

Volume 5 Issue 2
February 2023



Climate Smart
Communities
Certified Bronze

New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

February Climate Smart *Meetup*: Understanding the Benefits of Batteries for Residential Use and Utility Scale



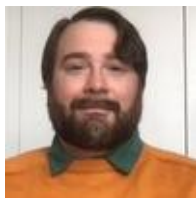
Tuesday February 7, 2023
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM EST

[Link to register for this online event.](#)

Batteries are an important technology that has changed how we live and work by providing greater mobility and flexibility by cutting the power cord. This trend will continue but they are poised to play a

larger role in transportation, home use to provide backup or satisfying time-phased loads to save money, and large-scale batteries that will connect to transmission lines to support renewable energy, resilience, and the reliability of the electric grid. The NYS Climate Action Council recently published the Final Scoping Plan that will reduce GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions by 85% by 2050 and batteries will be an important part of achieving that goal. Join us as Bill and Rick describe how batteries will be used in everyday life and the electric grid.

There will be time at the end of the presentations for questions and discussion.



Bill Oberkehr is a Senior Project Manager on the Clean Energy Siting team at the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Mr. Oberkehr currently focuses on battery energy storage, reviewing codes and standards related to energy storage technologies, ensuring alignment with the New York State Uniform Code, and guiding local government officials through requirements and best practices and creation and implementation of appropriate local laws. In addition to Mr. Oberkehr's statewide work, he spent several years administering the City of New York's municipal solar programs.

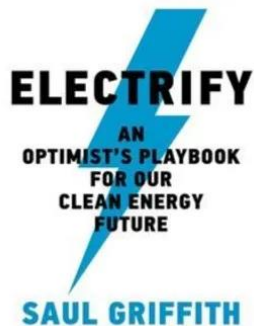


Rick Irizarry is a Sales Manager and Solar Consultant at SunPower by New York State Solar Farm in Modena, NY. Rick is responsible for the education, training, and management of their team of Solar Consultants. Rick Irizarry has worked in the solar industry for the past 12 years. His interest was piqued by

looking into solar for his own home in Gardiner. He began his solar career working for SolarCity /Tesla where he helped 250 families in the Hudson Valley go solar in 3.5 years. Rick left SolarCity / Tesla to work for Sunpower by New York State Solar Farm owned by the Sicari Family of Gardiner. Currently, he manages 11 Solar Consultants and also consults himself. Sunpower by NYSSF has sold and installed over 200 Tesla Powerwall batteries in the Hudson Valley. Rick is also a member of the Town of Gardiner Climate Smart Task Force and volunteers as an EMT with the Gardiner Fire Dept where he also sits on the Board of Directors.

February Climate Smart Book Club:

Electrify: An Optimist's Playbook for Our Clean Energy Future



**Tuesday, February 21, 2023
7:00 PM to at 8:30 PM EST**

[Click here to register for this online event.](#)

Our book selection this month is *Electrify: An Optimist's Playbook for Our Clean Energy Future*. This book is an optimistic—but realistic and feasible—action plan for fighting climate change while creating new jobs and a healthier environment: electrify everything.

Climate change is a planetary emergency. We have to do something *now*—but what? Saul Griffith has a plan. In *Electrify*, Griffith lays out a detailed blueprint—optimistic but feasible—for fighting climate change while creating millions of new jobs and a healthier environment. Griffith's plan can be summed up simply: electrify everything. He explains exactly what it would take to transform our infrastructure, update our grid, and adapt our households to make this possible. Billionaires may contemplate escaping our worn-out planet on a private rocket ship to Mars, but the rest of us, Griffith says, will stay and fight for the future.

Griffith, an engineer and inventor, calls for grid neutrality, ensuring that households, businesses, and utilities operate as equals; we will have to rewrite regulations that were created for a fossil-fueled world, mobilize industry as we did in World War II, and offer low-interest “climate loans.” Griffith's plan doesn't rely on big, not-yet-invented innovations, but on thousands of little inventions and cost reductions. We can still have our cars and our houses—but the cars will be electric and solar panels will cover our roofs. For a world trying to bounce back from a pandemic and economic crisis, there is no other project that would create as many jobs—up to 25 million, according to one economic analysis. Is this politically possible? We can change politics along with everything else.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Task Force

The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Taskforce has completed a major work product which is the completion of Final Drafts of ;

- Consolidated PV and/or Battery (Tier 1) System Permit Application
- Site Plan Review Waiver Criteria for Section 140-51 of Town Law
- Town Law for Tier 1 and 2 BESS

These Final Draft documents have been provided to Town Officials for making final edits that would then be used in the approval process to adopt them. The BESS taskforce won't disband, and will support the effort to make final edits and the approval process in a supporting role.

