

Saugerties Conservation Advisory Commission

December 2, 2021

(Rescheduled from November 18, 2021)

MINUTES

I CLIMATE SMART TASK FORCE

Meeting Start: 5:15 pm

Present: Steve Wehr, Leslie Surprenant, Vernon Benjamin, Nicole Roskos, Skip Arthur, Mike Harkavy, Elizabeth Shafer, Patti Kelly, Carole Furman, Mary O'Donnell.

Approval of October 21, 2021 Task Force Minutes – Approved

Community Solar: Saugerties/Solarize Ulster Update – Town apparently has 11 new subscribers; pending NYSERDA's confirmation that goal of 10 new subscribers in Town of Saugerties (outside of Village of Saugerties) has been met.

CEC Program Updates – All should review NYSERDA Leadership grants document and identify what actions we are interested in working on as individuals or with other TF members.

Winston Farm Development Proposal <https://winstonfarm.com/document-center/> Discussion and agreement that CC Task Force should be involved in climate-related issues. Some TF members provided background on an economic development proposal for the property developed in 2009 for the 9-county Hudson Valley Economic Development region. Winston Farm was the top priority project; Town of Saugerties has feasibility study conducted on the proposed project. Proposal was for over 500 acres of open space and approximately 187 acres as developed space. "Green tech" development was proposed. Town's comprehensive plan calls for 50% open space for large projects.

Discussed NY Stretch building code and relationship to project. NY Stretch code has not been adopted by Town due to cost to and push back from builders and developers. Town has until June 2022 to adopt NY Stretch building code in order to qualify for grants. TF raised question as to whether TF can be an Interested Party in the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process. Town would need to pass a resolution in order to be an Interested Party.

Action: Mary O will contact NYSERDA to find out if NY Stretch will be taking effect anyway and if June 2022 is deadline for early adoption of code.

Birds and Bees Preservation Act – Model resolution – does TF or Town want to sign onto this? Elizabeth Shafer sent for advance review. Tabled to CAC portion of meeting.

Tree Removal – Nicole R. raised concern about development and retention of large trees and highlighted their relation to climate change (shade, carbon sequestration). She referenced Comprehensive Plan which calls for retaining trees when possible and replacing if they can't be retained. Nicole is interested in working on a town-wide tree code. It was noted that trees are available for riparian planting from DEC / Hudson River Estuary Program every year. Need to identify potential properties for planting.

December 16, 2021 Meeting – meeting will be canceled, per tradition. Next meeting Jan 20, 2022.

Announcements - none

Adjournment – Adjourned 6:22 pm

II CAC REGULAR BUSINESS

Meeting Start: 6:22 pm.

Present: Elizabeth Shafer, Vern Benjamin, Carole Furman, Leslie Surprenant, Nicole Roskos, Skip Arthur, Mike Harkavy, Mary O'Donnell

Approval of October 21, 2021 Minutes – approved.

NYC DEP Presentation – CAC members who attended in person or virtually commented on DEP's November 18 presentation on Ashokan Reservoir operations and the Esopus Creek. Most CAC members agreed it was informative and thorough.

Winston Farm Proposed Development <https://winstonfarm.com/document-center/> CAC will be called upon to provide review of this large proposed project as plans are developed.

Town Planning Board – Rust Free Motors in Barklay Heights; controversy regarding whether it is a “junk yard” or “classic car restoration;” Proposed cell tower project (Tarpon Towers) along Thruway has local opposition; carwash proposed on Rte 32 north of Rte 212 requires zoning change (there are concerns about the underlying aquifer). A new metal recycling facility is proposed on King's Highway. A large solar array is under construction on Sparling Road and was approved prior. Churchland Rd solar array is delayed due to US Army Corps of Engineers wetlands issues. Project may be changed to a battery storage facility. Project will be a maximum 20MW.

Town Board Liaison Report – No report.

Announcements – Elizabeth Shafer – Birds and Bees legislation – recommend Town pass resolution in support.

Action: Mary will follow up the Town Board with the recommendation that the board pass a resolution in support of the legislation.

NYS will ban polystyrene (Styrofoam) food containers, packing peanuts, etc. effective Jan. 1, 2022.

No December 16 meeting – per traditional break.

Adjournment: 7:01 pm.