

# Saugerties Conservation Advisory Commission

March 17, 2022

## MINUTES

### I CLIMATE SMART TASK FORCE (CSTF)

**Meeting Start:** 5:04 pm

**Present:** Skip Arthur, Carole Furman, Kathleen Gray, Mike Harkavy, Zach Horton, Jim Mays, Susan Murphy, Mary O'Donnell, Nicole Roskos, Elizabeth Shafer, Leslie Surprenant, Steve Wehr, Mary Anne Wrolsen.

#### **NYSERDA Public Hearing**

The task force agreed to sign a letter addressed to the NYS Climate Action Council of NYSERDA requesting that public hearings be scheduled in the Hudson Valley for comment on the draft scoping plan for how New York will fight climate change in the years to come.

#### **Memorial Tree for Fred Costello, Sr.**

Mary expressed thanks to all who pledged a donation; \$315 has been pledged. The decision on what kind of tree to purchase and where to plant it will be decided in April. Greg Chorvas provided the names of companies that make plaques.

TO DO: Mary to send the names of companies that make plaques to Susan who will follow up.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

The February 17, 2022 minutes were moved by Mary, seconded by Elizabeth.

All approved.

#### **Winston Farm**

Skip requested a recording of a video-conference regarding Winston Farm from William Kimball who reported about it in the *Daily Freeman*. Skip e-mailed the WF people to obtain a copy, but they have not responded. Zach reported that the Town Board is the lead agency and that the project involves significant zoning discussions. Skip stated that the development of the property will not be performed by the owners, but contracted out. The issue of septic systems for the number of homes allowed and creating a sewer district was raised as important to consider. The question of zoning changes in relation to the SEQR process was raised.

#### **CEC \$5,000 Grant Award Project Update**

The Task Force recommendation is to use the grant to obtain energy efficient appliances (refrigerator, two oven ranges, two oven hoods, and a microwave oven) for the Senior Center and Greg Chorvas is agreeable. Mary suggests a plaque in the kitchen to acknowledge that the new appliances are the result of a NYSERDA grant. Zach reported LED lights are awaiting installation at the center.

#### **CEC \$10,000 Grant Update**

Kathleen reported that the PD is changing its request from a Tesla to a Ford Hybrid due to a \$10,000 price increase, month-long delays for delivery and negative reports of Tesla's catching fire. The Ford Hybrid does not meet the criteria for the grant. The grant requires that the vehicle is an EV or a plug-in hybrid. A discussion regarding a waiver of the requirements ensued.

TO DO Mary to follow up with the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Coordinator regarding the waiver.

TO DO: Steve to have a conversation with Jeremy re: an alternative EV.

### **EcoAdapt Program**

After considering the program and reviewing the Climate Adapt and Mitigation report prepared by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), it was agreed not to recommend participation in EcoAdapt to the Town Board because EcoAdapt offers similar information and guidance found in the CCE report. It was suggested that elements in the EcoAdapt program such as: implementation, evaluation, monitoring, and a timeline be considered when utilizing the CCE report and it was agreed that the task force begin addressing the recommendations in the CCE report.

### **Town Board Liaison Report**

Regarding the harvesting of the aquatic vegetation from the creek, Zach reported he had a productive phone call with Village Mayor Murphy re: upcoming use of the harvester. The village intends by mid-June to start at the beach and swimming areas, and go up the channel. Zach plans to meet with village officials to discuss the scheduling and the purchase of a second harvester. He learned that last year the harvester used a GPS function that saved info on the areas cleared; he's asking for screen shots of the areas.

Regarding the NY Stretch Code, Zack reported that the Town Board is aware of the Task Force's interest in meeting re: the NY Stretch Code. A Saturday meeting was proposed. A discussion on who should attend ensued. TO DO Zach will follow up with the Building Department to get input.

### **Community Choice Aggregation**

Given the higher Central Hudson variable rates for energy supply, it was agreed to do outreach informing residents that they can opt into CCA and get the fixed rate of \$.072 per KWh under the CCA program. TO DO prepare a flyer for distribution and posting on websites and social media, attempt to get the contact info to do a mailing to residents who opted out.

