



**Climate Smart
Communities**
Certified Bronze



**Town of Poughkeepsie
Climate Smart Communities Task Force**

February 3, 2022 at 7 pm

The meeting occurred on Zoom at the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/91995613444?pwd=d1dacndyNzI0VEF3ZXlicFJkb1JCQT09>

Task Force members present:

Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair
Thomas Lynch

Ann Shershin
Joan Freeman

Stanley Merritt
Feza Oktay

Task Force personnel changes:

- We welcomed our new member, Feza Oktay, and look forward to his valuable contributions.
- We acknowledged the resignation of Katherine Espinosa and wish her the best in her upcoming endeavors. Ann will follow up with the Legal Dept. to make sure her resignation is on record.
- Susan has an appointment to chat with Anne Burger, new Board rep from Ward 3, to fill her in on our work. We have an opportunity to invite Anne to bring forward an appointee from her ward.

Selected action updates:

- Fleet inventory: Rich Levine reached out to the Auto Dept. to request an opportunity to discuss needed additional information to add to the existing inventory. Feza asked if there is an annual audit of town finances and/or assets which might include the fleet. Ann will contact the Comptroller to inquire. Such an inventory, however, would be likely just a vehicle list and unlikely to include the type of information needed for transition planning.
- Any discussion of green fleet policy (within which the inventory would function as a crucial tool) will need to occur first with the Board. We need to plan our approach to this discussion and continue to look at sample policies. Feza pointed out that a key issue is the reduction of maintenance costs for EVs. There should be a comparison to the costs of a gas powered fleet. Perhaps the inventory should be expanded to include annual maintenance costs.
- The awarding of the charger grant is also a key point. Susan had inquired regarding time frame and learned from Mike Welti that it will take a few months to execute the contract with the DEC before work can begin. While we have the grant, the town is

awaiting the more formal notification in order to issue a press release that we can then

amplify.

- Town Hall recycling: Susan, Ann and others met with Kerry Russell, DC Recycling Coordinator. We learned that this issue will be more complex than anticipated. Currently all trash at Town Hall goes into a single dumpster (despite having recycling bins inside), which is picked up by the Highway Dept. and taken to the incinerator. In order to establish recycling, we would need not only small bins throughout the building, but also a separate dumpster, and for that collection to be hauled to the recycling facility in Beacon operated by Republic Services. We should determine what the cost would be to use the facility as well as the cost of a private hauler for that portion. Susan will contact the manager at Republic (contact provided by Kerry) to learn more, as well as other municipalities with this arrangement to obtain models. It was suggested that, in the meantime, town staff and visitors be encouraged to take their recyclables home if they have the ability to separate them. We also noted that the town is now using a shredding service for a lot of the paper waste to preserve confidentiality. This is taken off-site and we do not know if any recycling is involved; however, shredded paper is compostable.
- In a related report, Susan reported that she was contacted by Rebecca Edwards (former DC District 6 Legislator) to be put in touch with the new District Superintendent at DC BOCES, Jason Schetelick. Jason brings experience with composting and is planning an aerobic composting installation at BOCES. He is interested in connecting with food scrap generators (NYS's new food scrap recycling law is now in effect, and generators over a certain volume are required to route scraps for composting). Leaves/yard waste could potentially be taken to such a facility as well. Rebecca also looped in representatives of Mothers Out Front, a local environmental organization, which has identified organics management as a priority. Susan will connect this conversation to Michelle Gluck at CCEDC, who has already initiated a multi-municipality discussion about organics and is planning additional meetings. There is a wonderful opportunity for collaboration.
- NRI/Open Space Plan: Susan reported that the CAC received the draft plan last week; it aims for a final draft review in early April, followed by presentation to the Board in May or June.
- Solar for All campaign status: when we last received a count, there were 23 signups and 11 more in the pipeline with some outstanding documentation needs. We are close. It is exceedingly difficult to get updates, although at state level we are required to have this information in order to complete the action for both CSC and CEC. Danielle Salisbury left CCEDC and our current liaison for this need is Eleanor Peck, our CEC representative at HV Regional Council. Eleanor will be on maternity leave momentarily, but her colleague is covering, and Susan has been in touch to stress our need for periodic updates on registration.
- Comp Plan points determination: Tom has worked on this extensively and will work on updating Michelle Gluck's draft spreadsheet with info from the final Plan. After his review, Tom felt that we would qualify for some, but not all, of the possible points for this action (which vary from 3 to 21).
- Status of Eastdale (Creekside Park) for PE7: We obtained the various documents pertaining to this land acquisition (filed on Google Drive) and consulted with Michael Welti. It remains unclear if the legal procedure used to acquire the land qualifies for the action, which requires the town to make a financial contribution. Susan will attempt to connect with someone at CSC for clarification.
- CAPI status: We continue to await a starting date. In the meantime, we have been

offered the option of adding a “Climate Adaptation Chapter” to the work, to be completed with a template within the same time frame and based on our existing Vulnerability Assessment. This chapter could serve as the basis for a Climate Adaptation Plan, which is discrete from the Action Plan (address adaptation vs. mitigation respectively). Michael Welti is in favor of taking this opportunity, as is the Task Force; Mike recommended that the Board would need to consent, and we are also awaiting feedback regarding any potential cost (we don’t believe there is one but waiting for a response).

- Report from Hudson 7: Tom noted that there was some movement on the topic of the salt front.
- Brochure: Kristen Taylor committed to finishing the file.
- Outreach to the business community: We discussed potential elements of a Green Business Challenge. Feza recommended that it would be best to approach business owners with a broader concept, with different aspects that can help people in different situations be engaged. Charging infrastructure could be part of this as could many other specific actions such as supporting employee biking, recycling, plastic reduction, etc. CSC actions have potential to be applied at business level as do activities being promoted by the CAC such as native plantings. He also pointed out the importance of incentives and asked if a grant could be available to promote participating businesses. Susan mentioned our hoped-for CEC action grants once the Solar Campaign comes to fruition. There are a number of online resources related to green business challenges; we can look at the CSC site for communities that have created such a program. We can also explore if such a challenge would qualify for the Innovation elements. Feza and Joan are interested in researching this topic.

General discussion of our approach: a new year and updated approach. Given that we have achieved initial certification, our upcoming work would benefit from a thoughtful visioning of next priorities towards Silver. Priorities for the coming year should reflect the potential impact on our community, actions already in process, and feasibility.. By establishing clear goals, we can focus our efforts more efficiently and approach the Board for its support with a robust presentation. We need to flesh out each goal area prior to requesting a discussion with the Supervisor/Board. Our general consensus was that these areas are:

- Green fleet issues including inventory and policy
- Waste management issues including recycling and organics
- Development of a green business challenge

These 3 general “buckets” reflect a number of CSC actions that are in process. We should also target completion of:

- Climate adaptation chapter within CAPI
- Solar for All campaign

Our agenda next month will be built around these areas, those who have made commitments to obtain updated or new information will bring it back for discussion and next steps.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 3, 2022

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht