



**Climate Smart
Communities**
Certified Bronze



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

March 2, 2023 at 7 pm

The meeting took place on Zoom at the following link:

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

Present:

Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair
Ann Shershin, Town Board liaison
Feza Oktay, Member
Hannah Charlson, Vassar College intern
Johanna Fallert, Town resident

Update - CAPI Dutchess

Susan reported that the project is on track. Two monthly cohort meetings have occurred with data collection under way for a range of municipal GHG emission sources and training in data entry using the ICLEI program.

Update - Solar project

Susan reported that Supervisor Bailey sought a competing bid from a second contractor in accordance with Town procurement policy. Susan and Ann expressed concern to the Supervisor that the contractor in question is not NYSERDA certified, which is required for the grants. Resolution of this question is awaited. The SunCommon representative is aware of the process and wishes to be kept apprised so that they can remain competitive.

Update - Green Business initiative

Susan reported she, Feza, and Ann met again with Maria Genovesi from Green Business Bureau and that we have since received an updated MOU from GBB reflecting the proposed program launch in April, with details and discounted pricing/timelines for Town businesses. Susan, Ann, and Feza will meet with Maria again on 3/6 to pin down further plans. Maria shared that her meeting with representatives of Ulster's Green Business program and Sustainable Hudson Valley did not produce any information that would preclude the Town moving forward at this time, with the understanding that GBB will attempt to widen reach into Dutchess through the Chamber of Commerce. Feza is in contact with Sarah Lee, CEO of Think Dutchess which is working on economic development in the County. It's important to learn if there are other streams moving in this direction separate from the County government.

Update - Repair Cafe

Susan and Feza continue to work closely with Lisa Kaul, Town resident who is spearheading this initiative with the support of Sustainable Hudson Valley's Repair Cafe program. The first Cafe is scheduled for 4/15 at the Senior Center, making the Town a co-sponsor and eligible for Climate Smart action. The logistics are extensive, and there is a long list of "coaches" some of whom come from a distance to various cafes in our area. The goal is to develop a roster of local coaches. One of the planners is a City of Poughkeepsie resident, and we may eventually be able to alternate Town/City dates for an ongoing program. We fully expect glitches the first time but are very enthusiastic about this new program. We would benefit from sponsors (local businesses, orgs, or individuals) for minor financial support to get started with flyers, signs, or building a tools/supplies library. The expectation is that there will be cash donations (very typical of cafes) which will then be used month to month to fund these needs, food, etc. Susan will inquire about getting flyers printed by the Town and using all of the Town publicity outlets. In the near future our Cafe will have a page on the SHV Cafe site.

Information from Hannah Charlson, Vassar College, research on leaf blower ordinances

Hannah described her course and project. She is taking a course entitled "Big Problems, Local Solutions" taught by Rebecca Edwards. This is an "intensive" on local policy, each student is partnered with a municipal group or elected official to gain experience with policy work. Hannah is researching leaf blower ordinances in NYS and will produce a comprehensive paper laying out the elements of successful bans in other towns. She has learned that the vast majority of nearby bans are seasonal only, and that they are focused on noise pollution rather than emissions. A few towns have a complete ban. She will look at the seasonal bans to see if those towns are moving forward for a more complete policy. A few towns outside of NYS, e.g. Washington DC, have implemented complete bans. We discussed several questions that will impact future discussion:

- Are the bans only for leaf blowers, or are other small engines included?
- Where to start - residential vs. commercial (i.e. landscaping companies, tree services - much more challenging to change out the large machines due not only to cost but also to the need for powering for long periods of time, recharging, etc.)
- Municipal departments like the idea of small electric machines for a variety of reasons, and there are grants available to help with this.
- Are bans becoming more common and, if so, why? Is it because there are increasing electric options?

Hannah will continue to keep us posted as she finds information. The class will have a presentation in April for the students and municipal contacts.

It was stressed that this is background research only at this time, to provide a foundation should the CSTF/CAC choose to move into discussion with the Board on such an initiative at some point.

* Next meeting: Thursday, May 4, 2023. Due to holiday conflict and difficulty rescheduling for April, we will meet next in May. **NO APRIL MEETING**. Town will be notified for calendar, etc.