



Minutes

Climate Smart Task Force of Saratoga Springs

December 13th 2023

In Attendance: Chair Laura Faulk, James Gallagher, Dan Barusch, Ben Foster, Anita Morzillo, Jennifer Ferriss

City Staff in Attendance: Beige Berryman, Jen Dunn, Michael Dutre, Jessie House

Absent: Rayna Caldwell, Deirdre Ladd, Jamil Khan, Brooke VanBuskirk

MEETING MINUTES ARE NOT A WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSCRIPT.

Public Comment – 5 Minutes: There were no public comments.

Approval of November Meeting Minutes: Chair Faulk pointed out the minutes came later than expected and the Task Force would need time to review. This item will move to the January meeting.

Climate Action Plan: Jen Dunn reported that the top scoring contractor has been awarded the bid and the contract has been signed by the Mayor. Chair Faulk added that she, Jen, and Brooke met with DPW to keep them informed as the CAP moves forward. Deputy Commissioner O’Neil and DPW’s Business Manager Mike Veitch will attend the CAP kick-off meeting with C&S. Additionally, City staff has been compiling background information in the shared workspace ‘Basecamp’ to assist the contractors once they begin work.

One question that came up during prep work with C&S is whether or not the City wants to include GHG emissions from the Saratoga County wastewater treatment plant since it is a shared facility. The consensus of the Task Force was yes. Various methods of doing that were discussed but we agreed that we would defer to C&S’s GHG inventory expert as to the methodology.

Chair Faulk reported that CDRPC received funding authorized through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to create a Regional Climate Action Plan. This will be done in two phases, a priority CAP and a community CAP. The priority CAP is expected to be complete in early 2024 in time to identify projects that may be a good fit for the project implementation funding also authorized through the IRA. Dan Barusch said that he is a part of the CAP team assembled by CDRPC.

NYSERDA Solar Canopies for Parking Lot Build Ready Program Update: James Gallagher summarized the meeting with NYSERDA as interesting but lacking for the City’s specific needs. NYSERDA is interested in larger parking lots that would generate 5 megawatts of energy. The City’s smaller municipal lots couldn’t generate that amount of power, so NYSERDA would have to partner with other parking lot owners to get the scale they are looking for, which would be

challenging. Additionally, the NYSERDA financials were unclear for the City. James Gallagher observed that everything should be transparent for rate payers and recommended to pass on this particular program.

National Grid Programs Follow-up Meeting: Chair Faulk recommended the group schedule a meeting with National Grid in January. James Gallagher suggested that we should identify and invite a National Grid employee that has high-level knowledge over their programs who could offer a ‘menu’ of funding choices for the City to explore. He added that Con Ed is installing smart meters in all homes in their territory. It would be good to find out what National Grid’s plans are for smart meter deployment. Chair Faulk added that DPW corresponds with National Grid on their projects and incentives and it may be helpful to find out about their process and contacts.

NYSERDA FlexTech Audits: Jen Dunn said that the Climate Action Plan consultants have engineering staff that are certified in NYSERDA’s FlexTech program. C&S suggested that the City explore the possibility of adding FlexTech audits to the CAP process. NYSERDA pays for half of the cost but the City would have to provide matching funds. Jen will set up a meeting with Finance to discuss this opportunity in more detail. National Grid also offers building audits and DPW has worked with them to provide audits on some buildings. We need to find out the details and how these audits compare to FlexTech. DPW is interested in learning more about what the FlexTech program offers and should be included in the conversations.

Waste Management

a. Bethlehem Compost Facility Tour

Chair Faulk is coordinating with the Bethlehem Compost Facility to host a tour with Climate Smart. The Task Force prefers a spring tour date which was suggested by Bethlehem. Chair Faulk pointed out that Bethlehem residents can contract with a third party, ‘Food Scraps 360’, to pick up their food waste and bring it to the municipal site. Bethlehem itself is not currently offering curbside food waste pickup. Saratoga Springs has curbside yard waste pickup and residents can contract with a third-party organization, ‘Loving Earth Compost’, for curbside pickup. Loving Earth uses a private facility and does not use the City’s composting facility. Residents can also drop off food waste at the Saratoga Springs Farmers Market at no charge. Loving Earth picks up the waste and takes it to their composting facility. James Gallagher suggested City restaurants likely generate a high volume of food scraps and should be involved. Anita Morzillo highlighted that the City should make composting easy for residents and a pickup service would be more popular than a drop off system. Chair Faulk will find out how Skidmore is composting their food waste.

Champlain Hudson Power Express Green Economy Fund Meeting: Chair Faulk reminded the Task Force that we still need to meet with CHPE regarding this fund and should set up a meeting with the City’s CHPE community benefits contact to find out more about it. Based on the current award list, they have only funded organizations within New York City so far.

Social Media and Press Releases

- a. DPW EV infrastructure and equipment electrification: Jessie, Brooke, Rayna**
- b. Climate Action Plan Media**

Jen Dunn pitched a potential media series spearheaded by City Communications Coordinator, Jessie House to the group. The plan entails illustrating the goals of the Climate Action Plan and showcasing individuals in the community that have installed green technologies and realized savings.

Next Meeting: January 17th, 9am