

Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting

May 1, 2024, 5PM New Lebanon Town Hall

Attendance: Bob Gilson, Frieda Pearce, Adelia Moore, Elizabeth Poreba, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker, Cathy Wilkerson

After approval of the minutes, Chairman Powers gave his report:

EV Campaign:- exact dates are still needed for completion of the paperwork

Battery Recycling: Steve is going to arrange for pickup of batteries along with electronics. Members were invited to bring any outdated electronics to be recycled

Walkable downtown- final application was submitted on Jan 9

Road to Silver: SUCCESS! The town received front page coverage on the Register Star, though the article contained some misinformation: New Lebanon was actually among only 2 new Silver certifications in the state. There are now 13 in total, among which 5 are counties, New Lebanon is by far the smallest town to receive this award and the only town/city outside of Westchester County. *An article about this accomplishment will be in The Columbia Paper in the coming week.*

CEC status Steve is now working on getting quotes for insulation, heat pumps, additional solar panels, and improved electrification to allocate the \$175,000 NYSERDA grant now due to the town because of its certification. If rooftop solar is considered for the Town garage, recoating the roof is also in order. Projects must be proposed to the Town Board and approved by NYSERDA,

Asked how the money is accounted for, Steve said that the town pays the bills and is then refunded from the grant. Both expenses and income are recorded in the CSC account.

Water Tank grant for LVPA: -still in progress. Steve will ask Didi Barrett's office to push the State agency that is holding it up.

Plastic recycling- we're up to 335 lbs. Probably another 20 or 30 pounds are ready to be brought to Chatham.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: Steve is meeting weekly with the two Cornell students who are helping with this. The State requires the Town to focus on at least two specific projects. One may be finding ways to mitigate

flooding in trailer parks in the flood plain. Since the parks are privately owned, the Town can do no more than make recommendations. The second focus will be the potential of flooding of the stream through Shatford Park.

Bike Tune Up Day is May 18. Bruce will put up flyers around town. It is hoped that the simultaneous events of the day — bike repair in the Park, a repair café in the Library and the book sale at the Church of Our Savior, will be complementary rather than competitive.

Landfill update The town has been awarded \$2 million to cap the landfill. Unexpectedly, House Speaker Carl Heastie announced at the award ceremony that Albany will cover any additional costs. The landowner is on board with selling or perhaps donating the 5 acres to the Town. The Town Board is now in the process of choosing a contractor. Many years ago, the County has already given the Town money needed for the required 30 years of maintenance.

Bob then reported on the **Earth Day cleanup**, which took place on April 20. Some bags of collected trash, which the DOT was supposed to pick up, are still by the road.

Cathy said buckets for the **Composting Campaign** are usually between full and a third full. She suggested distributing a leaflet about the program at Jimmy D's, Mavericks, and Stewart's. It is not clear, however, that those who received these leaflets from those locations would have County or Town recycling stickers. Steve suggested targeting those who have recycling stickers. A list should be available from Marcie.

Peg reported via Steve that the **CAC Water Testing Campaign** is again heading out for more water testing, and will visit more than 30 more residences this month. The CAC will allocate \$3000 dollars of its water testing budget to a Waste Water Feasibility study and may need to allocate more.

She wrote that the **trees and shrubs** planted in Shatford Park are doing "great, but erosion in the Park is now extensive. The plantings are not going to be able to control erosion. Town Board member Craig Skerkis is now the Park liaison and is putting together something to present to the Town Board so that the erosion can be stemmed.

Adelia had good news about the **Repair Café**. Country Squire recently donated more than \$900 worth of lamp parts for repairs. Bob suggested that Country Squire officially give that donation to the Community Fund, which is a 501c, so that they could claim a deduction.

After the “pop up” Repair Café on May 18, the next one will be June 8 at East Nassau firehouse.

Alissa Ross reported, via Liz, about attendance at the **Free Store**: 66 visitors for the two weeks it was open in January, 142 in February, and 168 in March. About half of those numbers were repeat visitors.

Bruce described preliminary plans for the **Climate Carnival** on September 14. It will include a repair café, and Cathy will do something with composting.

In regard to the **Shaker Swamp**, Bruce said that a quarter mile trail is now open behind the brewery. Also, a feature-length movie about the Swamp will be shown at the Darrow School on May 17 at 7PM.

Bruce also said that a meeting with a landowner of part of the Rail Trail might meet with the Rail Trail committee about a stretch of the Trail that goes for 3 miles.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54

Next meeting date – June 5, 5PM

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Poreba