

Bethel Green Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2018

The January 15, 2018, Bethel Green Committee meeting was held at the Duggan Community Center and was called to order by Karen London at 10:30 a.m. Present were: Michael Chojnicki, Chris Cunningham, Dawn Ryder, Vicky Simpson, Jennifer Young, and Co-chairs Jeff Allison and Karen London. Wendy Robinson participated by phone.

Karen London stated that Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart are still available to us as resources through the County Sustainability Office and that the County Sustainability Office will now act as the Town's CSC Coordinator.

Karen described last year's accomplishments:

1. The largest project has culminated after 2 years' work in the Request for Proposal for a solar array on the Town's capped landfill promulgated last month. Along the way, it involved:
 - a. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency evaluation — they encouraged us to proceed
 - b. A feasibility study undertaken by Cornell University Graduate Engineering students
 - c. An EPA review of the Cornell study; the EPA believed that Cornell students didn't have all the latest data and encouraged us to proceed after securing additional input from National Renewable Energy Laboratory and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, which concluded that the economics of the proposed solar installation were more favorable than the findings of the Cornell study
 - d. We received approximately 50 hours of free consultation from NYSERDA
 - e. The expectation that the economics would not necessarily be positive for participation by the Town as the it pays so little for the electricity it consumes
 - f. We earned four points for accomplishing the feasibility study
 - g. Planning a site visit with two potential developers for January 18 with Dan and Chris (maybe Karen); other developers are still able to submit proposals
 - h. The conclusion that if the economics don't line up for the Town to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement and use some of the power generated (and therefore, we might not earn points), Bethel still might earn revenue from lease payments for leasing the landfill site to a solar developer
 - i. Agreement that Karen will follow up on the points issue with Dazzle Ekblad at the NY Department of Environmental Conservation
2. Conversion of streetlights
 - a. Have been working over the past year with the Mid-Hudson Consortium
 - b. Received favorable "turn key" proposal from New York Power Authority and will work with them instead
 - c. Received purchase price bid from New York State Electric & Gas — have 90 days to negotiate better price and NYPA will be handling the negotiations on the Town's behalf
 - d. NYPA trying to aggregate other towns and encourage their participation by hosting luncheon February 2.
 - e. Bethel has offered its facilities for that event (we might receive points for facilitating inter-municipality climate smart initiatives)
3. Smart car purchase almost finalized
 - a. Would be completely electric and used to run errands, pick up parts, etc. (for which we are now using larger, gas consuming vehicles)
 - b. \$17-24,000, with a potential \$5,000 rebate from the DEC and \$1,700 from NYSERDA

- c. Will receive two points for this
- 4. Electric Vehicle Charging Station
 - a. We received two points for installing
 - b. We should put up a sign and add pavement striping directing people to it — the EVSE is located in the Town's public parking lot and behind the Justice Court building
- 5. Ultraviolet upgrade to sewage treatment system
 - a. RFP underway
 - b. Received two bids, one for \$250,000 and the other for \$500,000
 - c. Would be the subject for a bond issuance
 - d. To earn points for this, we would have to demonstrate at least 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions achieved by the upgrade. We should ask bidders to estimate electricity savings we could achieve. We could also determine after the fact by plugging in the amount of electricity consumed vs. the numbers we already measured.
 - e. But the points are tiered on this so the greater the GHG reduction, the higher the points we could achieve
- 6. Internal Green Team met three times (thanks to Vicky), which earned eight points. They will continue to meet as their input and data assists the Green Committee in achieving its goals.
- 7. There are now 16 Certified Climate Smart Communities, Sullivan County having been the 15th!
- 8. We have 78 points out of 120 confirmed with the DEC and have completed action items ((5.9; 6.11; and 6.19), worth an additional 9 points for which documentation still needs to be submitted
- 9. We received Cleaner, Greener Certification last year

The Committee reviewed potential actions to achieve more points toward certification.

