Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting Minutes Feb 1, 2023

Present: Bob Gilson, Liz Poreba, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker, Cathy Wilkerson

Absent: Kris Cottom , Deb Gordon, Adelia Moore, Winfried Fuchsofen, Frieda Pearce

Called to order at 6:37pm, after approval of minutes, Chair Steve Powers updated members:

•The Climate Smart Resiliency Planning resolution is up for approval at the next Town Board meeting and will earn points toward Silver Certification.

•The County reached its Heat Pump Campaign goal last week. New Lebanon will continue to participate and will have more webinars. Dates TBA

•An initial bid for solar panels for Town Hall was received: $72,000 for 12 kilowatt hours. Steve is going to ask for some clarification, submit the bid to NYSERDA, and obtain other bids. Since the Town Hall, including the garage, requires 27 kw hours, further grants will be needed

•The Electric Vehicle campaign requires 5 residents to buy or lease EVs. Steve has yet to hear back from the local dealership, but the cars can be purchased anywhere.

• The Battery Recycling Program continues with boxes in 6 locations; 634 lbs recycled. The town cannot provide this service to people who are not residents.

•According to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, the CSC is expected to submit a Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Town Board. Since it will be at least a year for the County to revise the current Plan, Steve will submit the current Plan for now.

•The Comprehensive Plan also requires the CSC Taskforce to propose a plan for alternative methods of transportation and routes to promote multi-modal transportation throughout Town, with a focus on the old railroad bed. Bruce addressed this with a report on recent efforts to secure the railbed property between Shatford Park and Tilden Plaza, an area which covers 8 properties. In order to pay back taxes ($ 7000) and current taxes ($800), hire a company to help write grants and purchase easements( $30,000) or obtain revocable agreements from property owners, about $30,000 will be required.

•Steve is going to meet this week with New Lebanon’s school superintendent to discuss thewater filtration ( $200, 000) and the possibility of bringing back the Middle School’s Environment Club.

•Steve is also to meet with Didi Barrett and Michelle Hinchey about the landfill.

•The Walkable Downtown Committee will meet with an engineer to discuss sidewalks, design, and water treatment,.

• Cornell students are in the process of deciding whether to work with us in a class choosing among the 11 proposals for future collaboration with the Town submitted last summer. A Cornell grad student to help compile points for the Silver certification next summer..

•Steve is going to submit a Green Purchasing plan for the Town to use. Once the Town Board’ s approval is given, a site listing approved green vendors will be available. This will yield points toward Silver Certification.

• Steve is going to speak at two upcoming seminars: a CEC Webinar on Feb 28 and an Albany conference on Locally Sourced Climate Action-on May 19. (He pointed out that since the Town has already received $120,000 in grants in the last year, other CSC’s are interested.)

• A Source Water Protection Plan will be submitted to the Town Board this month.

Cathy reported the composting project is proceeding. Maverick’s wants to resume collections, with filter papers omitted and egg shells added. The Farmers Market scraps are now being consumed by a pig farm. Tistrya has authorized a 3-bin compost system in the Park. The area chosen must have truck access and nearby water. A grant could be obtained for the needed lumber but not the labor. Cathy completed her Shaker Mountain Trailer Park survey, finding much enthusiasm, and plans to put a bucket there. .

Adelia submitted an update on upcoming repair cafes.

Bruce reported that Darrow is interested in having a trailhead to the Shaker Swamp on campus. Bruce has written up a proposal for this potential project.

Steve said that the Education and Outreach Committee needs to find ways to inform residents about the necessity of separating recyclables, since contaminated items can cause a whole load to be thrown into the landfill.

The Taskforce considered the need for an Earth Day Event. Bob offered to head another roadside clean-up. Also considered were another electronics recycling day and a bike-repair teaching session run by Moy. It was decided these two events should occur on different days in the spring, not Earth Day.

The Bike Repair program has refurbished or repaired 200 bikes to date and is working on requests for many families.

Liz reported that the Free Store continues to have an abundance of donations of toys and clothing.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29.

Next meeting date – March 1, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba