

Summary of Claverack CSC Meeting - August 31, 2021

Attending J. Bradley, J. Kiplinger, J. Nislich, B. Shufelt

Excused: K. Cashen, C.Lewis, R. Weninger, I. Varga

John opened the meeting with several announcements:

- The County CSC will hold a meeting for all CSC Coordinators and other guests on Thursday, Sept 30, 5:30-7:30 PM; Location TBD. The purpose is to facilitate coordination among town efforts. Josh indicated interest in attending.
- Velatie Hydropower - The EMC gave a Good Earthkeeping award to John Doran, owner of Plug-in Stations (PISON) and the Vatie Falls Hydro Plant. John B contacted John Doran to arrange a tour of the hydro plant. Jeff Brenda and Josh expressed interest in attending. John will also extend the invitation to TB members

The committee discussed the follow up from the 8/12 Town Board meeting where John presented the results of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory and the committee's recommendations. Kippy has announced that he will start forming a planning committee for the new town hall and would also issue an RFP for the demolition of the old building. The committee discussed the importance of urging the TB to adopt the highest standards of sustainable design and construction. Several of the Climate Smart actions address this issue and should be recommended to the TB.

The recommendations concerning the town garage was also discussed. Josh said he would put a call into Louie Lamon to see if a tour with our members with expertise would be appropriate (Tom Paaino, Josh and Imre).

John reported that the County CSC will be launching a Solarize campaign. Solarize is a NYSERDA/Climate Smart program to encourage and incentivize towns to enroll its residents for renewable solar energy, with a structure that allows financial rewards for both the individual enrollees and the town's climate fund. Josh shared his experience, stressing that it is a good program for the town and its residents and for increasing the transition to renewable solar energy.

The Solarize project is a lot of work, which can be minimized by bootstrapping on the County's effort or borrowing from other towns' experience, for example for the scoping document, the RFP, the vendor selection, and the marketing. The actual marketing outreach component will require more volunteers and more TB involvement. It might be until 2021 that the County's campaign gets underway, so if it turns out to be too much for Claverack's resources, we can just cede it over to the County and we work with them.

The main reason to initiate this project now is that with the County Program we would probably be involved supporting them and without our own program Claverack would not reap any of the ancillary financial benefits. The benefits to enrolled residents would be the same.

Communications and outreach were discussed at length. In Claverack there are limited ways to communicate directly with our residents, since the town does not have a town newsletter or multiple committees like more successful Climate smart towns have. News and social media are our default options and they require considerable volunteer efforts. John's IMBY articles and e-blast reach a very limited population. As has been discussed in the past, we will need volunteers to develop and run our community and media outreach. Community outreach and education is one of the Pledge elements and is a foundation of all successful Climate Smart programs. In a past meeting Richard W. had a suggestion on how to secure some small grant funding for outreach but we have not had the volunteer resources to follow up.

Proposed Agenda for CSC Aug 31 meeting:

Update on Climate Action Planning (CAP):

- GHG Inventory
- Town Hall

Re-envisioning the town Hall 5 acre Site (Climate Smart project?)

- Work group formed with focus on natural area along creek
 - Sept 12 Happy Hour event - Nature Area Park Display
- Collaboration with Columbia Land Conservancy
- CSC Pledge Element - Climate Smart Land Use
- Community Outreach

County Climate Smart

- Report on Aug meeting
- County Solar Campaign (see background note at bottom)
 - Opportunity for towns to bootstrap on county initiative
- County meeting of CSC Coordinators (Sept 30, 5:30-7:30 PM)

Communications:

- Outreach & Recruiting
 - Claverack Climate List - email blast of 8/22
 - Needs for help with communications outreach
 - Form group for Solarize campaign (late Fall)
- Facebook
- Town Website
- Annual Report for 2021 - can we put this together
 - See New Lebanon example -