- 1. Action 2.3 — Emissions reduction. This could be done through a Climate Action Plan, which is a lot of work, or through Town Board resolution, and we could achieve four points. We could probably base ours on the County's plan and save some work. Jeff will review goals and targets.
- 2. Dawn volunteered to replace Tom on community outreach. She will review the DEC's recorded webinar on the Role of Community Engagement in Local Climate Action Planning featuring Dobbs Ferry (CSC Bronze certified). Some things we should consider:
 - a. Focus for our May Community Day — renewable energy
 - b. Use Earth Day and Arbor Day for outreach as well as the summer camp
 - c. Work with the Woodstock 50th Anniversary committee to design themes
 - d. Table at Farmers' Market (May—October on Triangle Mall Saturdays 10—1)
 - e. We should create a banner/signage to use at town events and Farmers' Market
 - f. Michael will work on a logo
 - g. The Town's website has a separate page for our Green Committee and we received points for that; Karen supplies Rita with information to update the webpage as needed and to add to the Town's monthly newsletter
- 3. Jeff will review Action 3.31 — implementing a GHG management system
- 4. Vulnerability Assessment Action 7.1
 - a. Jennifer and Wendy need guidance and have looked at the County's website. There is no Vulnerability Assessment, but Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (hundreds of pages). Bethel was not among the towns in that document and it is not directly on point.
 - b. Vicky will locate Bethel's Emergency Management Plan and provide to them
 - c. Karen recommended using the manual as a starting point
 - d. DEC's only webinar on the subject is on flooding
- 5. Street light conversion Action 3.15, worth 5 points should be done this year
- 6. Upgrading outdoor lighting fixtures on government buildings 3.18 — should be able to do easily

- a. Karen will check previous L&S audit
- b. Vicky will inquire with Dan and/or the Internal Green Team about conducting an audit
- 7. Serving as a Host Site for a Renewable Energy Installation and Enter into a PPA — Action 4.7 — not likely, but Karen working with DEC
- 8. Vehicle Fleet Policy Action 3.10 is in progress. Karen should have it completed and Board approved by next meeting
- 9. Anti-idling Policy Action 3.13 — will be incorporated into the above Policy and would give us three points
- 10. Right-sizing the Vehicle Fleet Action 3.11 should be done this year

We applied through State Senator John Bonacic for a \$100,000 grant to renovate and expand Town Hall and hope to receive at least \$50,000. We would need a bond for the rest, but NYSERDA rebates may be available for a “green building,” which would be the goal. Past architectural plans would have to be updated for sustainability. The L&S audit showed much that could be done, such as water efficiency and other green building standards that could serve as an inspiration to the community. We could receive nine points if we installed solar panels on the roof or replaced the roof with solar tiles. Michael can give input on the plans. This should be done in consultation with the County’s Office of Sustainability.

Other potential projects:

- 1. Climate Action Plan — Karen will work on it with someone else if anyone wants to volunteer
- 2. Board Resolution for green power purchase plan Action 4.1
- 3. Action 4.4 — the means by which to accomplish 4.1 — Vicky will look into this one (speak to Dan and Heather) and said we could do this through purchasing Renewable Energy Credits
- 4. Preserve Natural Areas through Zoning Action 6.19 (six points) and Conserve Wetlands and Forests. . . 7.17 (one point) — Karen has been discussing this regarding the Smallwood Preserve with Dazzle. Dawn said it was rezoned years ago from one to five acres and then forest conservation. Delaware Highland Conservancy was involved after that. There are wetlands, so DEC thinks 7.17 may be applicable. The entire water system for Smallwood is inside the preserve. There’s a whole history at Town Hall.
- 5. Natural Resource Inventory Action 6.17 (possible 5 points) — maybe we can get Stephen Metts (Bethel resident, expert GIS mapper) to help with this, perhaps with friend’s drone

Michael discussed what would have to be done to adopt a law allowing a Community Choice Aggregation plan for Bethel’s residents for the purchase of energy. The goal would be to tie it to locally produced green energy. Residents would be included unless they specifically opted out. NYSEG would transmit the energy, as it currently does, but the supplier would be different. It would have to cost less or the same as residents are currently paying; it could be all or only part renewable. They are working to ensure that both the supply and delivery charges would be on the same bill. Right now, a CCA is in place only in Westchester County. Working with Joule Assets, who would be the administrator, but Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development would be the local partner, educating and enlisting residents. The only costs to the town would be those associated with adopting the local law.

The next meeting will be held at 4:30 pm on February 12 at the Duggan School.

There being no further business, Wendy Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Jennifer Young and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Robinson

Bethel Green Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2018

The April 23, 2018, Bethel Green Committee meeting was held at the Duggan Community Center and was called to order by Karen London at 4:38 p.m. Present were: Michael Chojnicki, Chris Cunningham, Dawn Ryder, Vicky Simpson, Jennifer Young, and Wendy Robinson, and Co-chairs Jeff Allison and Karen London.

