Climate Smart Communities Taskforce September 7, 2022 Minutes

New Lebanon Town Hall

Present: Winfried Fuchsofen, Deb Gordon, Frieda Pearce, Liz Poreba, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker, Cathy Wilkerson

Absent: Adelia Moore, Kristine Cottom, Bob Gilson, Sarah Steadman

The meeting was called at 6:32 pm.

After approval of the minutes, Chair Steve Powers provided an update:

-  Heat Pump campaign- we have received a $5000 grant from NYSERDA for signing up 5 people. We now have 4000 points and will get more with the installation of heat pumps in town hall. Steve is negotiating with NYSERDSA to get “bumped up” in order to provide grants for the heat pumps at Town Hall. Deb asked if rewiring of town hall will be necessary. Steve did not know but said in any case it would be covered by the grants.

-  Town Hall Benchmarking: This has been complicated because Town Hall shares a meter with the garage. Steve is looking into getting separate meters.

- Steve is going to speak at a conference about locally sourced renewable green policy solutions. This is an opportunity for him to make good contacts for the town.

-  EV Campaign- has been approved by NYSERDA. We now need a strategy promoting evs and also making sure that residents who purchase an ev or hybrid notify us, because the town will now receive $5000 if 5 people purchase either.

-  Community solar NL is piggybacking on the Columbia County CS program. NYSEG has no more capacity for community solar this year

- Battery recycling program 450 lbs of batteries have been collected and recycled  from 6 boxes throughout town and more batteries arrive daily.

- Sept. 24 town clean up day. This will include electronics pick up, but no volunteers are needed for that this year. Residents must get a punch card from town hall.

- Comp Plan CSC expectations for 2022-4 bike racks have been ordered: 2 for the park, one for town hall, and one for the midtown mall

Other business

Corkscrew rail trail: Bruce reported that he and Steve walked it and it is easily discernible and accessible, except for behind Larabee’s. There is old rail bridge from 1920 on the south side of the high school. Help from the town will be necessary to persuade some land owners to allow access. Deb said she will put Bruce in touch with a lawyer she knows who deals with such cases.

Composting: Kris and Cathy are going to take a 15-hour course on the use of food scraps, which will result in a composting plan for the town. For now, along with the regular coffee ground collection, Cathy is bringing about 15 buckets of food scraps, gathered from around town, to Chatham three times a week. This is a labor intensive process that needs to be systemized. Not only will Cathy and Kris’s attendance at this course provide a plan, it will also garner points for the CSC.

Trees for Tribs & Water update- Peg via Steve reported that volunteers have given 91 hours tending and watering the newly-planted trees for the park.

Social Media/Education subcommittee Adelia said they had discussed the upcoming EV campaign but had no concrete plans as yet. Another potential project is a program involving art and recycled materials for seniors at the library.

Repair Café- The next one is Nov. 17 in Nassau There are no advance sign ups as yet but 17-18 fixers. Because it is on the same day as the town tag sale, the Café will distribute flyers informing attendees of the event. The Repair Café is also offering a do it yourself workshop at the library on Oct 12 at 6pm. Adelia noted that there are now 53 Repair Cafés in the Hudson Valley, Westchester, and New Jersey

Bike repairs continue steadily with over 200 bikes refurbished or repaired to date; Larry Bennett has taken over for Mac.

The Free Store distributes most of its clothes on the rack outside the Dollar Store though it still occupies a room on the second floor of Town Hall.

The Hudson Valley Climate Action Network Roundtable Bruce reported that all CSC and CAC members will be invited, probably on October 20 at the Basilica in Hudson, in order to discuss what people are doing and how.

Adjournment 7:26

Next meeting date – Oct 5

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba