



**Climate Smart
Communities**
Certified Bronze



**Town of Poughkeepsie
Climate Smart Communities Task Force
February 2, 2023 at 7 pm**

Meeting occurred on Zoom at the following link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85918232519?pwd=QkFoN0EwbXJzVnZLTIUzNGxHYIN0Zz09>

Task Force members present: Susan Karnes Hecht, chair
Feza Oktay
Richard Levine
Ann Shershin
Kristen Taylor
Stanley Merritt

Guests: Melissa Everett, Executive Director, Sustainable Hudson Valley (SHV)
Barbara Todd, Program Coordinator, SHV (also a Town resident)

Presentation from SHV

SHV was incorporated in 2007 to support organizations with economic development in the face of environmental challenges. Noted that so many communities are committed to renewables but do not have adequate specific plans. They want to “push the envelope”, find ways to “make it doable” and support communities in scaling up approaches. SHV tends, each year or two, to identify a focus. Examples include the Solarize HV campaign, group purchase programs with marketing and popularization techniques, Drive Electric HV, etc. and similar programs can be offered on a more customized basis, in partnership and with flexibility.. SHV has a large number of “deployable interns” who are supported primarily through NYSEERDA funding. The Clean Power Guide is their annual publication.

They are putting the finishing touches on the new Regional Climate Action Roadmap and Toolkit. This is a critical time for everyone to get organized to meet the goals of the NYS climate law. The web page will be available shortly.

We discussed the opportunity to support the action plan phase of CAPI, in a complementary way. We also discussed, more specifically, the opportunity to do a Drive Electric event in our Town, possibly at an existing event (while acknowledging the supply issue). Even an EV “rally” is beneficial for folks to be educated or consider ordering. We should follow up on this. SHV is not currently working with any municipalities on their fleets, but she would look at the possibility of any interns being engaged on this. She suggested looking at CEC for more ideas on the fleet, and also recommended looking at Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, which has just completed an assessment of the charger landscape which is far more detailed than the apps.

Melissa requested a copy of the EV presentation that we did for the Board and Susan will send it.

Update on Green Business initiative

Susan met with our GBB liaison, Maria Genovesi, earlier this week. Maria had some information that the very robust program now going in Ulster, Green Business Champions, might be offered to Dutchess or other counties as a model. GBB wishes to clarify that question before proceeding, she has a meeting scheduled with Ulster. This contact was actually arranged by Melissa, SHV is under contract to assist Ulster to grow its green business marketplace via a vendor membership arrangement. They are meeting 2/17 with the Ulster economic development team. It will be important to see what they have in mind to avoid duplication or conflict. Melissa is also a member of the Dutchess Co. CSTF, where so far this has not been discussed. It could potentially be a topic elsewhere in DC. They are committed to letting us know the results of that meeting.

Update on Repair Cafe planning

Lisa Kaul, town resident, is driving this initiative. SHV is the fiscal sponsor for Hudson Valley repair cafes, Suzie Fromer is the point person, and they are in touch. Our Town Recreation Dept. Director, Jan McHugh, has enthusiastically agreed to let us use the Senior Center, 4/15 or 4/16, a call for volunteers has gone out to help determine best date. We are fully aware of requirements to submit for a CSC action.

Melissa recommends the book Repair Revolution: How Fixers Are Transforming Our Throwaway Culture by John Wackman and Elizabeth Knight.

Update from CAPI Dutchess launch:

At long last! The first cohort meeting took place on 1/18. Town team: Kristen, Susan, Richard, Jay Baisley, Mike Welti. Designated for data entry: Kristen, Susan. The kickoff meeting covered the overall project roadmap. This month's "homework" was to get our team established with a first internal meeting (occurred), and look at the Central Hudson electric and gas use that was obtained for the Town. There is a very extensive list of locations/meters/accounts and it's important to make sure that it's complete. Much of this kind of work will necessarily need to be managed by staff, but we are on our way. CAPI will use the ICLEI *ClearPath* program as has been used in prior cohorts and many other settings. Susan showed a very brief video which explains the process in about two minutes. Video is here: <https://icleiusa.org/clearpath/> - click on "watch video."

Update on solar project

Susan and Ann spoke with Jay Baisley, he is following the procurement process, possible competing bid(s). Susan alerted him to the importance of the contractor being qualified with NYSERDA in terms of the grant. Kristen pointed out that this may or may not be a simple designation to obtain.

The full \$20,000 is now in hand and "encumbered" by the Comptroller for this project. The Action Grant was actually disbursed in advance in error. The related NYSERDA contract was executed yesterday. This is completely separate from installation contract.

Report on meeting with Comptroller

Ann, Susan, and Richard met with the new Town Comptroller, Jessica Servidio, with the goal of orienting her fully to CSC and how finances may intersect. We were able to get some clarity on some questions that have arisen such as donations, purchases, etc. These cannot be

managed through the town and require an outside group.

Vassar College student intern project

Rebecca Edwards is teaching an “intensive” called *Big Problems, Local Solutions* at Vassar College. The course syllabus will be shared with CSTF members for their interest. Our assigned student, Hannah Charlson, met with Susan earlier in the week. Hannah is a senior at Vassar. She will be researching all aspects of municipal leaf blower laws and background, and her final project will provide us with a roadmap or templates should we elect to pursue this. Hannah is required to attend at least one of our meetings.

Update on Earth Day events

Town cleanup 4/22 CAC sponsoring again.

County event 4/29 at Farm & Home Center in Millbrook, with shared CSTF and CAC spaces.

Awaiting further information.

Other business

Susan finally heard from the individual opening the *Tomfillery* store on Main Street. Had hoped to speak with her directly before tonight’s meeting but this did not occur.

Feza has done more reconnaissance in New Paltz and is concerned that the tiffins being sold through the CSTF there (with the help of a separate organization) are not being subjected to sales tax which he indicated should be required.

The minimum order for tiffins, to have a Climate Smart logo, is 192 pieces. We discussed if this might be covered by a group of retailers and if Adams should be approached. Feza will follow up.

Next meeting

Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 7 pm

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht