

Climate Smart Communities Task Force
June 3, 2020 Minutes
via video teleconference

Present

Steve Powers CSC Chair, CAC Rep

Bruce Shenker CSC Coordinator, NLR rep To CC Env Management Council

CAC Rep Jenna Barbary-Glovsky

CAC Rep Bob Gilson

Steven Dono

Marc Frey

Adelia Moore

Elizabeth Poreba

Carole Roseman

Cathy Wilkerson

Marc Anthonisen, Task Force advisor

Peg Munves, CAC member

Tistrya Houghtling Town Supervisor

Jill Falchi-Henck Clean Energy Coordinator

Not present: Sarah Steadman, Marsha Kessler

Steve Powers began the meeting at 7PM with the approval of the minutes of the May 6 meeting, corrected to include Steven Dono in the list of members then present.

Bruce Schenker reported on the May 18 meeting of the Environmental Management Council.

The consensus of the meeting was that there should be more county-wide action, if not by Columbia County as a whole acting as a Climate Smart Community, then by helping towns not yet enrolled as a CSC.

Carole Roseman reported on the Trees for Tributaries Program (Trees for Tribs). Since the creek on her property is a tributary to the Hudson it qualified for Trees for Tribs. CAC Chair David Farren has organized an ongoing volunteer effort to plant some 100 trees and bushes supplied by the state. Steve P. noted that this effort will yield 3 points toward the 120 points needed for CSC Bronze level certification.

Next, a series of possible action items was reviewed, with comments from Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling.

- Social media accounts. Each new platform must be approved by the Town Board. The Taskforce must come up with a person responsible for the accounts, which should be linked to but separate from the town's accounts. Steve P. and Jill Falchi-Henck said they would provide help to Tistrya setting up Facebook business accounts.

It was noted that the town Google Sheets account could be used to organize the materials needed to gain certification.

Tistrya offered to help members of the Taskforce set up town gmail accounts separate from their personal accounts if they so desire.

- EV charging stations. After gaining the grant but losing the first location for a station, a second location has been found, off Tilden Road, near the Rail Trail. The grant money has been put on

hold and will be available once the needed property is obtained. The town will get points for this station, as well as points for volunteer work involved in clearing the site.

- Town Composting - Though the Town Board would have final say on approving this endeavor, the Taskforce discussed its viability and possible collection sites. Marc Anthonisen offered to help with investigating its possibility here. Jenna Barbary-Glovsky noted that Darrow currently has a composting program and will reach out to explore the school's possible collaboration with the town. So far, no towns in the county have such a program. Jenna, Cathy Wilkerson, Bruce, and Marc A. volunteered to form a committee to investigate this further.
- Government Operations GHG Inventory Marc A. and Steve P. volunteered to do the data collection necessary to complete and get the points for this action. Tistrya said she has additional data on LED lights and benchmarking to be submitted.
- Hazard Mitigation Plan- The town has adopted Columbia County's Plan. Marc A. pointed out that there are additional sub-actions that could improve the plan. The town could acquire additional points if the plan were adjusted. Further research will be done by Marc A.
- Joining a Regional Climate Program- Membership in the EMC could qualify the town for points for this action according to Jill.
- Creating social media accounts to inform the community Liz Poreba, Adelia Moore, and Bob Gilson agreed to investigate this action with Steve P.
- Community choice aggregation (CCA) v. Community Solar (CS) The differences between these two ways of aggregating power purchases were discussed. One difference is that to participate in CCA the Town must enable legislation that would automatically include all Town residents into the program which they must opt out of if they do not want to participate, while participation in CS is voluntary on a household by household basis. Jill will email more details.
- Sustainable Agriculture- Marc A. noted there are several threads in this action that could be fleshed out. Cornell Cooperative Extension could help. Carole proposed that a retail food facility, centrally located, would enable local farmers and consumers to connect. With research, a model could be found for providing this with funds from for-profit businesses or grants rather than the town. Tistrya reported that the Farmers' Market is currently looking for a new model and she would put Carole in touch with initiatives that are currently being discussed. After a vote it was resolved to table this matter, which is also currently on the Business and Economic Development's agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

The next meeting will be held on July 1 at 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Poreba
Secretary