

**Minutes of the Kirkland/Clinton Climate Smart Community Task Force  
December 16, 2021  
6:30 p.m.**

Present: Carol Gable, coordinator; Sally Carman, secretary; Alan Cole, Webmaster; Stephen Orvis; Liseli Haines, Mona Perrotti; Aaron Strong; Kathy Collett; Shirley Knop, and guests: Natali Reyes, Anna Rutenback, Maggie Reilly, and Bryan Roy.

**Heat Smart:**

Natali and Anna described the Heat Smart program. It is possible to receive points if ten people sign up for the program. Funds are from NYSERDA. At the launch, ten participants, four energy audits and/or six installations of heat pump projects will gain points. Natali and Anna will help organize a presentation. West Winfield and the Town of Webb have already had programs. Information can be found at [heatsmartmv.org](http://heatsmartmv.org). Natali publishes a newsletter and also works with downstate areas. This is a not-for-profit group. They will also help with applications and help people choose the system right for them. They work with local contractors and conduct community campaigns. Kathy Collett is having an air source heat pump installed at her home.

**Action item:** We will hold an event after February, at a time and location to be determined. This will be a hybrid (in-person and on Zoom) event.

**Action item:** Carol will contact the Kirkland Town Library to determine dates when the upstairs room at the Kirkland Town Library will be available.

**Topics for the event:** geothermal heat, types of heat pumps, solar power, technical issues, NYSERDA funding. Natali and Anna will provide a list of contractors with whom they routinely work. This will be coordinated with Amy Wyatt, our liaison with NYSERDA. Publicity for the event will include: the local Chamber of Commerce, Facebook and the *Waterville Times*

**Action item:** Anna will send an application form to Carol.

**Action item:** This will be put on the schedules of the Town and Village Board meetings.

**Action item:** Kathy sent information to Doug Soika (who spoke at our last meeting). They will work on a letter to the solar company in charge of the Kirkland Avenue solar farm recommending that native species be planted under the solar arrays.

**Downtown Revitalization Initiative**

Carol reported that Little Falls received the DRI grant for our area this year. Past recipients include Rome and Utica.

**Food composting pilot project**

Sally reported that we have 49 participants [50 by year end] and data is being collected on the amount of waste diverted from the landfill.

### **Education plan**

Alma was not able to attend this meeting. However, the education plan is nearly complete and will be presented at the next meetings of the Clinton and Kirkland Boards.

### **New coordinator**

Steve Orvis is the proposed new coordinator for this committee, to be approved by the Clinton and Kirkland Boards. Our meetings will continue to be on the third Thursday of the month on Zoom at 6:30 p.m..

### **Flooding remediation**

**Action item:** Aaron and Mona volunteered to work on an open forum on flooding issues to be held before President's Day in February.

Maggie Reilly is a water engineer and the Project Engineer on the Sauquoit Creek Basin Intermunicipal Commission. She discussed various aspects of the extremely complex issue of flooding. John Shaheen has cost comparisons and case studies of flooding remediation programs.

Maggie noted that a whole system approach is needed. The watersheds cross many political districts, thus complicating the issue. After the severe flooding event in 2013, the DEC commissioned a report of the issues. The Mud Creek, Sauquoit Creek and the Oriskany Creek are interrelated. Another flood on Halloween of 2019 affected Whitesboro in particular. Sanford Avenue, University Avenue and Kirkland Avenue are local areas often affected.

Education is extremely important. Why there are increasing numbers of floods, the effects of these, and what to do about them is the issue. Climate change is causing an increase in the problem. One thing that is needed is stabilization of the river banks.

Steps to take:

1. Mitigation - stabilizing the natural banks.
2. Adaptation - buying houses in areas that routinely flood
3. Infrastructure changes - constructing culverts and bridges to improve water flow.
4. Smart solutions - using science

Funding is important and it is necessary to work with the towns affected. A questionnaire can identify where the problems are. Sediment and debris management is needed.

**Educating the public** is essential. Taking out sediment will not help if the problem is upstream. Cutting up branches in the stream can create sediment downstream. Using natural plants can be

helpful along the streams.

In Kirkland, the St. Mary's Brook Watershed has been studied by the Kirkland DPW headed by Jon Scott. Building in this watershed has blocked the natural flow. This building includes: Hannafords, Milkshouse Apartments, and Clinton Central School.

**Water 101** would be meetings to:

1. explain fully what is happening
2. a chance for residents to voice concerns
3. present an engineering study

This information is too much for just one meeting. The St. Mary's Brook Watershed is a tributary of the Oriskany Creek. Volunteers could be used to document where the flooding occurs. Another meeting site in Clark Mills is a possibility.

**Action item:** Aaron will check with Jon Scott and Garry Colarusso about a community meeting on flooding.

The Department of Environmental Conservation wants to help. Needed is a page describing "Water 101" to distribute to the media and to residents.

**Action item:** Aaron and Maggie will meet in early January to discuss parameters of a meeting about flooding.

Our State Representative, Rachel May, is interested in watershed and flooding concerns.

The next meeting of our task force will be on Thursday, January 20 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Sally Carman  
Secretary