**Climate Smart Communities Meeting**

**June 7, 2023- New Lebanon Town Hall, 6:30pm**

Present: Kristine Cottom, Winfried Fuchshofen, Bob Gilson, Frieda Pearce, Elizabeth Poreba, Steve Powers

After approval of minutes at 6:35, Steve provided updates:

High Peak Solar will install solar panels on the Town Hall by the end of July. Paperwork  for the project is still in process.

There has been no progress on the EV Campaign. Marc, however, has found a state web site listing EV owners that might prove helpful.

Battery recycling collection boxes continue to be filled in 6 locations. Soon another box, weighing more than 40 pounds, will be sent.

In accordance with the 2022/3 Comprehensive Plan expectation that the CSC develop a plan for alternative methods of transportation and routes to promote multi-modal transportation throughout Town, Steve and Bruce are continuing to reach out to land owners to obtain the necessary rights of way for the Rail Trail.

To initiate collaboration with New Lebanon Schools, Cornell students  Jillian Morley/ Xinyu Han/Yaqi Li & Yeguang Cheng created a battery collection contest.  The 7th and 8th graders collected 499 batteries and won a cupcake party.

Many Town residents attended the meeting concerning design alternatives for a Walkable downtown. Some complained they hadn’t known about the meeting ahead of time or that they did not feel the surveys were distributed widely enough. Though members felt that many efforts to communicate had been made, they discussed ways to disseminate surveys and other information. Kris and Winfried both suggested using the app “Next Door.”

Once the Walkable Downtown plan is approved by the Board, the Town may earn 10 points toward Silver.

Cornell student Michelle Parks will help assembling paperwork for points this summer.

Steve is looking for new funding for a Water Tank for the LVPA. He is going to meet with one of Didi Barrett’s staff.  Bob suggested an appeal to the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation, which has been known to fund fire stations. Bob said he would contact some members of the Foundation before Steve makes an appeal.

Six large bags are currently waiting for monthly delivery in the Plastic recycling campaign However, there is a great need for people to be educated and reminded that the bags must be clean; i.e. no mulch bags or ziplocks with food still in them. Liz will post this reminder on Facebook.

The year of free delivery is over for the Town’s EV charger next month.Marc has done an analysis to decide how much to charge. This must be submitted to the  Town Board. Since NYSEG charges a $20 monthly delivery fee, the charge will probably be 35 cents per kw. Grant money is \available for a Level 3 charger, and Steve is looking at possible locations for it.

The Bike Repair demo by Moy & Larry on May 20 was a big success. 12 bikes were tended to in 4 hours because of extra helpers.

Steve presided over a CSC table at a Town of Stephentown event  on June 3.

Stephentown is moving forward with community solar and heat pump campaigns

Steve reported that NYSERDA has created three tiers of points, allowing towns to access more grant money after the first goals of campaigns have been completed. For instance, since almost 50 people signed up for Community Solar, far beyond the stated goal, another grant and more points will be available to the Town.

Shaker Mill Inn is hosting an event from one to five on Aug 6 in conjunction with the CREED Foundation (Center for Regenerative Ecology, Education and Environment) and have invited the CSC. The purpose is to educate people about practical ways to act sustainably. Motion was passed that the CSC will sponsor and participate in this event, contingent upon finding out more about the organizations behind it and obtaining Town Board approval.

Cathy Wilkerson has begun to bring Maverick’s coffee grounds and egg shells, along with some kitchen scraps from a few other locations, to the transfer station in Chatham on Saturdays for the digester. Bruce and Liz help her collect the scraps. Though Kris has begun to do some research on the possibility of the Town getting its own digester, Jolene, who is in charge of the program for Columbia County has offered to help write a grant for the Town to get a 1000 lbs-a-day digester. It would have to be on Town property, on cement, and covered. Kris pointed out that there are also composters specifically for manure, which might be useful for local farms.

Peg reported via Steve that volunteers for Trees for Tribs have so far spent 18 hours or watering and maintenance and could use help.

Kris reported that the New Lebanon Repair Cafe was a great success. The next one is on June 24 in Chatham, 12-4. A reporter for the *Columbia Paper*is going to do a write up on the Repair Cafe.

Bike repairs update: 65 are ready to distributed. 200 bikes have been refurbished or repaired to date; volunteers are working on requests for many families

Liz  reported that the Free Store is quite full. Kris suggested she look at the app, “Trash Nothing” on which  people ask for things and list things they need. Liz will look into this, and the Columbia County Generosity Group website.

Freida said that a conversation with the head of  the Senior Citizens group revealed that the group is not interested in Art project . Frieda and Judy are waiting to hear from the library.

Next meeting date – July 5  Shatford Park

Meeting was adjourned at 7:25

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba