

**Volume 4 Issue 4**  
**April 2022**



**Climate Smart  
Communities**  
Certified Bronze

# New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

## Climate Smart Solutions Meetup: No Mow May - Saving Bees & Greenhouse Gas Emissions



No Mow May is becoming a movement across the country that may help transform the traditional American lawn – a manicured carpet of grass - into something that is ecologically beneficial. No Mow May initiatives have a clear purpose: to save the bees, and not just honeybees which are European imports, but also natives bees including bumble bees, mining bees and sweat bees. As many of you know bees are

facing a catastrophic decline with native bee species under particular threat due to habitat loss, pesticide use, climate change and urbanization. New Paltz Climate Smart would like to propose that New Paltz adopt No Mow May for another reason as well: climate impacts. The total estimation of greenhouse gas emissions from lawn care, which includes fertilizer and pesticide production, watering, mowing, leaf blowing and other lawn management practices, was found by a University of California-Irvine study to be four times greater than the amount of carbon stored by grass. In other words, our lawns produce more CO<sub>2</sub> than they absorb. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates the average gas mower creates as much pollution as eight cars driving 55 miles per hour!

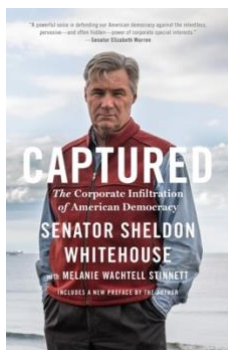
So what is the solution? It is time to shrink our lawn area to only what is needed and return large areas to meadow or plant groundcovers and other native species. Thus, even though many people like to look at an undivided expanse of green grass, there is a terrible cost that we pay for this view. Too much money, chemicals, and time are spent maintaining it and it is a clear contributor to environmental degradation and climate change. During this Meetup we will be discussing how to reduce the carbon footprint of our yards while simultaneously saving bees and other pollinators. We will discuss how other communities have promoted "No Mow May" and how we can do the same in New Paltz and in surrounding communities!

**Tuesday April 5, 2022 6:00 – 7:30 pm Eastern Time**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84504832824?pwd=ZG9PN0VHZFBWUIYwbGRZdjhTWHdmZz09>

# Climate Smart Book Club: Captured



Our Climate Smart Book Club this month features a book by Sheldon Whitehouse, a U.S. senator and former federal prosecutor. He has had a front-row seat for the spectacle of dark money in government. In his widely praised book *Captured - The Corporate Infiltration of American Democracy*, he describes how corporations buy influence over our government— not only over representatives and senators, but over the very regulators directly responsible for enforcing the laws under which these corporations operate, and over the judges and prosecutors who are supposed to be vigilant about protecting the public interest.

In a case study that shows these operations at work, *Whitehouse* reveals how fossil fuel companies have held any regulation related to climate change at bay. The problem is structural: as Kirkus Reviews wrote, "many of the ills it illuminates are bipartisan."

**Tuesday, April 26, 2022 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**

**Online event**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91066225574?pwd=TIVKMU9vNWkxMGE5ZzdTM2VabWMxQT09>

## Spring Forward: Ditch Disposables Follow-up

Thank you to all who attended Spring Forward: Ditch Disposables! If you couldn't make it (or had tech issues signing in) please [click here for a recording of the event](#).

### Four actions you can take right now:

1. Avoid the use of plastic and “compostable” packaging, food storage containers, dishes and utensils. Use tiffins! We have sold 100’s and placed a new order.
2. Check out the M.A.P. (My Alternatives to Plastic): [bit.ly/HUDSONVALLEYMAP](http://bit.ly/HUDSONVALLEYMAP)
3. Pass local resolutions and advocate for legislation banning single-use plastics on the county, state, and federal level.
4. Don’t give manufacturers and distributors a pass. Tell your State Senators and Assembly Members to oppose Governor Hochul's and Senator Kaminsky's flawed EPR proposals and pass Steve Englebright's upcoming Extended Producer Responsibility Act and Better Bottle Bill proposal.

