



**Climate Smart  
Communities**  
Certified Bronze



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

**March 3, 2022 at 7 pm**

The meeting occurred on Zoom at the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/91995613444?pwd=d1dacndyNzI0VEF3ZXlicFJkb1JCQT09>

Task Force members present:

Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair  
Thomas Lynch

Ann Shershin  
Feza Oktay

Stanley Merritt  
Richard Levine

Discussion of identified priorities:

We've gathered additional information and have more outreach to complete before being ready to go to our Board to ask for support with our priorities.

- Green fleet
  - Richard will complete outreach to Auto Dept. to update inventory.
  - Ann contacted Comptroller regarding existing annual audit and learned that vehicles are part of the annual inventory of assets; we assume simply a vehicle list, a financial function; she will seek greater detail to help us determine if we could piggyback our needs on this.

\* NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) is running the Clean Energy Communities Institute (CECI). The topic for July-August is Green Fleet (funding, purchase, installation of EVs and chargers). We should watch this opportunity as more details are provided.

- Waste management
  - Stanley shared DEC Solid Waste & Recycling newsletter, can sign up.
  - Stanley also shared information about single vs. dual stream (Ulster is now dual stream). Single stream seemed more feasible for individuals - paper is separated from other materials, there is a market for selling the paper.
  - There is a proposed UN treaty to reduce plastic pollution. In early stages but could be incredibly significant. Won't be completed until 2024 which is relatively fast for a global agreement, whatever lands in the final draft will be legally binding to reduce loopholes. More information:

<https://www.wastedive.com/news/global-treaty-plastic-pollution-lifecycle-waste-recycling/619753/>

This could address packaging, recycling, microplastics. Plastic waste will triple by 2040 with current trends. Plastics are made from fossil fuels and a major contributor to GHG emissions.

- We discussed that waste management may not be our best goal right now given extra costs to the town, potential changes to come. Our efforts may be better spent elsewhere and focused on decarbonizing. Our waste to energy burn center produces electricity that goes into the Central Hudson grid.
- Susan is still attempting to reach to director of recycling facility (Republic Services in Beacon). We are still in reconnaissance mode in this area.
- Green business
  - Feza reported on his research thus far. The previous Ulster program is defunct. However, Feza has connected with Michael Darcy, hired by Ulster to start a Green Business Champions program. A conversation with that person clarified that such programs tend to fall apart due to being a “heavy lift” especially for volunteers. Ulster has not only hired but also bought into a program developed in California with an online system for businesses to track metrics over time to be impactful. Feza will look at this system with Michael to see the elements.
  - Michael also recommended speaking to Europa McGovern (formerly with HV Regional Council) who now works for Ulster and is also on the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County CSTFs. Feza learned from Europa that the County CSTF is currently inactive. We discussed that there would be potential for such a program at county level but, if this does not seem likely, can we either advocate for that or do a more narrowly focused program on our own. The Town hosts a majority of the businesses in our county. Susan suggested that (1) we should explore collaborating with the City CSTF on this front and (2) possibly any action grant that we get in the near future could be earmarked to assist and incentivize businesses. Feza will follow up with both Michael and Europa on all of this.
  - We’ve created a folder in our Google Drive for green business information.

#### Status reports:

- Update on Climate Adaptation chapter - CAPI: Susan shared a CAPI summary that she prepared in anticipation of speaking to Jay Baisley - meeting date being set. We will ask for support for adding the proposed Climate Adaptation Chapter.
- Solar for All campaign: Susan was in touch with Kat Carroll, our interim liaison at HV Regional Council. Kat has reached out for current sign up totals and we should have an update next week.

- NRI/Open Space Plan: Susan reported from CAC that the completed NRI and OSP should go to the Board in April or May.
- Website and Brochure: Susan updated our website and awaits the completed brochure from Kristen Taylor.

New business:

We discussed the current issue of significant increases in electric rates and the public conversation occurring about municipalities that joined a Community Choice Aggregation, where residents have been protected from this winter's spikes. We considered the value of making our Board members aware of these comparisons in light of the past decisions not to consider CCA. Susan will reach out to Hudson Valley Community Power to obtain objective comparisons; it would also be valuable to know the impact on the Town's own electric bill.

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht