

Minutes of the Kirkland/Clinton Climate Smart Community Task Force July 21, 2022 6:30 pm.

Present: Steve Orvis, Coordinator; Alan Cole, Webmaster; Sally Carman, Secretary; Carol Gable; Sara Ahrens (a Levitt Fellow) ; Maya Wells-Cooley; Mona Perotti; Bryan Roy, Barry Colarussio; Liseli Haines; Elizabeth Tantillo, Clinton Mayor; representing Kirkland Trails: Jim Bramley and Chip Bassett; Introduced were Brendan Marris who is an architect with Nelson Associates and Matt Syke who is a sustainability planner for the Mohawk Valley Economic District.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Water 101

Alan reported on the meeting held on July 20 regarding flooding causes and remediation. It was led by Maggie Reilly, an engineer specializing in flooding issues and Randall Young representing the DEC. Alan will forward slides from the presentation to our group. He noted the two websites which provide more information:

<https://www.informnny.com/abc50-now/village-of-canton-working-to-offer-renewable-energy-to-residents/>

<https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities/How-It-Works/Toolkits/Community-Choice-Aggregation>

Proposed solar project

Jim Bramley spoke about concerns with the solar projects projected for wooded land adjacent to Sherryl Brook Park in New Hartford. This land is currently for sale and covers land in both the Town of New Hartford and the Town of Kirkland. The land includes informal trails, several gorges, waterfalls, and many old hardwood trees. The total property is 450 acres and for sale for \$1.9 million, which has been raised to \$4 million. Several local groups are interested in saving this land for trails rather than clear-cutting for a solar farm. These include: Tug hill Tomorrow Land Trust, GE Ski Club and Track and Trail Club. Atlas Renewables would like to set up a solar farm on part of this land. The property drains into Mud Creed and also Sauquoit Creek which raises flooding issues. The Town of New Hartford may be interested in purchase of some of this property. Factors to consider are: environmental impact, water quality, wild life impacted by fencing and protection of wetlands.

Action item. We are urged to write to the Kirkland Planning Board to urge that this project be rejected.

Sidewalks needed

An upgrade is planned for Meadow Street from Hannaford's to the Village which will include resurfacing the road and widening it to three lanes.. Will this include sidewalks and if so, on what side of the street? Who will assume the cost? Garry noted that the Town was notified late about this plan.

There is concern about the number of disabled people who travel from Franklin Avenue to Hannaford's and the drug stores. Also, more people are walking now. Clinton Tractor is willing to donate land. Hannaford will be responsible for lighting on their property.

Carol noted that NYSEDA encourages sidewalks as part of the Complete Streets program. Perhaps money would be available from other sources such as Hamilton College.

Action items: We are urged to attend Town board meetings and have this put on the agenda. Start a petition and have it available at the Farmer's Market.

Community Choice Aggregation

Some communities such as in Westchester County have combined to buy utilities in bulk. This would enable them to receive a lower rate for electricity. Would this work here?

Vehicle inventory

Town vehicles: police have 5 all-wheel vehicles (Charger and Durango), highway department has: 6 trucks (4 wheel drive) and a front-end loader (seasonal use), parks and recreation - 2 vehicles. Mona asked if these are owned or leased.

Sarah, a Levitt Fellow and student at Hamilton College has been working with the Village and generating a report on vehicle usage as well as other jobs for the Village. She will be leaving at the end of the month. She will be completing an inventory of Village vehicles.

A tree inventory is suggested. Elizabeth noted that the Village is taking a proactive approach. A draft of a Climate Smart Action Plan would be appropriate.

Resilience and Flooding

Liseli announced that there will be a meeting on the Oriskany Creek Watershed Commission on the third Thursday of the month at 4:30 pm in Lombard Hall. They are planning to apply for a grant of \$100,000 to prevent future flooding. The size of culverts is an issue. Communication with the public remains a problem.

Farmer's Market

Our task force is sponsoring a booth at the Clinton Farmer's Market every other Thursday in August. Kirkland Trails and Wild Ones group are assisting with staffing. Also, we will have a table at the Art and Music Festival on Saturday, August 27.

The meeting concluded at 7:40 pm.

Sally Carman
Secretary

