



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

**January 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM
First Floor Conference Room, Town Hall**

CSTF members present:

Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair
Kristen Taylor
Joan Freeman
Richard Levine
Ann Shershin
Stanley Merritt
Katherine Espinosa

Guest: Jeffrey Domanski, Hudson Valley Energy

Committee business:

- Laura DiStefano was unable to continue with the Task Force and submitted a formal resignation which was included in the recent Town Board agenda. Susan spoke with the Town Supervisor; at this time we do not have any candidates to replace her but will remain open to the possibility should there be applications.

Presentation on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) by Jeffrey Domanski:

- This presentation was scheduled as an opportunity for Task Force members to become familiar with CCA, which falls under Pledge Action 8 (Green Innovation Economy) of the Climate Smart program. Information about this action is found at: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/actions/#open/action/150>
Jeffrey's complete presentation, as well as an FAQ sheet, have been uploaded to the Task Force folder on Google Drive.
- It is our understanding that presentations on CCA have been made to the Town Board on prior occasions. At this time other municipalities in our region are considering forming a new aggregation. It was the consensus of those present that it would be appropriate to bring this topic to the current Board in light of its relevance for Climate Smart certification (as well as Clean Energy Communities, a separate program). This discussion would occur in the context of prioritizing next actions (see comments below).

Status of Planning Tool:

- The Planning Tool will be presented to the Board by Michelle Gluck on Wednesday 2/19/20; the meeting will begin at 7 pm, and we do not yet know where in the meeting this will occur. When the agenda is published Susan will send a reminder to the group; she plans to attend and welcomes others to join.

Status of grant for 2020-21 Climate Action Planning Institute in Dutchess County (CAPI Dutchess):

- Susan reported that this grant through NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities was recently approved. The County will serve as lead with several municipal partners. CAPI Dutchess is regional climate action planning leadership program that will take participants through the development of their own Local Government Operations GHG Emissions Inventories (GHGIs) and draft Government Climate Action Plans (CAPs), which are key Priority Actions (under Pledge Element 2) for the Climate Smart program. The project is structured as a 16 month-long working group facilitated by the Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC), in partnership with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and will convene in early spring. Participants will use software and tools that were designed for this purpose. The Town can designate volunteers and/or staff who will attend meetings, complete data collection/entry, do other project support on behalf of their local governments as needed, and participate in project communications and meetings. HVRC deployed the CAPI model in Ulster County in 2018-19 and successfully walked 8 communities through the process. Susan was in contact with the Town Supervisor and Director of Municipal Development; there are no specifics yet, but she will reach out to Europa McGovern at HVRC regarding what to expect. Richard Levine remains interested in participating.

Status of Certification Checklist:

- Michelle Gluck was unable to attend tonight but was in touch with Susan earlier to discuss the Certification Assessment. She requested that she, Susan, and Kristen meet in the next week or so to attempt to finish compiling the information in order that the Assessment can be wrapped up and presented to the Town. We would then share the updated draft with task force members for review. The goal was to complete this by the end of January. Susan will follow up regarding scheduling. Task force members were in agreement that we would be best able to prioritize next actions once we have the updated draft indicating items completed and those in progress, with a better sense of the relative impact of other possible actions on the town as well as certification points.

- Michelle provided the Town with a draft Letter of Support that needs to be completed in order to continue collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension through next steps of certification. We assume that this will proceed and are delighted to know that we will continue to have Michelle's support and expertise.
- Our intention is to proceed in the following sequence:
 1. Presentation of finalized Planning Tool (2/19)
 2. Presentation of finalized Certification Assessment (date TBA)
 3. Identification of next steps based on priorities across both items
 4. Implementation of those actions
 5. Implementation of work on documentation
- Susan also provided relevant updates from CAC: a grant to complete the Natural Resources Inventory (Priority Action under Pledge Element 6) was approved which allows the town to contract with a professional consultant; expectation is about 6 months to signing the contract due to the process that's involved in putting out the RFP. The CAC will take the lead and has already completed a project to outline desired NRI elements. The group is now also working on programming related to bird habitat which could eventually be relevant for habitat action (under Pledge Element 7)

Next meeting: February 6, 2020

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht