

MEETING MINUTES FOR: 04/19/2023
Town of Aurora Climate Smart Community Task Force

MEETING DETAILS

Project Manager: Luke Wochensky, Town of Aurora Councilman

Date:

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Town of Aurora Municipal Building, 575 Oakwood Ave. East Aurora, NY

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Luke Wochensky- Town of Aurora Councilman; Joe McCann - Town of Aurora Councilman; Matthew Bourke- UB Regional Institute's CSC Initiative; Claudia Newton- ACES Representative; Susan Russell- ACES Representative & Village of East Aurora Zoning Board; Pat Lally- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; Catie Jantzi- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; Lori Borowiak- NYSERDA Representative; Jeanne Beiter- Senior Program Manager for Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Village of East Aurora Planning Board;

Present via Zoom: Anika Safford

Absent:

Nicole Morris-McLaughlin- Senior Energy Development Specialist, County of Erie. Ryan McPherson - Chief Sustainability Officer, University at Buffalo; Jennifer Brazill, Borderland Festival Organizer ; Emma Dolan- President of East Aurora HS Sustainability Club
Jeffrey Shelley- Environmental Science Instructor, East Aurora High School, Faculty Student Liaison for EAHS Sustainability Club in; Elizabeth Cassidy- in advisory role as Aurora Town Code Enforcement Officer; Sharon Bachman- in advisory role from the Cornell Cooperative Extension

Visitors: Michelle & Steve Bjella

I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:00PM

II. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- **GHG inventory update:** Claudia reports Liz from Highway Dept gave gas and diesel 2019 numbers for comparison. Claudia needs Matt's

assistance to convert to GHG. Catie reports that 2021-2022 lighting data has been converted to GHG.

- **Complete Streets:** Luke reports he's received policies from Matt. Would like to pass a complete street policy at the town level, that would address complete street needs when new road construction is under consideration. Lori will inquire with NYS Dept of State if there are rural guidance standards. Claudia Newton, Michelle Bjella will also assist.
- **NYSERDA FlexTech Program opportunities:** Lori reports that she has identified 5 contractors. Luke said Town requires 3 quotes. They will handle application process and funding opportunities and incentives available for funding.
- **Earth Day update:** Luke reports that one EA police escort can be provided for slow roll. However, Hannah has not responded so it's not known if this event will take place. Sue reports that ACES's Garden Tool Swap Promotion consists of 2 articles in the EA Advertiser and the EA Bee; ACES website, FB and Instagram; blast email to ACES membership; posters hung around town and delivered to area churches. EA Bee would like to attend event for a photograph. Steve and Michelle Bjella offered to volunteer at the event.
- **Website update: Luke/Sue:** Sue reports that website page construction delay also created a delay for obtaining a QR code for our Task Force Banner so the banner will not be ready in time for the Earth Day event as we'd hoped. Website page has many of the basic categories covered as required. Remaining content needs to include identification of climate risk to the Town and identified/taken/planned toward remediation, adaptation, & education. Sue is in process of obtaining data from Erie County, the Rebuild By Design Atlas of Disaster for New York State from February 2023, and the Resilient Rural America Project, for purposes of documenting local climate risk. Suggestion: a chart could be a useful tool for listing risks, steps taken and recommended actions in the future for remediation and education. Same chart(s) could be used for outreach displays. Work is in progress.
- **Stretch code update:** Lori reports contact (Lou Vogel) says it's best to start with Town Board for 20-25 minutes presentation. Would prefer via Zoom.

- **No Bike June (name pending) plan and goals-** possible name suggestion from Pat Lally: “No Vroom June”. Luke reports committee has extensive planning outline in place. Project goals are: Hold a kick-off event to start the initiative; Track and report walked and biked mileage to provide accurate data about the reduced environmental impact; provide daily and weekly promotional events at local businesses to reward participants for walking/biking to the business; create a point system for tickets to eventually raffle off prizes; hold a celebration at the Town’s July 3 fireworks. Anika reminds members to sign up for volunteer slots on Google Docs. Much help is needed for the many tasks to make this event a success.
- **Review priorities and goals-** Luke is looking into precedents for banning town-wide pesticides.
- Susan is accumulating a resource library of helpful recordings & information from the following seminars she attended: (1) NYSAR3- 2 day seminar on starting small, medium and large municipal composting; (2) Four session seminar on best practices for Agrivoltaics for developing Town Codes that allow solar development and still protect Town/ community character; (3) Will be attending the DEC’s upcoming public webinar series on Extreme Heat & Climate Change-State Actions to Help Communities Prepare and Adapt. Suggestion from Luke to load some of the recordings onto google docs.

III. OPEN DISCUSSION - Luke reports that Town’s Open Space Committee is working on Majors Park (Hubbard Rd section). They’ve identified unique habitats, planning benches, etc. Held a community meeting with good attendance of 20 plus citizens.

IV. CLOSING REMARKS - Next meeting is 5/17/23 at 6:30pm

V. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm

Minutes submitted by: Susan Russell