**Announcement:** Reserve Saturday April 30th 11:00am for an Arbor Day tree planting. Nicole got approximately \$1000 from a grant thru the NYS Urban Forestry Council Quick Grant Program for three trees to be planted at Cantine Field (exact location TBD).

**Adjourned** at 6:18pm.

## **II. CAC REGULAR BUSINESS**

**Present:** Skip Arthur, Nicole Roskos Jim Mays, Leslie Surprenant. Kathleen Gray, Mike Harkavy, Mary O' Donnell, Carole Furman, Elizabeth Shafer, Mary McNamara, Mary Anne Wrolsen.

**Approval of February 17, 2022 Minutes:** Approved with change regarding pollinator garden to be located at high school.

### **Arbor Day Celebration Tree Planting and Tree Policy**

Nicole Roskos received approximately a \$1,000 grant to plant three American Linden (Basswood) trees. They grow the fastest, are most disease resistant and provide good shade. She will need to meet with Greg Chorvas to get them planted. Areas being considered are soccer field next to ice arena. The plan is to have them planted the day after Arbor Day, 4-30 at 11am at Cantine Field. Nicole R. presented a potential tree policy for the Town. She has sent it to the chair of the Planning Board and has not received any response regarding implementation. It may be the Town would need to hire an arborist to help identify trees that should not be removed. Perhaps the developer might pay \$150 for the arborist to come out to the site.

TO DO Carole F. said she would bring up the policy with the Planning Board at the next meeting, 4-19-22.

## **Bee City USA**

There has been no committee meeting but Elizabeth S. will set up a meeting with Zach Horton. There are model resolutions and existing pollinator gardens available that could be studied by the Town.

TO DO Zach H. said he would follow up with the Town. When Leslie S. contacted the school, she was put in touch with Mike Cooper who heads up the Ecology Class.

TO DO Leslie will check back with Mike Cooper.

Mike H. asked if there are pollinator pathways in the areas. Some sites are located in Woodstock.

## **Milfoil Harvesting**

Beach areas will use the Milfoil harvester in mid-June. It is important to work on creating a channel for boats on the Esopus up to at least the "Muddy." The Village has GPS of where they harvested last year.

Leslie S. plans to do the same sampling review of the Esopus Creek she did two years ago to see if there was any change in the type and quantity of invasive species after the harvester was used both summers.

Mary McNamara asked if there is a study of the consequences of removing native plants that also might be harvested along with the invasive species. Need to get schedule for this year and what locations were targeted last year with the harvester.

## **Ashokan Reservoir**

Mary McNamara reported that operations of the reservoir will be changing in June. The reservoir will be kept at 100% capacity from June to October where there will be only a modest release of water from the reservoir.

The Delaware Reservoir will primarily be used for delivering water to NYC this summer. She stated that after June no water will be removed out of the Ashokan reservoir going to NYC. In a normal year in June, 300 million gallons are removed in a day. This year DEP is keeping Ashokan reservoir full for entire summer. In October they will be removing 600 million gallons a day from the Ashokan when they plan to close the Delaware Reservoir completely.

She reported that the Esopus Creek will be lower, temperatures higher and invasive species will flourish. There will be more concentrated nutrients, increasing algae blooms. There will be Public Informational presentations beginning late March. Mary O asked that she be on the email list regarding this matter.

## **Aquatic Invasive Species**

Mike Harkavy reported that through PRIZM, inspections of boats is in progress in the Town of Ulster. CCE has a new person starting March 1 to develop aquatic invasive species program. They will be responsible for setting up the program and staffing. Volunteers will be needed. There will be an educational system including signage for cleaning boats, covering the launch areas. Lower Hudson PRIZM has signage on beach regarding water craft inspections. Mike H. will speak with Stan O'Dell noting signage has to be at every accessible boating site. Only motorboats have to be registered with the Village where they would get this information, but there are other type of boating allowed that would have to get this information.

## **Adjournment**