



## New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force

### Meeting Minutes: March 21, 2022

**Attendees:** Janelle Peotter, Mark Varian, Orelle Feher, Joe Londa, Jim O'Dowd, Alexandria Wojcik, Amanda Gotto, Eric Hollman

**Introductions:** Janelle introduced Eric Hollman, a New Paltz resident and City of Poughkeepsie Municipal Planner. Eric said he was aware of the Climate Smart program and was interested in listening in, perhaps working on a CSC project when he has some extra time.

**CSC Grant Extension:** Amanda reported that there is some money left over from the original Climate Smart Communities grant, which expired March 7. She is working to get it extended for another 12 months, and to use the remaining funds to hire a consultant to work with us to produce a community climate action plan. We also need to review recent town/village projects, such as the construction of new firehouse and court facilities, to determine if they are eligible for Climate Smart credits.

**Central Hudson:** Soaring February energy costs brought on by gas and oil shortages and supply chain issues were discussed. The utility has also been changing over to a new invoicing system that has resulted in billing irregularities for customers in Ulster County. Mark offered to write an article about energy costs for the April newsletter.

**Conservation Overlay Zoning:** Amanda stated that applications for the training program for development of Conservation Overlay Zones ([https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation\\_hudson\\_pdf/clurfa2022.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/clurfa2022.pdf)) are due April 17. Ingrid Heackel is heading up this project for the DEC in conjunction with Cornell University.

**Passive House Construction:** Janelle mentioned that Chronogram Media is sponsoring a webinar on passive house construction. ([https://www.eventbrite.com/e/passive-perfect-tickets-295261062787?aff=odeimcmalchimp&goal=0\\_f2edf21a67-33bfd68d12149561636&mc\\_cid=33bfd68d12&mc\\_eid=c742b2e037](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/passive-perfect-tickets-295261062787?aff=odeimcmalchimp&goal=0_f2edf21a67-33bfd68d12149561636&mc_cid=33bfd68d12&mc_eid=c742b2e037))

**Art & Community Engagement:** Janelle reported that Matthew Friday at SUNY New Paltz is developing a program that will use art projects with environmental themes. For a project in Kingston students used chalk to illustrate the location an underground stream course. Perhaps the Task Force can join with SUNY on a similar project at the site of the New Paltz Farmers Market. Matthew is currently working with the Middle School Climate Club as well.

**GHG Update:** Joe presented the revised Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory to the combined Village/Town Board meeting. The Village board voted to adopt the GHG Inventory and the environmental goals that were included in Joe's report. The Town did not have a quorum at the meeting of the Town/Village boards, but a vote on adoption will be on the agenda for a future meeting.

Alex will forward a signed copy of the resolution to Joe and Janelle. Joe will also record a presentation of the GHG Inventory report to be posted on the NP Climate Smart YouTube channel. Joe suggested that we should focus on updating the community and municipal inventories for 2022 early in 2023.

**Stretch to Zero:** Joe has attempted to reach out to Town and Village officials to discuss applying for available grant money to initiate adoption of the updated NY Stretch Code, but has not gotten a response. To apply for the grant we have to have a commitment from the Town and Village and the application is due very soon. Alex says that the Village is very interested in the stretch code. It is doubtful that a grant application, which is very comprehensive, could be put together in time.

**N.Y. State CAC Draft Climate Action Scoping Plan:** Joe reported that the public comment period is open for the Draft Climate Action Scoping Plan that was released the last week of 2021. Written comments will be accepted through June 10, 2022. For more information visit - <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan>. The schedule for public hearings for the scoping plan follows:

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, April 5, 2022	4:00 PM	Bronx
Wednesday, April 6, 2022	4:00 PM	Brookhaven
Tuesday, April 12, 2022	4:00 PM	Binghamton
Thursday, April 14, 2022	4:00 PM	Albany
Tuesday, April 26, 2022	4:00 PM	Syracuse
Wednesday, April 27, 2022	3:30 PM	Buffalo
Tuesday, May 3, 2022	4:00 PM	Brooklyn
Saturday, May 7, 2022	10:00 AM	VIRTUAL
Tuesday, May 10, 2022	4:00 PM	Tupper Lake
Wednesday, May 11, 2022	4:00 PM	VIRTUAL

**Spring Forward: Ditch Disposables:** Mark reviewed the Spring Forward: Ditch Disposables! event held on March 16. About 50 people attended virtually and the program went well in spite of some technical difficulties with one of the presenter's slides. The speakers were all engaging and knowledgeable. Even though the topic was very serious, a light touch added to the enjoyment of the program. Erik Callendar and his white socks were a highlight of the evening.

Janelle suggested that Lisa Lindsley should be invited to present her program at a future Climate Solutions Meetup.

**U.C.R.R.A. Tour:** Members of the New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force visited the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency site in Kingston on March 9. Angelina was our host and tour guide on a chilly wet March afternoon. Joe will write an article on the field trip for the April news letter.

**Extended Producer Responsibility:** The timing of the *Spring Forward* event could not have been better for Megan's announcement of the Beyond Plastics campaign to get the Governor's EPR bill out of her current budget. The bill is flawed and should be removed so that the assembly can introduce a much stronger EPR bill along with an updated bottle bill. The budget is due April 1. For more information visit: <https://www.beyondplastics.org/>.

**Tiffin Project:** Another timely and popular element in *Spring Forward* was Janelle's tiffin demonstration. Jim says we are almost out of our tiffin stock and Janelle says that the next delivery of 200 units is a way off. So far we have sold about 180 and demand is still high. Some restaurants have offered to buy some from us.

#### **Action Groups:**

- **7Rs - Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Repair, Recycle....Refill:** Repair Café was held on March 19.
- **Green Business:** See Tiffin Project above.
- **Green Spaces:** The offer by Liz's company, Bloom, to provide a team day per month over the next three growing seasons to clear out the mugwort at the pollinator planting along Rte. 299 was approved. The town highway department will also participate. Liz is looking for volunteers to sign up for work days as well.
- **Green Transportation:** Orelle has spoken with Maureen Ryan from the New Paltz Central School District's Transportation Department about electric school buses. Ms. Ryan spoke of the frustrations school systems face in applying for and fulfilling all the grant requirements. Some suggestions for the school system: Since the county seems to be committed to introducing electric buses into their fleet, perhaps it would be willing to offer a webinar outlining the best way to approach these grant requirements. Maybe the school system would be more prone to act on this issue if parents of students approach the School Board. The task force could reach out to Dennis Doyle, who is with the County Transportation Dept., or even the County Executive for their thoughts. Remember, this is a health concern as well as an environmental problem.
- **Publicity & Social Media:** Articles for the April newsletter should be submitted by March 28.
- **Youth:** See **Art & Community Engagement** above.
- **Alternative Energy:** Janelle announced that the Town's solar project on the landfill is moving forward. It is before the Planning Board.
- **Lifestyle:** The next Climate Solutions Meetup will be on April 5, at 6:00 PM. We hope that **Stefan Yarabek** will discuss climate smart landscaping. The Climate Smart Book Club meeting on April 19, at 7:00 PM, will feature *Captured: The Corporate Infiltration of American Democracy* by Sheldon Whitehouse. Janelle will not be able to attend so she is asking for a volunteer to take her place.

The next **Climate Smart Task Force** meeting is Monday, April 18, at 7:00 pm. Mark will be out of the country so we need a volunteer to take notes.

Minutes submitted by Mark Varian

