



Minutes of the March 2, 2022, Meeting Held on Zoom

Task Force Members Present: Jason Mayer, Mark Varian, Rick Irizarry, Franco Carucci, Kim Mayer, Tara Hoey, Holly Shader

Task Force Members Excused: Steve Mazzuca, Stephen Weir

Guest: Carol Richman

Opening Remarks

Jason opened the meeting. The minutes of the February 2022 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Solar Mapping Tool: Carol spoke about Scenic Hudson's development of a mapping tool that uses the Esri (Environmental Systems Research Institute) platform to locate the best sites in the Hudson Valley to install solar arrays. The Town of Gardiner was used as an example in the training session and the town landfill was determined to be a suitable location for a solar farm. The tool focuses on "disturbed" areas, but other locations may be better utilized by a combination of solar array and agriculture – Agro-Solar. For more information visit:

<https://www.scenichudson.org/ourwork/climate/renewable-energy/solar-energy-in-the-hudson-valley/>

Ulster County CSC Update: Kim reported that there was no new action regarding the Solar Tax (Customer Benefit Contribution). CSC's participation in the Ulster County Fair will include climate education and a sustainability event. There is a possibility that an energy audit of the fair will be conducted. Local CSC groups may be invited to provide short presentations about their current activities.

Susan Gillespie, president of Citizens for Local Power, is working at establishing an alternative CCA.

New Business

CSC Bronze Certification Plaques: One plaque will be placed at the Town Hall and one will be installed at the charging station.



Mark announced that the end of winter event he spoke of at the last task force meeting is now called *Spring Forward: Ditch Disposables!* It will feature a panel discussion on the health hazards and climate impacts of single-use plastic, legislation limiting their use, and holding corporations accountable for the life-cycle damage caused by the manufacturing and use of plastic. The program will also include the introduction of a MAP locating stores that sell food products and household items in bulk, with no packaging, or in refillable containers. There will also be a demonstration of the use of tiffins (stainless steel containers) for take-out and leftovers at local tiffin-friendly restaurants.

Gardiner Gazette: We are looking for someone to write an article about Climate Smart activities for the Gazette. Stories for the spring edition are due by the end of March.

Repair Café: Gardiner Library hosted a Repair Café last Saturday, 2/27. Holly reported that there was a steady crowd (25 guests). Thirteen lamps and a few vacuums were repaired along with several other things. Most people brought in more than one item. The next Repair café will be held on June 26.

Hudson Valley Regional Climate Action Strategy: This program, sponsored by Sustainable Hudson Valley, will establish a strategy to make the transformative changes in our energy system and entire built environment. Franco will look into this.

ICLEI: The town board approved the payment of \$1,080 for ICLEI dues through March 2024. Franco requested that if we are aware of any potential expenses, let him know so he can include those costs in the annual town budget discussions.

Plattekill CSC: A strong core group is getting started. There are plans to hand out seedlings at the Plattekill transfer station.

NRI Law: The Environmental Conservation Commission has submitted a letter of support for a Local Law adopting the NRI. This will be taken up after the Comprehensive Plan is approved. The ECC has attracted some interns through the use of the *Handshake* website.

Recurring Business

EV Charging Station: Jason reported that the charging station is bringing in about \$55 per month, almost covering its cost. Currently there is a fee of \$1/hour after the first two hours. In June, Jason said the fee will be a flat charge of 25 cents/kWh.



Use of the CDC Grant: Franco stated that the town board has no issue with payments from the grant being used to incentivize private businesses to do energy audits. For every five audits for private farms and businesses, the town will receive an energy audit for one of its buildings at no cost.

Community Solar Array: Jason sent out an invitation to various stakeholders for a discussion about the plans for a solar array at the landfill. It has been difficult finding an open date when everyone is available. Jason also wanted to know if we thought it might not be a good idea to have a third party moderate the discussion. It was decided that, since the scope of the work for the solar array would not be determined until we receive proposals from developers, a moderator shouldn't be necessary at this time.



Riverkeeper Sweep, May 7: Franco & Rebecca have been checking out potential sites along the river (at this time there are no plans for a flotilla to collect refuse from the Walkkill). They hope to select 8 locations for possibly 60 volunteers to cover. The Yard Owl and Hoot Owl will sponsor.

Trees for Tribs: The town board approved the grant application last night and that the DEC has received it. Tara said she would be walking the property with the DEC next week. She said they hope to plant another 350 trees adjacent to the 300 trees we planted last year. Climate Smart will advocate to have the highway department provide for more mowing and watering of the site.



Arbor Day, April 30: Carol Richman has offered to be the Town Board Liaison for the Arbor Day Committee. Tree planting sites were discussed. The Supervisor has suggested creating a small park outside Town Hall.

Community Choice Aggregation: Rick and Franco met with Jeff and a Joule representative to discuss an opt-in community solar opportunity. They feel that the Joule program is not competitive with Solarize Ulster. CCA outreach for the next Request for a Proposal is being scheduled.

LED Streetlights: Discussions with New York Power Authority are continuing.

Climate Action Portal: Jason stated that we are in the process of completing enough actions to earn 107 points since Bronze certification. This brings us to a total of 241 points toward Silver certification, which requires 300 points. We should set a goal of Silver in 2025.

Community GHG Study: Mark stated that the data gathering, including agricultural information and off-road emissions, has been completed. When Steve W returns to

Gardiner, in-person meetings will be scheduled to start the forecasting and reporting stages of the inventory.

Pole Barn: Tara said that there is nothing new to report.

Closing Notes and Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on April 6 @ 7 p.m. at the Town Hall or via Zoom. Stay safe and save energy!



Submitted by Mark Varian