New York State has made adoption of Batteries an important element of the Electric Grid Transformation as it supports avoidance of curtailment of electricity from Renewable Energy Sources during peak generation periods and avoidance of Fossil Fuel generation during peak demand. Our role in the Town of New Paltz is to facilitate the addition of Batteries for Residential, Multi Family, Commercial, and Utility Scale use in a controlled and safe manner that fits within the goals of the comprehensive plan for the Town.

Environmental Policy Board Opportunity

The Village of New Paltz Environmental Policy Board (EPB) is looking for you! The EPB meets every second Tuesday of every month at 5:30 pm. You can send general comments or inquiries to environment@villageofnewpaltz.org. The EPB does the following:

Advise and advocate

Guide the Village Board and Planning Board on environmental issues and advocate for the rights of nature

Research and propose policies

Prevent, minimize, remediate or mitigate, continuing or future harm to the environment

Propose measures to remediate undo past harm to the environment

Educate

Inform Village residents about the causes and prevention of environmental problems; what can be done individually and collectively to reverse environmental damage.

Preserve green spaces

Maintain an open space inventory and open space maps

Community coordination

Collaborate with environmentally-based groups, clubs, government agencies to achieve positive environmental outcomes

A Volunteer Board position is now available. Contact the Village to find out more on how to become involved: environment@villageofnewpaltz.org

New Paltz Riparian Buffer Assessment Begins

Gillian Mathews, the Natural Resources Educator at the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County will be completing a Riparian Buffer Assessment for the Town of New Paltz as part of their 2023 Climate Resiliency work funded by the NYSDEC's Hudson River Estuary Program and the NYS Water Resources Institute. This project has the potential to earn the town at least 2 points under Pledge Element 7 in the NYS Climate Smart Communities Program.

In the coming months, Gillian will be completing the research portion of this project. This will include data collection and interpretation that will serve as a foundation for future conversations and the final product. The New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force will work to make sure Gillian has all the information she needs to complete this project.

Can New Paltz Reach Silver Certification?



In March of 2020, separately but at the same time both the Town and Village of New Paltz were awarded their Bronze certification as Climate Smart Communities. Since that time the Climate Smart Task Force has set as its goal to attain the next level of certification. This is important, real work that makes a difference both in terms of our greenhouse gas emissions which contribute to the climate crisis and our ability to be resilient in the face of floods, fires, droughts, ice storms and other impacts of climate change.



However, we seem to have stalled in our progress. **We need more people from the municipality and the community to commit to working on the necessary actions.** There are 373 communities in the state of New York that have registered with Climate Smart Communities, 91 have become Bronze certified like us, and only 9 communities in the state have achieved Silver certification. Is there the will to do the actions that would get New Paltz to Silver? Is it worth it? Yes!! Certification means that we have done our part not just for the benefit of the greater good but also for our community because many of the actions improve our quality of life! Attaining Silver also improves our chances of receiving funding when we apply for grants. Does New Paltz want to be a leader in the state proactively addressing our climate impact? Think of the positive message that gives our youth. When you see problem, don't just sit back and idly complain, you do something about it!

In the Climate Smart Communities certification process, there are 115 possible actions totaling 1097 points and to attain silver, New Paltz needs 300 points. Scroll through the actions and consider all the possibilities. Is there one that you have a particular interest in? Send an email to newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com with your thoughts. Consider joining the Climate Smart Task Force. We need more active participation from many people and if we work hard and remain committed, I believe New Paltz can achieve silver certification.

New Paltz Climate Smart February Calendar

Tuesday February 7th at 6:00 – 7:30 pm Climate Solutions Meetup – Understanding the Benefits of Batteries for Residential Use and Utility Scale [Link to register for this online event.](#)

Tuesday February 14th at 7:00 – 8:30 pm monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting. We meet online. Send an email to the address below if you are interested in participating.

Tuesday February 21st at 7:00 – 8:30 pm Climate Smart Book Club: Electrify: An Optimist's Playbook for Our Clean Energy Future [Click here to register for this online event.](#)

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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Reduce your use of single use!

Bring your own container, such as this tiffin, to restaurants for take out or left overs. We have tiffins for sale through New Paltz Climate Smart or the Climate Action Coalition at the wholesale cost of only \$15

BYOC:

Bring Your Own Container!