To learn more about the actions to take to stop the use of single use plastics and other disposable packaging visit: <https://www.beyondplastics.org/>

Lisa Lindsley's Presentation on Empowering shareholders to hold corporations accountable:  
[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1R776mS4s\\_a0Gs3F75hxv1Sodww9FXtPZ/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=107007054898987364158&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1R776mS4s_a0Gs3F75hxv1Sodww9FXtPZ/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=107007054898987364158&rtpof=true&sd=true)

The Story of Plastic Animated Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO3SA4YyEYU>

# New Paltz Benefits from Community Choice Aggregation

By Mark Varian



In 2019, thanks to the efforts of local environmental advocates, residents of the Village and Town of New Paltz who had Central Hudson electricity accounts were automatically included in a Community Choice Aggregation administered by Joule Community Power. Hudson Valley Community Power, the CCA, negotiated a fixed price for the supply of 100% renewable energy from New York State hydro and wind projects of \$.06573 per kWh from June of 2021 through June 2024. Residents could opt out of the program if they preferred to pay for the energy supply mix provided by Central Hudson or a third-party energy supply company (ESCO).

In February the Central Hudson energy supply rate skyrocketed to over \$.20 per kWh, an increase of close to 200%! So, if you had opted out of the CCA program and used 750 kWh of electricity, you would have paid \$157.50 while residents in the CCA paid \$49.30! That is just for your energy supply (visit: <https://www.hudsonvalleyenergy.org/community-choice-aggregation>). All residents also paid for the utility's distribution cost, which is regulated by the State Department of Public Service. Besides paying less for their energy, CCA members also received 100% of their electricity from renewable sources, which is the most important benefit a CCA can offer.

Residents of the Town of Gardiner weren't as lucky. Last summer, the town turned down the proposed CCA fixed rate of \$.07289 per kWh, which was almost a penny more than New Paltz was paying and also higher than Central Hudson's standard rate. There was consensus that it would be best to wait until this spring to seek better pricing in the renewable energy market. Last week Central Hudson sent out an email announcing that the electrical supply rate has fallen 46% in March to just over \$.11 per kWh. But over the past eight months the average cost of energy from Central Hudson is considerably higher than the 100% renewable supply from the CCA.

**This should be a wake-up call to all those Hudson Valley communities that are thinking of joining a CCA. The best time to join was eight months ago. The second-best time is now!**

For more information you can see the rate comparison charts for our Hudson Valley programs at this link: <https://www.hudsonvalleyenergy.org/community-choice-aggregation>

Additionally, here is a link to a recent press release noting the estimated \$3.4 million in savings for HVCP communities in February alone – and an additional \$1M in January, due to the difference between the HVCP rate and Central Hudson's rates: <https://prn.to/3JS9Yhl>

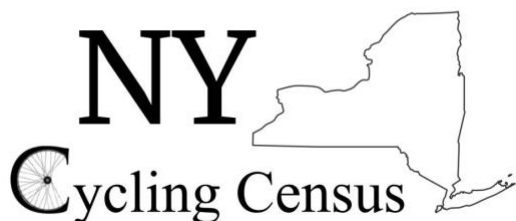
## Climate Can't Wait NYC-Albany Bike Event

ClimateCantWait.org is planning a NYC to Albany bike ride from April 16<sup>th</sup> to April 23<sup>rd</sup> aimed at highlighting both needed climate legislation and climate solutions. They are creating a walkalong/ride along rally and press event at various locations on the way. **The stop in New Paltz will be around April 19<sup>th</sup> and we would like to show them our support.** If you can accommodate a rider that evening, please contact Tara at the email listed below.



Climate Can't Wait is welcoming other riders to join for the entire ride or just a section. We are asking anyone who joins the ride to be a road safe, self-sufficient biker- as of now they are not planning on having support vehicles or road closures. Everyone is absolutely invited to join us at the rallies/walk along events along the way! **If you want to participate and/or can assist in the planning please contact Tara Vamos [Tara@itsallaboutmovement.com](mailto:Tara@itsallaboutmovement.com)**

## Participate in the First New York State Bike Census!



Riding a bicycle instead of driving a car is very climate smart but often there are structural barriers that prevent people from using this option. Be a part of the first New York State Bike Census! This is an exciting and unprecedented opportunity to help shape the future of cycling and document where, why and how New Yorkers are riding bikes! With this kind of information, we can help shape public policy that will

foster safer streets, and more equitable transportation options across the state.

