Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting Minutes March 1, 2023

Town Hall, New Lebanon

Present: Kristine Cottom, Deb Gordon, Adelia Moore, Frieda Pearce, Elizabeth Poreba, Steve Powers

Absent: Winfried Fuchshofen, Bob Gilson, Bruce Shenker, Cathy Wilkerson

The meeting was called to order at 6:40

After approval of the minutes, Steve provided updates:

• The Climate Smart Resiliency Planning resolution was approved at the last Town Board meeting. Many of the proposed actions will help toward getting points for Silver Certification

• The County Heat Pump Campaign goal has been achieved, earning the county $15,000. Steve suggested, in a recent CAC webinar, that further incentives should be offered after the original goal is met.

• Steve is going to meet in Stephentown with residents interested in starting a CSC there.

• The solar panels for Town Hall have received 2nd level NYSERDA approval. Once he has heard from NYSERDA, the Town will send out for bids, and the panels should be installed this summer, at a cost of $70,000.

• The EV Campaign continues. The problem is tracking residents who have bought EVs. Albany is the only other town attempting this campaign.

• The battery recycling program continues, with  634 lbs sent in and another 75 in Steve’s garage. Bob will take over this program when he returns.

• The CSC was requested to submit a draft updated Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Town Board.- and will take action on it once the County completes its Plan.

• Steve and Bruce are working on a plan for alternative methods of transportation and routes to promote multi-modal transportation throughout Town, with a focus on the old railroad bed. The Town Board has approved ARPA funding for coming up with a plan and possibly for easements from the head of the Rail Trail to the high school

• Steve met with New Lebanon Superintendent of Schools Andrew Kourt about obtaining funds for its water treatment tanks, which will cost $200,000.

• Steve also spoke to the Superintendent about reinvigorating the school’s Environmental Club. An alternative suggested was a Community Education Project, which would not require paying or fingerprinting the adults involved. Cathy and Frieda are interested in implementing such a program 2 days a month, 3:25-4:30. with 5th and 6th graders.

• On March 23, The Walkable Downtown committee is going to host a presentation with the engineers who prepared the previous walkability study to discuss potential options: sidewalks, bike ways, slowing traffic, crosswalks. The DOT is on board for such changes.

-• Steve hasn’t heard from Cornell about its programs for this academic term, but he is confident the town will have a grad student for the summer to help with paperwork for Silver certification

• A Green Purchasing plan for the town-was approved by Town Board. Steve will work with Marcie on it. Staples has a list of sustainable products on their website.

• A “Locally Sourced” event will occur in Albany in September. Local experts will discuss. transportation, buildings, and energy

• Some Taskforce members had responded to Steve’ query about stipends for non-advisory boards. Kris said, and all agreed, that the only reason for a stipend would be to encourage people who would not be otherwise able to participate; otherwise, no compensation is called for. Compensation of non-advisory boards will be discussed at the next Town Board.

• Steve received an estimate of $76,000 for an underground water tank for the LVPA. He is applied to Molinaro’s office for a grant which would not be forthcoming until 2024.

• Earth Day Cleanup will occur on Earth Day, April 22. Cathy will distribute posters.

• Moy is going to conduct a Bike Repair demo in May

• An Instagram account for the CSC was approved by Town Board but has not yet been created.

• Cathy has applied for a $500 grant for composting supplies. The placement of the compost bins in the Park still needs to be decided.

Freida reported on her talk with Michelle Hoffman, the Director of the Library. Michelle is interested in hosting a series on home composting. It will be necessary to coordinate between town and private composting projects.

She also recommended more heat pump informational sessions stressing financial incentives.

Michelle expressed interest in Judy and Freida’s proposed “Trash to Treasure” workshops. Frieda said she would contact Mary Young of the Lebanon Valley Senior Group about such an event in the LVPA.

Peg submitted an email reporting that the Town Board has adopted the Drinking Water Source Protection plan and the CAC is now awaiting DEC approval. The Board also approved $30,000 for water testing around town and for supporting the Wastewater Committee.

Deb said that the Wastewater Committee is considering extending its range beyond the Route 20/22 corridor., up Lovers’ Lane .

Adelia said the next Repair Café- is from 10 to 2 Saturday, March 4, in Austerlitz Town Hall. She has about 15 fixers ready She has discovered that [nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com) was a good place to find fixers After that event, an April 30 Repair Café will occur at the LVPA. She hopes to include tech in that one.

Bike Repair continues to add to the -200+ bikes it has refurbished or repaired to date; and is working on requests for many families-

Liz said the Free Store continues to be visited. There is a need for children’s clothes..

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37.

Next meeting date – April 5