

Volume 3 Issue 12
December 2021



**Climate Smart
Communities**
Certified Bronze

New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

New Paltz Climate Change Solutions *Meetup:*

Bitcoin, Cryptocurrency, Blockchain: The Promise and the Peril

Tuesday
December 7, 2021
6:00 to 7:30 PM

Online event:



<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85396370823?pwd=dXkxeEhHSkNqc2FzZzhSaXRxY3VDQT09>

There's a new technology that is exploding across NYS and while its proponents celebrate its transformative potential, others are deeply concerned about the environmental impacts. The most popular brand is Bitcoin - one of over 6000 types of digital "money" known as cryptocurrency. Don't worry if you don't understand technology or find the whole thing confusing.

Our speaker, Irene Weiser, coordinator of Fossil Free Tompkins (outside Ithaca) felt the same way. She's not a technology expert - actually a veterinarian by training, (now retired.) Irene now spends her time engaged in local and state efforts to stop the use of fossil fuels and promoting renewable solutions. When Irene learned that an old, polluting power plant on Seneca Lake was being taken over by a Bitcoin mining company, and that it would be burning gas 24/7/365 she knew she had to get involved. Of course, getting involved started with learning what the heck Bitcoin is, and cryptocurrency and blockchain. While not by any means an expert, Irene has become conversant with the techno-speak. In this Meetup she'll do her best - with the aid of a couple of YouTube videos - to bring a basic understanding about cryptocurrencies and blockchain technologies, their revolutionary potential, and their environmental impacts. She'll discuss the insatiable energy appetite of some forms of cryptocurrencies, and how they threaten to derail NY's achievement of its climate goals. While being careful not to throw the blockchain baby out with the bathwater, she'll discuss possible solutions and what we can all do to get involved.

December Climate Smart Book Club:

Regeneration - Ending The Climate Crisis In One Generation



This stack here represents just a small cross section of all the books we have read in the Climate Smart Book Club over the past two years. Some are hard to read, some have inspired great hope and even joy but we are enriched by discussing them together. Please consider joining us for the **Climate Smart Book Club!**

**Tuesday, December 21st 2021
7:00 to 8:30 PM EST**

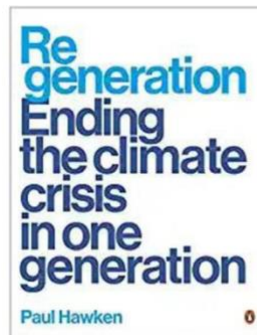
Online event

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

We have decided our December meeting of the Climate Smart Book Club will be a continuation of our book pick for November: ***Regeneration – Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation*** by Paul Hawken and is a

sort of sequel to ***Drawdown*** which we read as part of our Climate Smart Book Club in May of 2020. It is available both as an audiobook, softcover, or on the website below. Even if you are not up to reading the whole book you can easily pick and choose chapters that

interest you. Much like Drawdown, each section stands on its own. Quoting from their website: “*Regeneration* is a radical new approach to the climate crisis, one that weaves justice, climate, biodiversity, and human dignity into a seamless tapestry of action, policy, and transformation that can end the climate crisis in one generation. It is the first book to describe and define the burgeoning regeneration movement spreading rapidly throughout the world.”



<https://regeneration.org/>

Reduce Your Use of Single Use with a Tiffin!



Figure 1 The Tiffin stands proud in a sea of single use plastic!

See that shiny container in the photograph surrounded by single use plastic bags, plastic containers, and perhaps boxes coated on the inside with polyethylene (PE) plastic to make them moisture proof? That shiny stainless steel container is called a tiffin and is one way to reduce your use of single use!

The New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force has eight Action Groups that were created with community input. One of those Action Groups we call the 6 R's: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Repurpose, Recycle. Our Tiffin Project is a direct outgrowth of trying to reduce waste through the reuse of a container for take out from restaurants. We are promoting

the use of tiffins – a container that prevents needing to come home with plastic or other single use containers from a restaurant. Tiffins are made of stainless steel, reusable 1000's of times, and easily washed in a dishwasher. Tiffin style carriers are great at keeping the foods separate, in a structured container, to prevent your meal from getting soggy or squashed before you can eat it. While many of us feel good when our favorite restaurants puts our orders in compostable containers, remember that if these containers are put in the trash, they go to landfill. Landfill is an anerobic environment that does not compost materials. Even these compostable containers are single use and continue our addiction to single-use items, detracting from the most environmentally beneficial practices: reducing and reusing. Compostable containers take a lot of resources to make and are rarely actually composted because that needs to happen in an industrial facility which we do not have here in New Paltz.

