

NS Climate Smart Community Meeting June 15, 2021 Notes

Present: Janine Kourakos, John Roach and Charlotte Harris, Jocko McKean, Pam Pooley, Chris Brockmeyer, Brandy Keenan, Holly Thomson, Katherine Daniels, Bob Tompkins, Amy Rosmarin, Brandy Keenan. Emily Simoness, Maria Hlushko, Finn Keenan, Edris Scherer, and Janet Olshansky

1. Conversation with Midge Iorio ED of Bedford 2030:

First Bedford plan written 2010, written by community members from info gathered beginning in 2004 about greenhouse gases.

2010 plan included energy, transportation, food, waste & recycling. 120 pages with goals and potential impact.

2019 they achieved their goal and wrote a new climate action plan. Did research looking at Orlando and Boston plans. Did 6 action areas and drafted what they had done and proposed actions to do.

Goal in 2019 Plan: Wanted to reduce greenhouse gases by 80% by 2030.

2019 Plan: process. Did several internal drafts, met with the board and then with town dept heads and got input from them. Redrafted plan reviewing with town board, building dept. Had 3 public meetings and got input. Was adopted by the Town board. Started Fall of 2019 & adopted June 2020.

Did townwide survey in 2010, but not in 2019. Wants to do one now. Thought it was good idea for us to do survey.

6 action areas in 2019 plan: most of their emissions are in buildings & transportation so that's their focus. Wanted to add carbon drawdown to their plan & did.

Questions: Any access to town employees? Yes. They worked with town department heads. They incorporated their comments in the plan.

Community Engagement: When to reach out to the community broadly? Timing of survey and meetings.?

Midge likes reaching out in survey early on. Suggested we should frame or have an agenda but early buyin from community is good = letting community know we are doing this. If we do a community meeting have Warren there too to show everyone is on board.

Difference between Pillars and Action areas: Pillars = Goals where they'll get the most from their efforts. Their focus is building and transportation & carbon drawdown.

Each action item in their plan has a report on progress & new strategies to achieve the 2030 objective.

Figure out what we've accomplished already. We'll find out that department heads have already done a lot. Good to know that you're not starting from zero.

We can update the greenhouse inventory list we did in 2010. Would be a good starting point.

They used "ICLE" as a consultant. Midge recommends them to do an inventory for us.

Carbon sequestration is interesting. How to measure the drawdown? They are close to having a baseline. Researching how to set a goal and measuring it but are going forward before they know how to measure it as they consider it a "fertile" area.

What are you measuring in maps? How much carbon is being sequestered in wetlands, lawn and forests? Coming up with methodology to see how much carbon is in each area. Maybe Open Land maps can help us? Forest Carbon Works, can they help us?

Will residents change their behavior? Programs to get people to change their behavior, individual action as well as collective action. Can we get town to benchmark buildings in terms of carbon footprint? Encourage people to switch to EVs, plant trees. *"Need to engage people where they are"*. If people interested in trees engage them there and hope that will be an entry point. (ex, Trees, composting,) *Composting very popular! Composting is great gateway* per Midge.

Is town bound by the plan? Town board adopted their plan and made a commitment to achieve goals in plan but it's not a law.

What works best in community for easy buyin? Or what were hardest goals?
Midge: People want to feel heard. Need something to react to. Just talking climate change is not enough. Maybe share what has been done and share what goes next. Get them excited.

Any success with solar projects on large barns? Did campaign but it wasn't a priority for them. Pointed out we have a farm that could be a model so it may be a priority for us.

Offered to answer questions going forward too. Happy to collaborate. Midge then left.

Our Plan: we draft a plan then then go out to the community & ask questions like: who's interested in composting? Consultant to look at putting solar on barns. We can use the Bedford plan as a template. It's very concise & easy to work with. Assign 2 people per goal and see what we've done already. Have one municipal person per group. Consensus was they liked sharing what we have already done.

Energy assessments: there may be funding available. Janine to look and see if there is funding available. Meanwhile we'll look and see how many people in town did it.