Karen London updated the Committee about the potential solar installation on the Town's capped landfill. Out of the more than 50 identified installers, only four came for a site visit, but only one proposal was received from BQ Solar. However, it was likely the best candidate, as they specialize in capped landfills and unused town properties. In the process, we received about 100-150 hours of free consultations from New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, including assistance preparing the Request for Proposals and in reviewing the proposal we did receive. The Town Board unanimously agreed to enter into a non-binding Letter of Intent, which was necessary to contact New York State Electric and Gas to determine whether we have sufficient capacity to absorb the 4.9 megawatts of electrical power the proposed solar installation would produce. Two potential hurdles:

1. It is possible that NYSEG may say we need infrastructure upgrades.
2. BQ may agree to do the project only if there are enough market transition credits left by the time we enter into an agreement. There are only 30 mw credits left, we would need five of those, and we would have to have the lease in place first for them to obtain the credits

The basic proposal for the capped landfill and old sand mine is about 30 acres, which could generate about \$50,000 in annual lease payments over a 25-year period. The Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency would require that a significant portion of the payments derived from a Payment in Lieu of Taxes be distributed to the County and the Monticello School District, thereby reducing the lease payments to Bethel. The Town would therefore receive approximately \$10,000 per year of those lease payments. BQ has said they will reach out to the IDA to begin negotiating. Subscribers to the community solar project, both individuals and businesses resident in Bethel, would receive a 12% discount and all other county residents would be eligible for a 9% discount. We now have to hear from NYSEG — if we have sufficient capacity, we must sign a lease and get in the queue. We should know within the next couple of months if we will move ahead.

Regarding the street light upgrade, New York Power Authority signed a non-disclosure agreement to prohibit the disclosure of the price NYSEG would charge for the purchase of the old streetlights. NYPA will negotiate with NYSEG on behalf of the Town. NYPA is trying to convince other towns to participate so that replacement and management costs to all the towns could be aggregated and reduced.

Jennifer and Wendy discussed the challenges related to conducting the vulnerability study, and the lack of available sample documents. The County did not conduct one as part of its Climate Smart Communities effort, and the Department of Environmental Conservation doesn't include any on its website. NYSERDA's resources are very lengthy and large segments are not pertinent to our small, rural town. They said that having meetings with the relevant local officials would be a necessary step to completing the assessment. Vicky offered to set up an Internal Green Team meeting at which those officials could be present and invite Jennifer and Wendy to the meeting as a means of simplifying the

process. Karen suggested that perhaps Dazzle Eckblad at the DEC would have access to assessments that other small towns have prepared. Wendy also said that Carol Roig offered her assistance.

Michael provided the Committee with a schematic of a suggested Town Hall renovation/expansion. He is trying to determine the scope and whether ripping out walls and reinsulating them would be worth the cost, as well as other potential changes to the outside of the building and parking lot. The process will continue with input from Supervisor Sturm and Chris.

Karen talked about the concept of a Repair Café that she attended in The Town of Beacon, where people volunteer to transform small broken mechanical and household goods brought there by other town residents. Those residents stay and observe the repair processes so that, where possible, they can perform simple fixes for others. This demonstrates for those with skills that they're valued, and it builds community among residents. The only charges are for parts necessary to fix the items. The Committee agreed to look into trying to set up a Repair Café in Bethel. Karen said she would arrange to get the signage.

Dawn reported on the Community Day scheduled for May 19 at the Duggan Community Center and the Bethel Woods Open House on June 2. We will have a table at both events and should consider one at the Kauneonga block party on June 17. The Committee should produce a banner, which would cost about \$60, and Dawn will circulate some potential designs. She said that she also applied for and received a grant from the County for 50% of the cost of producing a map of Bethel with the town's businesses (all 112!), points of attraction, parks, boat launches, and a list of events (that can be updated as more are printed). The maps, 30,000 of which will be printed, will be placed in New York State Thruway rest stops and visitor centers and throughout the area.

Karen stated that we have up to 84 points out of the 120 already entered, and that she and Rita can add another 8 and some additional amount for the car that are uncertain due to how the fleet is calculated. However, Dazzle said that the DEC is revamping the point system and that we shouldn't submit any more until they have finished the process because we may receive more points than were originally allocated for those actions we've already achieved.

Chris notified the Committee that there will be Music in the Park again every Thursday beginning June 28 from 6:30-8, the Farmer's Market will be in the Kauneonga Lake triangle every Saturday from 10-1 from Memorial Day through October, and that they are trying to arrange yoga either before the Thursday music or Saturday market. The Town is also planning to construct a dog park in the Forest Preserve in Smallwood and they will have representatives soliciting donations for that at the May 19 Community Day. The Woodstock 50th Anniversary Committee will also have a table at Community Day. "Save Your Life" will also install smoke alarm and CO₂ detectors from the Red Cross at no charge.

There being no further business, Wendy Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Dawn Ryder and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Robinson