that GreenLogic Energy celebrated the opening of its fifth branch, right in the heart of Fire Island on the 40th Anniversary of Woodstock. Others might consider it fortuitous. "This is the perfect place to be in the forefront of green energy," exclaimed GreenLogic's Education Specialist, Marie Domenici. "Nothing but sun all winter long collecting free energy and spinning our client's meters backwards!"

Indeed there has been considerable excitement generated this summer about the promise and potential of environmental construction alternatives on Fire Island, including U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's press conference in Fire Island Pines earlier this season in which she discussed the Green Community Planning Assistance Grants Act. Speeches by prominent officials are certainly very encouraging, but homeowners, small businesses and even municipalities can easily become overwhelmed by the terminology that has saturated the media. Often such discourse is peppered with mention of aid packages and stimulus money "out there" that can further contribute to the confusion.

GreenLogic's debut on the back deck of Maguire's Restaurant in Ocean Beach on August 14th made it quite clear they were not there to hustle sales, but rather to demystify what has become a compound subject.

"Overcoming myth is crucial," emphasized Marc Cléjan, co-founder and CEO of GreenLogic. "This work is being done by a conscientious, professional company, and we have to get the word out that alternative energy can be an attractive solution that also saves our clients thousands of dollars a year."

For some of us, the introduction into the world of solar power may have included a tour through a futuristic looking model home during the 1970's. One memorable feature of those bunker-like compounds was the sight of immense, unsightly solar units that dominated in the background. And if you were by chance interested in making a purchase, the price tag was staggering. However just a glance at GreenLogic's literature illustrates that green energy need not detract

from aesthetics. With thoughtful design, solar panels can be discreet and incorporated into the building's architecture. Cléjan is a self-proclaimed "environmental geek" who left the world of healthcare information systems to earn his Masters in Environmental Management at NYU with the intention of starting up a profit-making green business. Since the inception of GreenLogic in 2005, the enterprise has become one of the fastest growing alternative energy companies on Long Island with regional offices in Southampton, Cutchogue, Manorville and Roslyn. With such a pedigree, expanding their reach to Fire Island was a logical next step.

"This has been a dream of mine for a very long time and now the time is right," says Tim Cottrell, owner of Island Gardeners. Tim's landscaping business and plant nursery in Seaview have earned the trust of the local community for nearly 20 years. He and his wife Kathleen will now also wear the hats of GreenLogic's local representatives, but this too feels like a natural progression of things.

The suite of products GreenLogic offers includes solar electric panels, one of the items most often associated with green building. As the panels are installed to maintain constant communication with the structure's standard electric grid, surplus generated power actually makes your electric meter run backward -- selling energy back to the utility company. This is a breath of fresh air to anyone who pays a monthly LIPA bill. Long Island Power Authority rebates presently stand at \$3.50 per watt, \$4.50 and up for non-profits, schools and municipalities. Tax credits also offer significant incentives with New York State kicking in a 25% tax credit, with a \$5,000 cap on top of the Federal credits of 30%. "When you factor in all these incentives, the government is paying for about 75% of the cost of the system, so now is a very good time to capture these incentives, before they run out," said Cléjan.

Other products include solar thermal panels to heat water at a fraction of conventional costs while looking no different than an attractive skylight. Then there are small-scale wind turbines. Looking not much different than whirligigs, they harness not the sun but the wind to chan-

nel power. Presently there are more permitting issues surrounding the turbines, but they are "slowly catching on" according to Cléjan.

However, what may be the most attractive product of all offered by GreenLogic is the ongoing support they offer once you have come aboard. The GreenLogic team will help navigate their customers through the grant, rebate and permitting processes so that they need not fear getting caught in a quagmire of paperwork.

This arsenal of knowledge could be especially important for municipalities. While \$9 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act subsidies has been earmarked for K-12 public schools on Long Island through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, response was low for the most recently expired rolling deadline of August 21st -- presumably because the concepts are simply too dense for potential funding candidates to presently grasp.

"I was impressed. They made a good presentation," said Ocean Beach Mayor Joseph Loeffler, Jr. who attended the event. "This sounds like the way to go to reduce our carbon footprint long-term. Municipalities are a large consumer of power. It would be foolish not to look into this for our upcoming projects." GreenLogic also aspires to be a company that gives back to the community. Some of the not for profit institutions in which they have donated alternative energy systems include the Peconic Land Trust's Quail Hill Farm and the Children's Museum of the East End (CMEE) in Bridgehampton.

"We are not just two guys with a truck that you will never see again," insists Cléjan. "Our solar systems carry 25-year manufacturer warranties. We maintain ongoing relationships with our customers, who often come back to purchase additional solutions based on a long term master plan we develop for them that often leads to a zero energy home -- that's a home that consumes no net energy and has no annual energy cost whatsoever! It is important to add that we never subcontract jobs. We do all the design and installation and work with only the finest manufacturers."

Systems begin at \$5,000 and up. For more information about GreenLogic, including obtaining a free estimate visit their website [www.GreenLogic.com](http://www.GreenLogic.com) or call 631-771-5152. **FT**

*The GreenLogic Team: Tim and Kathleen Cottrell, Marie Domenici, Mary McPartland, John Rocchetta, Dave Kneirman, Marc Clejan, and Joe Sullivan.*

