

New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force

Annual Report of Activities

2021

Climate Smart Task Force (CSTF) Members: Janelle Peotter, Amanda Gotto, Mark Varian, Jim O'Dowd, Wendy Rudder, Orelle Feher, Lynn Cherry, Liz Elkin Added members: Alexandria Wojcik (Liaison to Village Board), Julie Seyfert Lillis (Liaison to Town Board), Megan Wolff and Joe Londa

New Actions Towards Certification as a Climate Smart Community:

- Renewal of Community Choice Aggregation contracts by both Town and Village of New Paltz
- The Natural Resource Inventory for the Town and Village of New Paltz was completed, presented, and approved by the Town and Village Boards. The comprehensive report and interactive online story maps compiled information from 17 Town and Village plans and data from over 75 local, county, state, and national published reference documents and reports. In addition an online tutorial was created and a 1-hour training session was provided. This was accomplished through the efforts of a paid consultant (357 hours) and a dedicated group of 20 community volunteers (339 hours). The project was funded by a grant from the NYS DEC and Environmental Protection Fund Hudson River Estuary Program and wonderfully supported by local DEC staff.
- Update and response to reviewers comments on Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory underway led by CSTF member Joe Londa.

Task Force Meetings: Meetings were held every third Monday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00. Agendas and minutes archived on the Village and Town of New Paltz websites.

Education and Awareness:

- 4th Annual Zero Emissions Electric Vehicle Event – CSTF planned and participated in this event on October 2nd
- Warm Up to Winter: An Energy Showcase – January 14th, CSTF sponsored in collaboration with the New Paltz Climate Action Coalition & Interfaith Earth Action
- Eleven New Paltz Climate Change Solutions Meetups (335 Meet-Up members) held on first Tuesday of each month on Zoom The following were topics in 2021:
 - January 5th: Energy Navigators
 - February 2nd: Regenerative Agriculture and Carbon Farming Offset
 - March 2nd: Converting a 1790s Farmhouse to Zero/Low Energy
 - April 6th: Green Burials
 - May 4th: Film Discussion & Panel: The Story of Plastic
 - July 6th: The Future has Arrived: Why Your Next Car Should be Electric!
 - August 3rd: Energy Efficient Solutions For Your Home
 - September 7th: New Paltz Climate Solutions Meetup: Synthetic Turf Carpeting is a Hot Mess

- October 5th: Theatrical Solutions to Fast Fashion: Impacts of Clothing Waste and Alternatives
- November 2nd: Creating a Net Zero Energy and Fossil Fuel Free Residence
- December 7th: Bitcoin, Cryptocurrency, Blockchain: The Promise and the Peril
- 12 Climate Smart Book Club meetings featuring 11 different climate related books (117 Book Club Members on Meetup)
- 12 New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletters created monthly and widely distributed to more than 350 people
- Social Media Presence on Facebook, Instagram and Meetup
- Mentored 1 high school intern – updating the Town of New Paltz Local Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Launched New Paltz Tiffin Project: Three phase program to reduce solid waste through the promotion of reusable stainless steel containers for restaurant take out.

Task Force Training

Beyond Plastic Course with Judith Enck at Bennington College (3 members, 6 weeks)

ICLEI Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory Course (1 member, 5 months)

Cornell Climate Steward (2 members, 12 week course)

Additional Related Activities on Other Boards & Committees

CSTF members participated on the Bicycle Pedestrian Committee, Environmental Conservation Board, Town Planning Board, Solar at the Landfill Working Group, Climate Action Coalition, Ulster County Climate Smart, Climate Smart Gardiner, Cornell Climate Steward Program, Interfaith Earth Action, Climate Reality Project, Climate Mediation Group, Reformed Church of New Paltz - Caring for Creation Committee, Jewish Congregation of New Paltz – Green Committee