



**Climate Smart  
Communities**  
Certified Bronze



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

**April 7, 2022 at 7 pm Zoom**

The meeting occurred on Zoom at the following link:

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

Task Force members present: Susan Karnes Hecht, Chair  
Tom Lynch  
Stan Merritt  
Joan Freeman  
Ann Shershin  
Feza Oktay

Guests: Christopher Parks - Resident, Ward 5  
Chris Sterbenz - Resident, Ward 4

**Discussion topics:**

- Green fleet: Ann reported her conversation with our Acting Chief of Police, Joe Cavaliere, who can access records of police vehicles as well as others regarding when gas is filled and thus the resulting MPG; the vehicles are coded in this list, so we'd have to do the work to identify them from the inventory. Chief Cavaliere seems supportive and open to further discussion. The Highway Dept. vehicles are not included in the inventory, we need to work on getting MPG. We agreed that it would be valuable to research police fleets in other towns, and that in light of our previous discussion about purchase and hand-me-down patterns this could be an important driver in a transition. We do have a Town vehicle which is used by admins, board members, etc. for town business and this could also be a targeted replacement.

We still need to initiate a discussion with the Board regarding a decision to pursue a fleet policy, before working on specifics. We need context: number of vehicles, MPG, annual gas expense, etc. - fiscal as well as emissions impact. What other information do we need for an essential fiscal analysis? Let's revisit Joan's personal cost comparison / return on investment spreadsheet (in our folder), which she had developed for personal purchase but could be reformatted for our purposes. We could select a few sample vehicles from the town inventory to illustrate the information. We also need to include potential tax credits and find out if there are EVs on the NYS purchasing list that is used.

Ann also reported that last night the Board voted to accept the charger grant. She also shared that Anne Burger, Ward 3 representative, recently acquired a personal EV. Susan will reach out to Anne to discuss this overall topic.

- Waste management: Susan made contact with David Kahn at Republic Services, the recycling facility in Beacon for local haulers. Single stream is dropped off for \$33.89/ton at this time. "Clean" loads of cardboard are rebated at \$62.25/ton (no minimum weight). Currently, paper is charged. A separate haul would be required, options would include a separate truck from our Highway Dept. or a contract with a private hauler for recyclables, plus a separate dumpster at Town Hall or other municipal sites. He was not aware of any other town that brings its own load, they are usually on a private hauler route.

Is this something we want to pursue? Benefits may be offset by the vehicle going to Beacon. Town may not be incinerator due to location. We still feel like this is not our primary focus, especially considering that a very small percentage of typical recycling is actually recycled. However, we should clarify that the recycling bins are misleading and look for options (employees take recycling home? Revisit can/bottle collection as income for local groups?). We would also like to know if the shredding, which is now picked up, is being recycled.

- Green business challenge: Feza does not yet have an update, is working on connecting with Europa McGovern.
- Potential projects for grants resulting from Solar Campaign: NYSERDA formally approved our action on 3/28, we await resulting notifications for grant eligibility. Susan contacted our NYSERDA liaison to ask about the timeline for this but we don't have an answer yet. Refer to our CEC summary in file for pre-approved projects. We should be proactive regarding grant use. There was a consensus in favor of:

\$5K grant - flexible use, support for green business incentives

\$15K grant - go with pre-approved project, preference to support an EV purchase which would provide symbolic as well as real benefits and serve as a catalyst for the fleet.

- Electric rates and CCA: There is a lot of talk in the community about the recent electric rate spike and the fact that residents in communities that belong to an aggregation were protected from that spike. Susan has information from HV Community Power with the comparisons and will share it with CSTF members. We can discuss if we wish to pursue this topic and how. We also learned that Fishkill, which was part of the first local aggregation, did not renew. It would be good to understand why not.
- ECET (Energy Code Enforcement Training): No one from our town staff registered for the 4/14 workshop, although this was urged. This is a high-impact action for CEC and also counts for CSC. Feza asked if we can obtain more information about what trainings the staff do typically attend and why this one is not of interest. The reason given was staff time/shortages. This was also reported last year. We need more information about what continuing education requirements are for relevant staff.

**Updates:**

- Dutchess CAPI: Supervisor approval was obtained for Climate Adaptation Chapter. We still don't have a starting date. Refer to CAPI Dutchess Summary in file.
- Comprehensive Plan points determination: Tom presented the work he is completing for the updated memo documenting each sustainability element. He has done an enormous amount of work on this which is greatly appreciated. It appears that we may be able to achieve points for most, or perhaps all, elements.
- Overall points status: all previously approved and planned actions total 220, we would need 300 for Silver. What is already planned/in process will cover the required number of priority actions and pledge elements. Susan will add to the spreadsheet possible actions and potential points. Will go back to Michelle Gluck's original recommendations to help identify these along with major actions that intersect with CEC. We discussed the need to identify the town's incentive to reach Silver.
- NRI/Open Space Plan status: going to the Board in May or June
- Brochure: Kristen Taylor gave current draft to Susan, this is to be completed.
- Earth Day Cleanup: CAC is planning this on 4/23 in multiple locations. Watch for publicity.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 7 pm

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht