

# Ulster County Climate Smart Committee

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**DATE & TIME:** January 25, 2015 – 7:00 PM

**LOCATION:** Karen L. Binder Library, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, COB, Kingston

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Manna Jo Greene

**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn A. Tantillo, Sr. Legislative Employee

**PRESENT:** Ron Leonard, Pat Courtney-Strong and Laura Petit

**ABSENT:** Legislator Peter Loughran (

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislator Jennifer Schwartz Berky (departed at approximately 8:18); Ken Panza, Woodstock; Betta Broad, Kingston Climate Smart; Susan H. Gillespie, Rosendale RCCE; Jason Zimmerman, Marbletown EEC; Azriel Alleyne, Kingston SAF

Chairman Greene called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00. She welcomed members and said that she wants the committee to focus on setting goals based upon their mission. She plans to review the minutes of last year's meetings to extract a report of accomplishments and ongoing projects.

The committee discussed several of these concrete tangible accomplishments. Laura Petit offered to begin that review.

Chairman Greene asked each person to introduce themselves and describe their involvement in local environmental issues.

**Rosendale:** Ms. Gillespie reported that they are hosting monthly breakfast meeting on the Fourth Friday of the month at 8 am at the Creative Co-op (402 Main Street, Rosendale) behind the Big Cheese. At the last breakfast several elected officials attended and they had an insightful report and discussion about Central Hudson issues.

**Kingston:** Ms. Broad reported that with the election of the new mayor, the Kingston Climate Smart Committee that was meeting regularly last year is now an officially sanctioned committee and they expect to move forward with several projects. Going solar is their first priority.

Legislator Berky noted that as a commission they have a plan in place and can push many of its climate smart goals.

**Marbletown:** Mr. Zimmerman reported that the town has 18 Climate Smart Community (CSC) points.

They wrapped up their street light project and anticipate getting thousands of dollars in refunds from Central Hudson for things like “phantom” street lights. They have repaired flickering and daylight-burning street lights. They are interviewing residents to see if they can reduce the number of street lights in some areas and hope to convert the remaining lights to LED. The town got the first LED street light exactly three months after the EEC began the inventory.

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) made a presentation to the Town Board on January 19 regarding the draft environmental report that they expect to release shortly. The NYCDEP is planning to flush the lines with chlorine to remove biofilm and the Town has concerns that numerous leaks in the aqueduct will result in contamination leaking. The EEC is discussing recommendations to do some testing before the work takes place so they have a reliable baseline.

The committee discussed an upcoming Legislative Resolution to bring water from the NYCDEP aqueduct to the SUNY Ulster Campus and other agreements NYCDEP made with TU regarding the use of chlorine.

Marbletown did not renew their contract with the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA). With a new hauler, the town switched to single stream waste and the EEC hopes to explore ways to return to dual stream waste disposal. The committee discussed how this issue impacts other towns and the UCRRA.

\_\_\_\_\_ (not sure who was speaking - what town they are from or what project they are reporting on) \_\_\_\_\_ reported the town is moving forward with their solar \_\_\_\_\_ project and filed plans with Central Hudson. They plan to begin work this year with a two megawatt array and for it to grow into a ten megawatt system.

**Woodstock:** Mr. Panzer reported they completed the Electric report detailing electrical usage for all municipal buildings and he provided the solar calculation for remote net metering.

He is disappointed that their 600 kilowatt array is still “dead in the water”. The town has no word from On Force and noted they are approaching the one year anniversary since the contract was awarded. The Town supervisor has not announced any decisions.

Town of Esopus solar project has come to a standstill since the death of the Supervisor Coutant. New Paltz was also discussing a solar project for the former landfill. These projects have been under consideration since 2011 and Mr. Panzer expressed frustration at the lack of progress with various solar vendors. The committee discussed various problems facing several towns that seem to be stalling the projects.

Woodstock has a new zoning amendment regarding the aqueduct that will also provide protection to the watershed.

They are also moving forward with several NY Community Rising projects. One involves replacing culverts along Route 212.

**New Paltz:** Ms. Petit reported that the new town supervisor and board members are very environmentally conscious. The new town supervisor has a background in storm water management.

She is aware of a group that has a renewed interest in developing a solar project at the former town landfill but they seem unaware of the issues involved such as disturbing the landfill cap. While she is supportive of the project conceptually she will not be able to work with them directly at this time.

She is hoping to work on the NY Prize initiative. The feasibility study is complete. She also anticipates working with the SUNY New Paltz Climate Smart group.

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Motion No. 1:	The minutes of November 23, 2015 were approved as presented.
Motion Made By:	Ms. Courtney-Strong
Motion Seconded By:	Ms. Petit
Roll Call Vote:	No
Voting in Favor:	Legislator Greene, Ms. Courtney-Strong, Mr. Leonard and Ms. Petit
Voting Against:	None
No. of Votes in Favor:	4
No. of Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	Minutes Approved

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**Energy Improvement Initiatives:** Chairman Greene reminded the members the Ulster County government approved the Energy Improvement Program that would help business fund climate smart improvements. She also reminded them of an upcoming breakfast sponsored by the Ulster County Office of Economic Development entitled Building Ulster Together to be held Wednesday, January 27 at the Best Western in Kingston. She discussed the details and asked members to spread the word.

**Municipal Street Lighting:** Ms. Courtney- Strong detailed work being done as part of the Cleaner Greener Communities Grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). She and other partners have attended meetings with NYSERDA officials and await their approval to get started with their plans.

She described the four partner agencies and six steps that are part of their plans. These plans include a Webinar on Wednesday, February 17; assisting towns with street lighting inventories; a survey to find out where various Hudson Valley communities are in the process; completing an study of options as a framework to help communities get started; working with an experienced and successful advocate to negotiate on behalf of these communities with Central Hudson; helping municipalities explore financing options and inter-municipal agreements; future plans to attract manufacturers.

**Ulster County Solid Waste Improvement Commission:** Chairman Greene reported on progress of the Commission and tours of various facilities. The Commission is working on a report. The Commission will only make recommendations then the RRA will develop a 10 year plan and ultimately the plan will be approved by the full Legislature.

Ms. Petit reported on discussions about using railroad in various areas of the county to move solid waste. A meeting is planned February 3, 2016.

There was a discussion about the need for the towns and the public to weigh in on the plan and how to raise awareness and facilitate public input.

**Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) proceedings – Update:** The Committee discussed a notice some members received today about meetings in Albany on January 28 and 29. One of the topics to be discussed is incentivizing nuclear power with a Zero Emissions Credit. There was a discussion about the success and failures of NYS efforts to provide energy from various sources.

Chairman Greene expressed concern that the county did not have a staff person with expertise in energy issues dedicated to tracking the diverse and complex issues related to energy. She applauded the excellent work this small group of volunteers is doing to keep government informed but felt more is needed.

**Outreach and Recruiting:** Chairman Greene was concerned that only a fraction of Ulster County communities are taking part in this Climate Smart process despite the fact that many of them have taken the Climate Smart Pledge. She suggested one goal should be to recruit one member from each community that has taken the pledge and to encourage the remaining communities to take the pledge.

Ms. Petit read the Resolution creating the CSC and its mission. The committee discussed how to approach municipalities and how to report the progress of the past year. Chairman Greene recommended asking the towns for input on climate smart projects in their town to enhance the report and perhaps encourage more participation on the CSC from the towns.

Chairman Greene began a brainstorming session about other outreach tactics and how to encourage more CSC initiatives from County Government.

The committee discussed holding forums on various topics and the best way to gather and distribute information. Two Community Solar Summits are planned in upstate New York for March. Members discussed the possibility of getting a tape of the summit to use as a webinar.

A discussion ensued about the mission of the CSC, what resources to seek and/or offer and what groups, municipalities or entities should be approached. Chairman Greene suggested forming a sub-committee to explore the issues discussed and report back to the committee in February. A sub-committee of Pat Courtney-Strong, Betta Broad, Azriel Alleyne and Ken Panza was formed.

### **New Business**

Ms. Petit met with Kathy Nolan and discussed possibility of a joint meeting with the Trails Advisory Committee to address the need to for connectivity to encourage the use of non-motorized trails.

Citizens for Local power would like to produce a map of renewable resources.

There was a discussion about the Pilgrim Pipeline and what entities will be lead agency. Chairman Greene told the committee that the county passed a resolution opposing the pipe line and because of the tight time frame, several legislators signed on to a letter opposing the NYS Thruway Authority being a lead agency and encouraging the NYS Department of Environmental Protection (NYSDEP).

The next meeting will be February 22, 2016 at 7:00 in the Karen L. Binder Library.

There being no further business before the Committee, a motion was made and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Minutes Approved \_\_\_\_\_, 2016