A couple of months ago, a wholesale order was made for these tiffins so that they could be sold to individuals at cost. We have completely sold out of that first order and our next order is available now. If you would like a tiffin we have a convenient pick up location near the Tops Plaza. **To make arrangements to buy a tiffin at our cost of \$15, contact Jim O'Dowd via his email: jimmyodowd@yahoo.com** The New Paltz Tiffin Project is planned to be a three phased program. In this first phase we are encouraging individuals to buy a tiffin and bring it to restaurants both for take-out and for to-go containers used at the end of a meal you can't finish. In this way, we are introducing the tiffin to both fellow restaurant goers, restaurant staff and owners. In the next phase we would like to feature New Paltz restaurants that are willing to promote the use of tiffins.

Will you help us further promote the New Paltz Tiffin Project? Please contact Janelle if you would like to help with this project by emailing newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com.

New Paltz Climate Smart Collaboration with the New Paltz Middle School Climate Club

Of the eight Action Groups that are part of the New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force, the Youth Action Group is one that we have wanted to do more with for some time. We are very excited to announce a new collaboration with the New Paltz Middle School Climate Club! Janelle, our Climate Smart Coordinator, met with the club virtually this past week and plans were discussed as to how the students would like to help with the Tiffin Project. The Climate Club meets once a week after school and are under the direction of advisors Mary Jane Nusbaum and Bryan Krebs. The students are in the process of brainstorming a 'waste free lunch' campaign for the schools.

Victory! Danskammer Power Plant Air Permit Denial

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation denied a Title V Air Permit last month to the developers of the proposed Danskammer gas-fired power plant in the Town of Newburgh. This action may turn out to be a milestone in the campaign to eliminate fossil fuels in the production of electricity for the New York power grid. The DEC reviewed 4,500 comments from individuals and organizations during the public comment period. A number of advocacy groups, including Food & Water Watch, Clearwater, River Keeper, Scenic Hudson, and our own New Paltz Climate Action Coalition, formed the Stop the Plant Coalition, which organized demonstrations, webinars, and lobbying efforts to pressure the Siting Board and DEC to stop the project. Municipalities from all over the Hudson Valley, including New Paltz and Gardiner, passed resolutions opposing the Danskammer project.



In the end the DEC found that the application for a Title V permit was not consistent with the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which went into effect in January of 2020. As stated in the letter from the DEC to Danskammer: "This determination of inconsistency is based primarily on the fact that the Project would be a new source of a substantial amount of GHG emissions, including both direct and upstream GHG emissions, and that the Project would constitute a new and long-term utilization of fossil fuels to produce electricity without a specific plan in place to comply with the requirements of the Climate Act." State agencies are reviewing many more fossil fuel developments. Perhaps the DEC's rejection of the Danskammer proposal and the denial of a Title V permit for the Astoria power plant in Queens will set a precedent for fracked gas projects in the future.

The mission of The New Paltz Climate Smart Communities Task Force is to help our community lower its greenhouse gas emissions and minimize the risks of climate change through mitigation and adaptation. It takes climate-smart decisions on a state, national, and global scale to save our vulnerable planet.

-Mark Varian

JOIN US 12/01 @ 12PM TO HEAR ABOUT EQUITABLE CLEAN TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS ACROSS NEW YORK

Register at nyfortci.org



Join this teach-in on December 1st at 12:00pm with New Yorkers for the Transportation and Climate Initiative (NY for TCI). We'll feature clean transportation projects across NYS - from greenways encouraging biking and walking to electric school buses and on-demand electric para-transit. Innovative projects like these need more investment. Tune in to learn how we can scale up equitable clean transportation in NYS!

[Register here](https://nyfortci.org)

New Paltz Climate Smart December Calendar

Wednesday December 1st 12:00 noon Equitable Clean Transportation Projects Across New York. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7fbYYbrmSHu1r63sM3_78g

Tuesday December 7th 6:00 – 7:30 pm Climate Solutions Meetup – Cryptocurrency
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84120286006?pwd=bVnKdDZ6ZUdHQVJ6THJVSEZzRTU5UT09>

Monday December 20^h at 7:00 pm monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting
[Link to Zoom Meeting of Task Force](#)

Tuesday December 21st at 7:00 pm Climate Smart Book Club – Regeneration
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91066225574?pwd=TIVKMU9vNWkxMGE5ZzdTM2VabWMxQT09>

If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please contact Janelle Peotter, Climate Smart Coordinator at newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com



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