

Climate Smart Communities Task Force
August 5, 2020 Minutes
via video teleconference

Present

Steve Powers CSC Chair, CAC Rep
Bruce Shenker CSC Coordinator, NLR rep To CC Env Management Council
Jenna Barbary-Glovsky, CAC Rep
Bob Gilson, CAC Rep
Elizabeth Poreba
Sarah Steadman
Cathy Wilkerson

Marc Anthonisen advisor
Jill Falchi-Henck Clean Energy Coordinator

Absent

Steve Dono
Marsha Kessler
Adelia Moore

Steve Powers began the meeting at 7PM announcing that New Lebanon is now officially a Clean Energy Community. In addition, the Town Board has officially allowed the Task Force to create a Face Book page, so the Social Media subcommittee will meet soon, when Steve has received the information he needs from the Town.

He then asked for a motion for the Task Force to officially form subcommittees for Community Composting and Social Media. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Marc reported that he has restored many old, donated bikes and repaired them with the help of Moy Wong. They have been distributed via Tistrya's Facebook page. He is researching waivers about this distribution for the Town attorney to study for insurance purposes. He also noted that this endeavor could be a PE5 Action: (Resource Recovery Center) and therefore asked the Task Force to recommend it to Town Board for a vote of approval. Jill noted that the Climate Smart actions don't deal directly with cutting emissions, but the bike recovery could count toward encouraging walking and biking.

The Task Force next turned to consideration of the Free Store, which was run out of the Town Hall until closed down in March due to COVID-19 rules. Tistrya would like someone else to take responsibility for this, and to relocate it if possible. It was agreed that the Store should be under an official town body and that running it would also fit under a proposed Resource Recovery Center action. Sarah volunteered to take the lead on this project.

Steve asked for a motion for the Task Force to officially take responsibility for a Resource Recovery Center that will include both bike repair and the Free Store. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Sarah reported that the topic of sustainable agriculture is not yet ready for Task Force consideration and can be taken on “further down the line.”

Marc reported on his completion of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Government Operations Summary Report, copies of which had been distributed to Task Force members. This is a major PE2 Action, counting for 16 points. The report revealed that diesel vehicles counted for 65% of the Town’s emissions, 25% for heating, and 10% for electricity. Electricity use will drop by half now that LED lights are in use. Discussion ensued about ways to target diesel and fuel oil emissions. Jill asked how old the fuel oil system is; since no one knew, it was resolved to look into this matter. The possibility of replacing some of the town fleet with electric vehicles in the next round of purchases was mentioned subject to available revenue. Cathy asked if the Town subcontracts the maintenance of roads. Tistrya will be consulted about this, along with the possibility that the Town insist on green suppliers for subcontracted jobs.

Another consideration is the necessity of keeping town vehicles warm in the winter. Bruce said he would ask Cara about how this is done in Chatham..

The Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Government Operations Summary Report will be posted publicly after Town Board approval.

There was also a question about switching town buildings to community solar, which could save another 10%, roughly \$600, off the annual electric bill. Jill asked if the town was demand metered. Marc volunteered to find out.

Marc noted that doing a fleet inventory could be another Action undertaken by the Task Force. He will consult Tistrya about this.

Steve then briefly reminded Task Force members of the committee rules for meetings passed by the Town Board at their last meeting.

- A. Open Meeting laws apply to Task Force meetings but not subcommittees
- B. Subcommittee actions have to be approved by whole Task Force and they cannot speak on behalf of the TF without prior approval
- C. Communications with the Town Board are to be from the TF Chair or someone appointed by them
- D. Communications with gov’t entities for research purposes must be approved by whole TF
- E. Communications with gov’t officials have to be approved by the Town Supervisor

The other rules that we approved in the last meeting still apply

Jenna reported on the Composting Subcommittee’s work. They have prepared educational materials to be made into flyers and distributed at the Farmers’ Market and the post office. Jenna is also preparing a short video.

Compost deposits can be made at the Community Garden. Peter Morrill has agreed with this arrangement, with the caveat that people are educated about what materials can be composted. Bins for compost collection will also be available at the Farmers’ Market. If the Town Board

approves, bins located on Town property could count toward PE5 Action (Recycling Bins in Government Buildings). Cathy volunteered to distribute flyers door to door and locate other places that would post them.

Steve asked for a motion for the Task Force to officially present this plan for community composting at the Town Board next week. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Bruce reported on the work of the Solar subcommittee. He has been in touch with Cara Humphrey of Astral Power, a solar company that does community outreach. She will be invited to address the Town Board in September regarding options for procuring solar power. It was noted that Town buildings are eligible for community solar if they are not demand metered. This could save the Town about \$600 a year. Jill said she would contact Cara about this.

Bruce next explained that Columbia County Climate Smart towns are writing letters to County Supervisors requesting that the County join the New York State Climate Smart Community Program. Bruce will present this letter to the Town Board at the next meeting for their approval to be sent to the Board of Supervisors.

Marc announced that, as part of his 2-year degree at Cornell, he will produce a 40 to 60 page report for the Task Force that will include Climate Smart activities already taken, a review of the literature and a suggested road map for the next 5 years, especially in regard to resiliency. Additionally, Cornell is proposing more students work with the Climate Smart Task Force as part of their degree program, completing modules such as composting or an inventory of community greenhouse gas emissions. Cathy suggested that one project could be a survey to discover how people in the Town feel about climate change and what they understand about the Climate Smart goals. It was agreed that a strategy that reflects the needs of people in the Town is necessary.

Steve asked for a motion that the Task Force approve the establishment of an arrangement between Cornell and the CAS Task Force after Marc's departure next May. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Marc suggested that he now turn his attention, as CAS advisor, to a Climate Vulnerability Assessment of the Town. Steve asked for a motion for the Task Force to approve Marc's work on this assessment. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25.

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on September 2 at 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba

Secretary