

Climate Smart Communities Task Force
September 2, 2020 Minutes
via video teleconference

Present

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

Marc Anthonisen advisor
Jill Falchi-Henck Clean Energy Coordinator

two members of the community

Absent

Jenna Barbary-Glovsky
Marsha Kessler
Adelia Moore

After approval of the minutes, Steve noted that all members of the Task Force on the call had completed the safety plan. A press release on the Task Force's work has been edited and approved by the DEC and will be going out to newspapers. He has created a Facebook page for the town, which will require the Town Board to revote on to allow comments, as Facebook requires.

Sarah reported on a Zoom meeting the Resource Recovery Center subcommittee had held with Diane Cohen, Executive Director of Finger Lakes Reuse, Inc, to learn about Ithaca's community resource model. Ms Cohen shared materials and offered future consultation.

The Free Store will open at the end of September in the Town Hall, though another location is being sought. Recipients of restored bikes now must sign liability waivers, which also include a brief description of the Climate Smart Communities program.

Steve then asked for a motion to proceed with two more actions: PE2 Community Green House Gas Inventory (a priority item worth 16 points), and PE3 Fleet inventory (worth 4 points). The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. Steve will need help in completing these two actions. Jill said she would provide sources for some of the information required.

Cathy gave an update on the work of the Compost subcommittee. The informational leaflet has been edited and is ready for printing, along with posters. Tistrya has provided a list of about 25 places to hang the posters around town. There will also be a sign on the site indicating what kinds of scraps can be composted. Committee members will host a table with information at the

September 13 Farmers Market. Josh Young, director of the Farmers Market, suggested they also provide a compost bin. They are exploring the purchase of bins with Wastequip on Route 20.

Bruce reported that the Solar subcommittee has invited Cara Humphrey of Astral Power to make a presentation at the October Town Board meeting about a community solar education and outreach event. Jill said that she would also be present with Cara and will discuss how schools can be used as anchor tenants for solar power. Other town buildings can be switched to solar, though the fact that they are now on demand metering might make the switch problematic.

Bruce said that there was much enthusiasm among members of the County Environmental Management Council about the prospect of making Columbia County as a whole a Climate Smart Community. The larger scale would make sustainability programs more powerful, and grants might be available to hire a person to help communities integrate their efforts. An initial presentation about this will be made to the relevant subcommittee this month. Meanwhile, the EMC is looking for ways for communities within the county to help each other with the CSC process.

Marc pointed out that there is C-PACE financing available to small businesses for energy-saving projects. Jill said these grants are available through Clean Energy Communities.

Marc announced that his role as intern in New Lebanon as part of the Cornell Civic Service Training Program is now officially over. He suggested that the Task Force compose a brief description of the work a future Cornell summer intern could do. Such a placement would be ideal for a student in the Masters in Public Administration program who lived in the area. Steve said he would check with Tistrya as to whether Town Board approval was required.

Marc added that he is now writing his final project about the work he has done for and with the Task Force. He suggested that it might be possible to bring in teams of students to work on specific projects such as Composting, the Community Greenhouse Gas inventory, the Climate Vulnerability Assessment and the Resource Recovery Program.

Steve and the members of the Task Force gave Marc a heart-felt round of applause in thanks for his work.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00

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

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba

Secretary