Using Bedford 6 areas as ours. There is an uneven distribution on sign up so people may have to be reassigned. Will need deliverables and deadlines == that's our assignment for next month.

Katherine and Janine will assign everyone & go out with who's doing what.

Note: On Goggle Drive: Bedford 2030 plan and relevant documents, climate bills to follow are there too. Can work in google drive so it's all in the same place. If can't get into google drive ask Janine.

2. Motion to approve minutes: approved

3. Solar Webinar: Katherine. Seminar was on solar in general. Not geared for the Horse community. Recommended we do a solar presentation to get all of the horse farms or arenas to see what can be done.

John: lots of moving parts from Alexis Finley's experience. Hard to grasp. Subsidies are changing.

Charlotte talking to another farm in town that is doing it too. Several other barns are interested. It is expensive. Tax deductions, depreciation, subsidies are all part of it but to generate interest from non-billionaires the financial piece is important. How long till break even? That's a big part of it.

Could installers participate? Alexis used company with limited experience. Most companies have only been in business for 5 years or so.

Pam had good experience with her solar contractor. Her contractor did all of the paperwork. Invite David Sandbank to talk about what's going on in the solar field. Can he come to the next meeting?

2 companies discussed: Green Hybrid Energy Solutions and PurePoint Energy do this. What is payback timeframe? 15 years? It's in the proposals per Pam. Both will do a free proposal. Could there be a savings if a number of people want to do it?

4. Katherine went out to SunPower, a third company. She was impressed by them. SunPower was soup to nuts too. She felt we should include them too. They do all of the permitting, rebates and tax credits. They calculate savings on electric bills.

Katherine recommends we do a solar consultation for residents and commercial properties. Payback quicker if southern facing.

Does NYSEG do energy audits? Katherine to find out.

Municipal side is another important avenue.

Batteries: can they replace gas generators etc?

Back to Solar Power on homes: Christopher's suggestion: Need turnkey approach for solar for middle class households. If we can lead residents to turnkey approach it will increase interest. Need someone as test case. Approach all 3 companies and see if they will package a lower rate. Pam will ask her solar contractor. Perhaps this is a survey question: would you consider solar if it's at a discount.?

Nina Orville, ED from Sustainable Westchester: She's been trying to get deals from contractors. Ask Nina and David for advice. Pam to ask David to join us for our next meeting.

Solar talking points needs:

1. Warren & Janine to discuss how solar works for community
2. Need Solar for more modest homes where investment isn't \$30K - \$40K upfront.

Other comments: Everyone can contribute to clean energy by opting into clean energy sources by joining CCA. We have this in town now. You can then opt into solar but notices are confusing.

Janine to arrange to have someone come and talk to us about CCA. Will ask Jasmine to come from Sustainable Westchester to explain CCA to all of us.

Question: What are other creative ways to get people excited about this? What did Bedford do: Fairs with demonstrations, meatless Mondays. They started a non-profit with Midge at the helm. Used celebrities. Did a film showing at Bedford playhouse.

What's going to appeal to different communities? Need buy in. We have very different types of communities. Bloomerside, Purdys, Peach Lake, Salem Center. How to get everyone to buy in. Our *Strategy wants to be inclusive*.

Suggestion: We go to each community and ask what they're interested in.

Maybe we do something like a community fair: Could have table at library fair first. Have a table at various places: in Purdy's, F & F, Hayfields.

Maybe we'll have enough to do a newsletter after the next meeting.

5. Update on EV charging stations on Highway Garage: Warren still negotiating with NYSEG and Blink about EV chargers. Trying to figure out what options are. Complicated calculations. Warren is trying to make it attractive for townspeople to use. Goal to have 2 - 4 type-2 chargers at each location in town: Town Hall, Courthouse and Croton Falls Train Station.

FYI. We were retroactively awarded a \$5K grant for being a green community. Janine will check and see if we can use it.

Next Tuesday they will award the highway garage contract for the roof -- solar panel project to be later.

Next meeting: Tuesday July 20th at 7:30pm