

Minutes of the Public Meeting

Climate Smart Communities Task Force- Village of Bronxville

May 19, 2021 6:30-7:30pm via Zoom

Meeting attendance:13

Steven Shallo	Assistant to Village Administrator and Coordinator for Climate Smart Communities Task Force
Helen Knapp	Village Trustee and Liaison to CSC, Task Force Member, Bronxville resident
Ellen Edwards	Task Force Chair, Bronxville resident
Carole Upshur	Task Force Member, Bronxville resident
Pamela Lippe	Task Force Member, Bronxville resident
Maria Terjanian	Task Force Member, Bronxville resident
Eliza Brennan	Bronxville School student representative, Bronxville resident
Joseph Cutaia	Bronxville School student representative, Bronxville resident
Ruth Walter	County legislator, Bronxville resident
Susan Brownie	Mount Vernon resident
Josyane Colwell	Bronxville resident
Laura van Tienhoven	Bronxville resident
Christina Weiler	Bronxville resident

Task Force members absent: Craig Hart, Bronxville resident; Charles Miers, Bronxville resident; Thomas Breglia, NYP Hospital Director of Westchester Facilities & Development.

Steven Shallo opened the meeting by explaining his role as Village Coordinator for the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program.

Ellen Edwards reviewed previous steps: the Village Trustees passed a resolution in February 2021 to register Bronxville as a Climate Smart Community; in April 2021, the Village Coordinator, Liaison to the Trustees, and the Task Force members were named by the Trustees.

Ellen provided an overview of CSC:

- The CSC program is a state-wide program to promote local climate change planning and work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Bronxville's goal is to win 120 points in the program to qualify for Bronze Certification.
- Thirty-one of 48 Westchester communities have registered in the CSC program; two have Silver Certification (Croton, Hastings), and ten have Bronze status, including Irvington, Mamaroneck, Pound Ridge, and Yonkers.
- There are ten programmatic areas that communities can choose to work on, with over 100 action elements, some designated as mandatory and/or priority.
- Areas include: Forming teams, conducting greenhouse gas inventories and creating climate action plans, reducing energy use and shifting to clean energy, solid waste management, land-use policies, enhancing community resilience, supporting a green economy, and public engagement and commitment.
- Communities are awarded Bronze, Silver, or potentially Gold status (Gold is not yet defined within the program) depending on how many actions they have completed and documented with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Ellen reported that she, Stephen, and Trustee Knapp met via Zoom with Carla Cardillo, Executive Director of the CSC program in the Lower Hudson region. Carla identified Eleanor Peck as our program manager who will help us navigate the program. Once we believe we have taken steps worth 120 points, Eleanor will review our documentation and guide

our submission for the state's review; in any given year, we are allowed three dates on which to submit our request for certification.

Both Stephen and Ellen indicated that the purpose of today's meeting is to reach a consensus on the action steps we'll pursue, based on ones the CSC Coordinator and the Task Force previously suggested as possible short-, medium-, and long-term goals. These included identifying climate smart actions already taken by the Village for which we might earn points. After reaching a consensus, we would solicit public comment.

The posted agenda listed action steps recommended by various Task Force members and highlighted steps suggested by more than one member. These were briefly reviewed by the members who submitted them. Twenty-four items were flagged across eight of the ten CSC action areas; they included:

- Various approaches to public education, use of social media, and a website.
- Developing or documenting partnerships with other entities and regional/national climate programs (the Village is already a member of Sustainable Westchester and the Bronx River Watershed Agreement)
- Promoting waste reduction and launching the food scrap recycling program
- Installing additional electric vehicle charging stations
- Having the Village building inspector update training on energy code enforcement
- Promoting the Farmer's Market

Task force members pointed out that higher point/priority areas like a solar ordinance and promoting Community Choice Aggregation would result in greater climate impacts.

Eliza Brennan reported that the high school Environmental Club has held several educational events in the elementary school and applied to the Bronxville School Foundation for a \$10,000 grant, including \$5,000 to implement food scrap recycling in the elementary school and \$5000 for environmental speakers and educational materials. The grant has been approved by the Foundation and is awaiting School Board approval.

The student representatives, Trustee Knapp, and Legislator Ruth Walter also advocated for promoting better walking/biking in the village by reviewing the Village's Comprehensive plan and considering how to make the village safer and more friendly for runners, walkers, and bikers. Legislator Walter indicated that the county planner, who will be offering a fall webinar, might provide technical assistance.

Ellen Edwards reported that according to Carla Cardillo, there is currently no grant funding available to hire someone to create a greenhouse gas inventory or create a climate action plan; the state can offer tool kits but has no list of volunteers willing to do this work. However, by being registered in CSC, Bronxville has greater access to other grant funding.

The floor was opened for public comment and several people spoke briefly, including Christina Weiler, who just graduated from Colgate with degrees in economics and environmental science; she has returned to Bronxville for the summer and offered to assist the Task Force. As part of her course work, she helped Hamilton, NY, obtain Bronze certification last year. Task Force members will meet with her next week.

The meeting concluded with a consensus that the Task Force should vigorously pursue points for work that has already been done by the Village; Stephen will create a list of actions we intend to present to the Trustees for their approval; he will add up the points they represent and determine how close that would get us to the 120 needed for Bronze certification.

Respectfully submitted,

Carole Upshur, Task Force Member, May 21, 2021

