

## **Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting**

August 4, 2021 New Lebanon Town Hall, 6:30 PM

Present: Marc Anthonisen, Kris Cottom, Deborah Gordon, Adelia Moore, Peg Munves, Liz Poreba, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker, Cathy Wilkerson

Absent: Bob Gilson, Sarah Steadman, Josh Young

perspective new member Frieda Pearce

Jim Yienger Principal. Climate Action Associates, LLC

Jill Falchi-Henck. Capital District Regional Planning Commission

The meeting was called at 6:30 pm. Steve called for an approval of the minutes. They were approved as submitted.

**Jim Yienger** then reported on the **New Lebanon Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory**, which he had compiled for the town. After describing his methodology, he pointed out his major findings

One finding is that New Lebanon residents' average per capita green house gas emissions have gone down slightly, for a variety of reasons: cleaner sources for electricity, greater fuel economy of cars, and the local increase in the use of wood, which as a biofuel, is not counted as a greenhouse gas emitter, since the carbon wood releases would have been released anyway.

(Some argue, however, that burning wood makes carbon into a gas, which affects the environment.)

Another finding is that 23% of New Lebanon residents burn wood for heat, as opposed to 6% for the region, which is the eastern upper half of New York.

When Jim pointed out that electricity usage has gone up in New Lebanon, a discussion ensued about the difficulty of determining the source of the electricity being used. The report in its present form cannot really help to measure or monitor the environmental effects of increased use of solar power or of HVAC heating systems.

Marc pointed out that the changes that will have the greatest effect on greenhouse gas emissions are those made rarely in individual's lives, when buying a new heating system or a car. The goal should be to make sure people have the information available when the time comes.

### **Chair Update: – Steve Powers:**

The Community Picnic was a big success, allowing CSC members to interact with an audience different from the one at the Farmers' Market. The Task Force has been asked to make sure recycling and composting are available at the next picnic.

The latest application for a \$5000 NYSEDA grant was rejected, possibly because of a paperwork error, and will be resubmitted.-

26 people have now signed up with Ampion, though a number have been rejected. New Lebanon's goal should be 50 sign-ups. . Ancram garnered 75.

129 pounds of batteries have been kept out of the waste stream and sent to be recycled thanks to the Big Green Box program. There are currently boxes in 4 locations.

Electronics recycling has been added to the community cleanup day on Sept 18. 16 large boxes will be provided to take electronics to be recycled, with a charge only for screens.

The electrician is coming tomorrow, August 5, to install the EV charging station.

In response to demand, a list of state-approved solar vendors and heat pump installers will be posted on the CSC website.

The next meeting of the Town Board will set a town hall recycling policy to obtain points for the CSC program. This action was rejected in our bronze application as there was no official resolution.

The Library is open to joint programming with the CSC and perhaps to enrolling in Ampion.

Cathy offered to go address the next Library Board meeting about Ampion.

The Task Force's suggestions for the Comprehensive Plan have been submitted to the Comp Plan review committee.

#### **Other Business:**

**Trees. for Tribs: Peg:** The rain is helping. In October, some of the newly-planted trees will be moved.

**Education and Outreach: Adelia** The number of views on the Facebook. page is growing, though it may be time for another post about Ampion, it was agreed that the best approach is to present the plan to already-established groups.

**Repair Café: Adelia.** Currently 18 people have signed up to be fixers. A plan is in place for the first event on October 23, with a September 15 deadline for signing up repairers. The Women's Group has offered to help at the event.

**Bike and Free Store: Marc-** Larry Bennet will take over for Marc, who will help facilitate the transition in the next 2 months. The program needs a new storage place for the bikes.

The Free Store will have a winter clothing give-away event some time in the fall. This will be a good opportunity for the CSC to reach people.

**PE7: CSRP** Steve asked for and received an unanimous vote.to request that the Town Board approve the development of a check list of current resilience policies to use as a baseline for creating a local resilience plan. This is a project that would be done in 2022 with Cornell Cooperative Extension for Columbia and Greene Counties.

**County CSC: Bruce** The county task force is following the same roadmap New Lebanon did to get to Bronze, but on a county level. They are proceeding well and are looking for a full-time employee to move the process along. Tistrya is involved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Next meeting: **Wednesday, September 1 at 6:30.**

Respectfully submitted: Elizabeth Poreba