In a unique partnership between the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and Urban Cycling Solutions (UCS), the Cycling Census represents New York's first statewide dataset on bicycle integration with mass transit. The purpose of this short survey is to collect insights from cyclists and transit customers from all over New York State to better understand opportunities and barriers for active first/last mile transportation. Please help direct the future of more and safer bicycling in New York, by completing and submitting to the New York Bike Census below! Each participant will be entered to win one of three \$150 [Planet Bike](#) gift cards.

The data gleaned from this survey will be used to help shape the future of bicycling in New York, and assist decision makers to develop a more inclusive and equitable multimodal transportation system throughout The Empire State. Please be assured that no email addresses or other personal information will be saved or shared!

**Survey Link** [https://nyserda.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_aaOKnyxZSgkskmi](https://nyserda.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aaOKnyxZSgkskmi)



# Task Force Field Trip to UCCRA

By Joe Londa

Members of the New Paltz Climate Smart Community Task Force toured the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA) on a chilly March morning. UCRRA is not a department of Ulster County, but a solid waste authority that is financially self-sustaining and operates independently of the County of Ulster. The Ulster County Legislature approves appointments of the UCRRA Board of Directors. The tour focused on Composting, Recycling and Solid Waste transported to the landfill in Seneca Falls.



The scale of the composting capability is impressive and is planned to expand further. It takes in food waste from participating organizations and mixes them with chipped landscaping waste and pallets to form a starting material that then follows an aging and aeration process to form high quality compost. This process is highly regulated and monitored to produce a STA certified compost. The compost has been sampled and tested as required by the Seal of Testing Assurance Certified Compost Program of the US Composting Council and then sold by the ton.



Recycling takes in single stream recycling material and sorts it into paper, cardboard, glass and plastic. The sorting takes advantage of both equipment and people to create these separate streams and then further separates the plastic into different groupings which are crushed into bales and sold into the market for recycled bulk materials. One of the great challenges that UCRRA must contend with "Wishful Recycling". That is the practice of people putting materials that cannot be recycled or materials that

become entangled in the equipment. These materials must be removed from the stream and slows the processing of the recycling. A full list of what is "Wishful Recycling" can be found here <https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https%3A%2F%2Fucrra.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2021%2F10%2F2021-DualStreamRecyclingGuide.pdf>

That which is not composted or recycled, becomes solid waste for landfill. All solid waste is transported to Seneca Falls landfill with a round trip of 480 miles on a truck with very low MPG. Transportation is one of the Greenhouse Gas Sectors that is a very high contributor to emissions and any organic materials will decay and produce methane, one of the Greenhouse Gases. **Thus, minimizing our solid waste should be the goal of all citizens of New Paltz by effective recycling and taking advantage of composting opportunities.** New Paltz now collects food waste at the recycling center on Clearwater Road or food waste can also be taken to the community compost bins in front of the Community Center at 3 Veteran's Drive in New Paltz. Thank you to both Angelina Brandt and Tanesia White from UCCRA for this very informative tour.

## New Paltz Climate Smart April Calendar

**Tuesday April 5th at 6:00 – 7:30 pm** Climate Solutions Meetup – No Mow May  
- Saving Bees & Greenhouse Gas Emissions [Zoom link to Meetup](#)

**Monday April 18th at 7:00 pm** monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting  
[Link to Zoom Meeting of Task Force](#)

**Sunday April 24<sup>th</sup> 1:00 – 4:00 pm** Earth Day Fair and Fundraiser for Millbrook Preserve, 50 Sunset Ridge (park at Duzine Elementary)

**Tuesday April 26th at 7:00 pm** Climate Smart Book Club: Captured: The Corporate Infiltration of American Democracy  
[Link to Climate Smart Book Club](#)

*If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please contact Janelle Peotter, Climate Smart Coordinator at [newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com](mailto:newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com)*



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