

# **Saugerties Conservation Advisory Commission**

May 16, 2024, Zoom Video Conferencing

## **MINUTES**

### **CLIMATE SMART TASK FORCE 5:00 pm Start**

**Present:** Mary O'Donnell, Mike Harkavy, Leslie Surprenant, Ken Goldberg, Skip Arthur, Elizabeth Shafer, Kathleen Gray, Rob Irizarry, Mary McNamara, Zach Horton, Fred Costello, Toni Giammona

#### **Approval of April 18, 2024 Minutes**

Mike moved, Skip seconded. The motion passed.

#### **CAC Reorganization**

Mary announced the need to nominate a chair of the CAC and a coordinator of the task force. The group thanked Mary for her leadership. Skip was nominated by Elizabeth. He accepted until at least the end of the year with the understanding that, as well as secretarial duties, Kevin would assist with technical aspects. Mary said she would follow up with the Town Board to have Skip approved as CAC Chair.

#### **Secretary Duties**

1. Prepare and Distribute CAC Agenda to Members no later than 3 days prior to Meeting.
2. Prepare and Distribute CAC Draft Minutes to Members no later than 3 days prior to meeting
3. Email to Town Webmaster PDF Agenda for Posting on Town Website 3 days prior to meeting.
4. Email Draft of Prior Meeting Minutes to CAC Chair no later than 10 days following the meeting.
5. Email to Town Webmaster Approved PDF Minutes for Posting on Town Website immediately following meeting.

Toni asked about volunteer positions. Leslie mentioned the pollinator garden as an opportunity.

Mary outlined the necessity of a Task Force Coordinator. The duties would be to liaison with the State's Climate Smart Communities Program coordinator. She mentioned that the current Clean Energies Communities Program would be phased out. Rob volunteered for the position and Kathleen said she would be available to track actions and help navigate submitting materials to the portal.

Next on the agenda was outlining volunteer tasks.

### **Volunteer Tasks**

- Prepare press releases
- Prepare Memos/letters
- Create flyers
- Organize flyer distribution
- Updates to town webmaster
- Post events on Manna Jo Calendar
- Post Meeting date on Climate Smart Saugerties Website
- Update Climate Smart Website.
- Plan and oversee events
- Publicize events

Mary said she would continue to update the website and publicize events, prepare press releases, create flyers, post events on Manna Jo Green's Calendar

### **CEC Grant Update**

Kathleen said the town decided to apply the \$100,000 grant to three light-duty trucks. It is unclear what the GHG reduction would be replacing older vehicles, but the new trucks and the electric Zamboni could qualify for points towards a higher grant level. She said that the Assistant Building Inspector has signed up for the NYSERDA class in energy code enforcement and that is worth an additional 300 points.

Mary reported she would like someone to take over as contact person for the Repair Café. Leslie volunteered.

While waiting for Supervisor Costello to come, Skip asked if Mike would talk about the water supply and protection information he has collected. He said there were two studies, one from 2005 that dealt with protection of the water, and one from 2008, that dealt with development projections. Skip asked if the memorandum had been forwarded to the Town Board and Mike said it had.

### **Update DEC Drinking Water Source Protection Plan**

Mary reported that the DEC has a drinking water source protection program that they will hopefully present to the Town Board in June. Kathleen said it was on the agenda for the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mary said there were two issues: Supply and protection.

### **Presentation by Supervisor Fred Costello**

Mike welcomed Fred and said that the CAC was concerned about the town's level of development. He mentioned the studies of 2005 and 2008 and asked if the town was considering new research on the subjects.

Fred said that the current municipal supply was adequate for current demand. In the future, however, current zoning could out-develop the current water supplies. He said that Saugerties needs to be thoughtful about what the zoning law will allow, what density it allows, and what we want future planning to look like. Future supply could come from Winston Farm in an arrangement with the developer. There is also an aquifer underneath Mount Marion Park, owned by Fuller Porter Company. The Town of Ulster also has contracts that force it to have an excess of water. He said that the supply isn't the issue but rather maintaining Saugerties rural character. Without a Zoning modification, aquifers could remain in private hands. Although he hasn't seen it, there are wells owned by the Glasgow Water Company just beyond the south end of Esopus Bend Preserve that could be utilized.

Mary asked why Fred was confident in the supply since the studies were from almost 20 years ago. Fred said the projections were only considering the Blue Mountain Reservoir as the source. Mary asked if there was consideration from the Planning Board that the approval process includes a metric on consumption. Fred said that there are mechanisms in place, but they are imperfect. It is the Village that has veto power over projects they believe will exceed the 650,000 gallon per day allotment.

Mary asked Fred about the CAC's strong recommendation for a minimum of 50% contiguous open space for development in general and Winston Farm in particular. Fred replied that the developer has not supplied new plans or the SEQRA documents for review. He said the Town Board is going to function as the agent of the community, but there would be opportunity for public input in the process.

Fred spoke on the potential option of a water authority in the future to avoid the disconnect between the Town and Village for supply.

The committee thanked Supervisor Costello for his time and insights.

### **Pollinator Garden Update**

Leslie stated the project is a meadow, not a garden. She and Skip went to the Catskill Native Nursery and purchased the potted plant material. There were times available to volunteer on Saturday for planting. She said Climate Smart Hudson Valley had a breakfast webinar releasing their pollinator guidance and it's available online at [pollinatorhv.org](http://pollinatorhv.org). The priority is for the 100 most threatened native pollinator species.

### **EMC Report**

Leslie said the Ulster Department of Firemen have been working with Bard graduate students and contractors to identify quantify community greenhouse gases at the county level. And there's 24 municipalities in the county, which will all be included, and localities can refine what is in this at the municipal level if necessary or desired.

The county does host the GIS overlays. Most of it is online. You can print out PDFs and they are developing a checklist of layers for specific site assessments like rare plants or whatever.

She also reported that the Department of the Environment said after 2025, all county passenger and light community vehicles purchased will be full EV plug-in in order of availability.

### **Planning Board Report**

Carole was not present.

### **Adjournment**

Leslie moved with Mike seconding. Motion passed.

Adjournment at 7pm

*Prepared by: Kevin Freeman, Secretary*