



**Town of Poughkeepsie
Climate Smart Communities Task Force**

January 7, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Meeting occurred and was recorded on Zoom online platform at
<https://zoom.us/j/97572973121?pwd=UzJmVS9Gb1VNRGc5ZjdDUHdrNEFNUT09>

Task Force members present: Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair
Kristen Taylor
Joan Freeman
Richard Levine
Beverly Santero
Michelle Gluck
Ann Shershin
Katherine Espinosa

Guest: Bill Carlos, Ward 2 Town Board representative

- Update on certification application: the NYS portal was shared on-screen; we completed a detailed review of all pledge elements and actions including those that remain “planned” in anticipation of revision or future focus. We reviewed expectations following submission. Normally there is a period of several weeks before a response is received, and we may be asked for additional documentation for “completed” actions in time for the next submission date (April); however, by that point it is likely that we will finish off additional planned actions that can be added to our submission.

Anticipated major actions coming up include CAPI, Solar for All, and work on EV with our business community. Richard and Joan plan to be in contact to work on the EV education concept. Recently, a couple of great ideas came up via the CSC listserve including models for procurement and green fleet policies. Those working on CSC in different municipalities are willing to share and help each other, moving all of us forward more rapidly and efficiently. Susan also made the suggestion there that we need the County task force to assist in facilitating this type of collaboration.

- Submission of application for initial (Bronze) certification - we submitted our application “live” and took a moment to acknowledge and celebrate this milestone! Task force members were delighted to reach this juncture, and gratitude was expressed for all of the hard work that has gotten us there. We noted in particular the support received from Town department heads in providing needed information. An automated response was received confirming submission.

- Changing role of Cornell Cooperative Extension: at this time Michelle will, as planned, step back from her active role as a task force member, having guided us to the point of initial submission and concluded the relevant grant period. Michelle, and CCE overall, continue to be a resource for us but will no longer have a specific grant to support the Town with Climate Smart. We are in a very positive place, have a roadmap for next steps and know how to navigate the CSC portal. The group expressed its deep appreciation for Michelle's work and commitment. Susan expressed, as Chair, her personal gratitude for the opportunity to learn so much since the effort started and to develop confidence in moving forward. We hope to celebrate in person once it is safe to do so.
- Commentary from our guest: Bill stated how impressed he is with our dedication and accomplishments so far and inquired regarding how much literal time we have spent on this project. As volunteers, we find this difficult to pinpoint, but he feels it is important for the Board to be aware of the level of commitment. He suggested that our profile in the community is very limited, and that it's important to issue a press release "blowing our own horn" and to continue issuing them periodically as we reach new milestones. (Michelle mentioned that the DEC/HREP has a template and will help us find it.)

Bill also discussed the Comprehensive Plan and the importance of including elements from our work. He views the Plan as a "recommendation" rather than "mandatory." One of our next priorities should be to engage with the Draft Plan, which has gone to the Comp Plan committee for preliminary review before a series of public hearings. Since Kristen and Ann are both involved with the committee, we already have a liaison in place. This should be a topic for our next meeting.
- Update on Local Champions grant program: announcement of grants is expected on 1/12. Susan is doubtful of being selected, since we are much further in the process than the grant profile, but is nonetheless hopeful. We should look for other grants as well, and this is a good question for the listserv, which Susan will pose, or through DEC. Ann noted that the Town has a new grant writing team that can assist. Bev noted that there is a resource at the library called the Foundation Center, which contains all kinds of funding opportunities, and will investigate this for us. We can also use the Consolidated Funding Application process to advantage.