

Town of Stuyvesant
Climate Smart Community Task Force Meeting
February 27, 2024

Present: William Schneider, Maria Ausherman, Seamus Donahoe Carol Leber, Keegan Oneal, Kathryn Schneider, Hannah Shepard, Jim Werkowski

Absent: Brian Chittenden, Lee Jamison, Bob Green, Paula Van Meter

Minutes: Minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Reports at Town Board Meetings: Hannah will report at the board meeting on March 14, and Jim will attend on April 11, 2024.

Old Business—Reports and Updates

Trex Recycling – Carol reported that 578 of the 1000 pounds of plastic film needed for our next bench have been collected.

CEC Designation Grant and Benchmarking – Hannah reported that our nomination of the garage for a free energy audit has been approved. We will be notified by NYSERDA or the auditing company when it will take place.

Hannah has been trying to collect energy bills and data for benchmarking updates. She has what she needs for oil and propane, but she has had difficulty getting data on electricity from National Grid. It would be easiest to get the data electronically from their website but if that proves impossible, she may need to have the bills scanned. Hannah will stay on top of this.

Bill sent a separate email detailing the electric landscaping equipment purchased by the town highway department with \$2,000 from the Designation Grant. We are still waiting for NYSERDA's approval of the press release. When the equipment comes in, we would like to take a photo with town officials and CSCTF members. Maria volunteered Steve Taylor to take the photo.

Columbia County Climate Smart Committee – Kathy attended the February 1 meeting via zoom. The County CSC meets via zoom on the first Thursday of every month from 10-12. Anyone can view the meeting and all the past meetings have been posted to YouTube (see <https://climatesmart.columbiacountyny.com/>). The county garage solar project is up and running. The county has also made progress on the installation of charging stations for county vehicles. They would like to open some to the public but there are costs associated with doing this. A tree planting campaign is still being planned for this spring in Hudson around Earth Day or Arbor Day. Audrey Kropp of Columbia Greene Cooperative Extension reported on the Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Planning project. Towns participating in this project will have

their plans finalized by March 28, 2024. The county is working on a parallel effort to revise the Hazard Mitigation Plan under FEMA. A Climate Carnival is planned for September 14, 2024. Kathy is unable to attend the March 7 meeting. No one was available to sub for her so we will rely on the recording for information.

NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities 3.0 – Several of us listened to this webinar about changes to the CEC program. Point allocations and grant amounts have changed. We learned that the program will end on December 31, 2025, and that there is a great deal of money that needs to be distributed in the next two years.

Climate Smart Community Submissions Update – Kathy circulated a list of completed actions, which, if approved should bring us up to 74 points.

New Business

Regenerating Life film showing – Seamus and Maria reported on John Feldman’s film, and we would like to try to do a community showing in the fall. There was discussion about whether this should be held in Stuyvesant or someplace else, and who we might partner with. The cost of a showing for 50 people or less is \$100 and we would have to ask the town for support. The film is 3 hours long and could have an intermission and/or a panel discussion. Maria and Seamus will investigate venues, partners, and costs and come back to us with a proposal.

Future Climate Smart Community actions – Many thanks to the task force members who took devoted time to going through the long list of CSC pledge elements and actions on the website. We identified a number of actions that seemed feasible to pursue, task force volunteers who will investigate the actions further, and if feasible, spearhead these efforts.

PE 3 Government Buildings Energy Audits (priority action) - Hannah

PE 3 Interior Lighting Upgrades – Jim

PE 3 HVAC Upgrades - Jim

PE 3 Clean Energy Upgrades - Hannah

PE 3 Fleet Inventory – Hannah

PE 4 Heat Pumps – Bill

PE 4 Solar Energy Installation – Jim

PE 5 Recycling Bins in Government Buildings - Carol

PE 5 Community Repair - Carol

PE 6 Infrastructure for Biking and Walking - Maria

PE 6 Natural Resources Inventory (priority action) – Kathy and Keegan

PE 7 Culverts and Dams – Keegan

Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan – Bill attended a meeting that was attended by town officials, fire personnel and emergency management personnel. The main takeaway from the meeting is that the town needs public input via the questionnaire that was initially sent out using QR code and is posted on the town website.

CLC Strategic Conservation Plan for Columbia County – It was recently announced in a press release that CLC received funding and we should expect to hear more about this planning effort going forward.

Partners for Climate Action webinars – Kathy and some others on the task force receive emails from this group, which has had several good webinars recently. Kathy will circulate information about how to get on their mailing list and a link to a recording of a recent webinar on climate change and storms.

Next meeting – March 26, 2024, 7:00pm, Town Hall.