

Saugerties Conservation Advisory Commission

February 17, 2025

Zoom Video Conferencing

MINUTES

Present: Skip Arthur, Mike Harkavy, Ken Goldberg, Mary O'Donnell, Elizabeth and Steven Shafer, Carole Furman, Linda Armour, Leslie Surprenant, Kathleen Gray, Zach Horton.

Approval of November 21st and January 16th Minutes

Linda noted a correction. The group referenced should be Citizens Concerned About Plastic Pollution, not Citizens Concerned Against Plastic Pollution. Kevin confirmed the correction.

The minutes from November and January were approved.

Climate Smart Task Force

It was noted that Linda was officially appointed coordinator of the task force by the Town Board. She is working with Mary O'Donnell to familiarize herself with the Climate Smart Communities program. She reported the Repair Cafe (February 1st) had 81 participants and received donations and discounts from local businesses (e.g. Smith's Hardware). Future goals are to increase participation and support.

Community Climate Action Plan CCAP Outreach and Implementation

Mary O'Donnell led the discussion on the text for the outreach section of the plan. The task force approved the draft text as presented. Elizabeth inquired whether the Town Board would appoint an individual responsible for implementation. The consensus was that the Town Board would appoint a representative, not necessarily a board member. Text for the implementation section of the plan was approved as presented.

Cover Design for Climate Action Plan

Mary O'Donnell presented several photos for consideration for the cover of the Community Climate Action Plan. The aerial photos of John Street in the village was favored and the task force approved the expenditure of a \$100 for use of the photo. An aerial photo of solar panels was viewed, and a picture of the pollinator meadow was suggested by Leslie. Linda proposed reaching out to a local photographer for a possible collage. No decision on a cover photo was made.

Landfill Leachate Letter

Rebecca Martin's group suggested that municipalities send letters to the (Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) urging the adoption of leachate regulations. Skip proposed, and it was agreed, that the task force recommend sending to the Town Board the letter that was

drafted by several task force members and attached to the meeting announcement. Zach confirmed that the Town Board would support the initiative.

Community Preservation Fund

Skip discussed a potential fund for property preservation, modeled after similar efforts in Tivoli, Red Hook, Marbletown, and Gardiner. The goal is to set up a real estate transfer tax to fund future land acquisitions for preservation. Research is ongoing, and further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

Town Board Liaison Report

On the matter of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), Zach provided an update on the ~~renewable~~ energy supply agreement.

The town signed a Memorandum of Understanding allowing Joule on behalf of the town to request pricing from energy suppliers.

Mary O'Donnell and Skip raised concerns about misleading terminology (e.g. "blended electricity product.") which should be clarified.

Zach reported that the Saugerties Farm, LLC was notified to stop using the Climate Smart Saugerties logo in their communications. Mary O'Donnell and Skip requested a formal acknowledgment in writing, as previous emails were ignored.

Mary O'Donnell had drafted a press release for a NYSERDA grant to acquire two, all electric light-duty trucks, but was unsure whether it had been submitted. Kathleen agreed to send it to NYSERDA for approval. The town received the final \$75,000 grant disbursement and now needs to arrange a photo of the Town Board with the NYSERDA-funded trucks to submit with the press release.

Planning Board Report

There was discussion about a proposed 24-unit townhouse development on 9W, a possible new apartment complex near North Street, and another potential project near Trinity Church Cemetery. Further details will be emailed to the group.

Announcements

Carole inquired about potential funding losses due to federal budget issues.

Zach confirmed that Saugerties relies heavily on federal grants, particularly for law enforcement and emergency services, and FEMA funding cuts could impact local operations.

Linda reported that the 2025 Repair Cafe dates are June 7 and October 4. Knife sharpener and guitar repair will also be available at the events on those dates.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mike Harkavy.

Approved unanimously at 6:07 pm

Prepared by: Kevin Freeman, Secretary