

**MEETING MINUTES FOR:  
Town of Aurora Climate Smart Community Task Force**

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**MEETING DETAILS**

**Project Manager:** Luke Wochensky, Town of Aurora Councilman

**Date:** 03/15/2023

**Time:** 6:00pm

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:04pm**

**II. ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** **Luke Wochensky**- Town of Aurora Councilman; **Joe McCann** - Town of Aurora Councilman; **Matthew Bourke**- UB Regional Institute's CSC Initiative; **Nicole Morris-McLaughlin**- Senior Energy Development Specialist, County of Erie; **Jeanne Beiter**- Senior Program Manager for Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Village of East Aurora Planning Board; **Claudia Newton**- ACES Representative; **Susan Russell**- ACES Representative & Village of EA Zoning Board; **Lori Borowiak**- NYSERDA Representative; **Pat Lally**- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Catie Jantzi**- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Emma Dolan**- President of East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Sharon Bachman**- in advisory role from the Cornell Cooperative Extension, **Anika Safford** - Student, University of Vermont, **Sustainability & Marketing**

**Absent:** **Jennifer Brazill**- Borderland Festival Organizer; **Ryan McPherson** - Chief Sustainability Officer, University at Buffalo; **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;

**Visitors:** *Hannah Michalek, East Aurora High School, Sarah Connaughton, ACES, Michele & Steve Bjella, village residents*

### III. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) **Documentation update for bronze certification:** Matt- Reports that Town is in good shape with documentation necessary for bronze level certification. Spreadsheet is updated.
- 2) **North Grove and Whaley pictures-** Pat Lally has uploaded photos to Google Drive as of 3/15/23. Matt will review.
- 3) **GHG inventory update:** Claudia- Town staff has given all numbers needed for streetlights. Katie will enter data with Sarah's help. Anika will turn data into interactive, visual graphs. Kathleen Moffat (Assistant to Town Supervisor) has updated building data. Highway Dept. has provided fuel numbers. In 2022 gas and diesel costs are 2x higher than 2021. Fuel price increases are likely contributor. However gallons used also increased by 50%. Joe suggested that fewer projects during pandemic could explain the difference. Suggestion made to compare 2022 to pre-pandemic 2019.
- 4) **Energy Audit Update:** Lori- Not able to get estimate yet but will work on it for next meeting. Luke reports that information on size of buildings is now available.
- 5) **NY Bond Act Opportunities:** ROC could apply for some of the grants for NFP's that are not available to municipalities.
- 6) **Follow-up on Gas Appliances and Heating Resolution -** Joe McCann- Both the Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora tabled the resolution and decided not to vote on it. There was a strong community showing against the resolution and in support of the municipalities supporting NYS's Building Electrification Act and the NYS CLCPA.
- 7) **Earth Day Update-** Hannah Michalek, representing EA High School and Girl Scouts. Hannah is organizing Earth Day activities at Hamlin Park in the village to earn her Girl Scout Gold Star. **Event will take place on Earth Day, 4/22/23.** Area GS Troops will be sponsoring plant-based or informative booths for environment, butterflies, sustainability-themed art crafts etc; Slow Roll to take place at the end. She has Hamlin Park Pavilion reserved for the day. Jeanne offered to have her EV on display. Suggestion made by Michelle to have

musicians. Luke to follow up with permissions necessary for Slow Roll. On behalf of ACES, Sue invited the the Task Force to co-sponsor a Garden Tool Swap at the Pavilion. Poster for event has been created. Goal is to have CSC Task Force banner with QR code linking to web page, to hang on the Pavilion. Task Force volunteers will be needed to help staff the table throughout the event and be willing to talk with community about the goals of the Town's Climate Smart Community Pledge.

- 8) No-drive June:** Anika- will take place in June. (See attached suggestions.) Luke and Lori suggest options for raffle incentives/weekly prizes. There will be a point system per mile. Points create eligibility for one large raffle at end possibly to be awarded at Borderland or 3rd of July. 3rd of July indicated as preference to keep reward closer to actual event. Go Bike Buffalo mentioned as source of support. Anika will be chair of committee. Jennifer Brazill, Joe McCann and Lori will be on the committee. Jennifer will handle social media via FB and Instagram.
- 9) Website Update:** Sue- Web Page for Community Education- Sue will meet with Town of Aurora webmaster, Rob Goller, on 3/23/23 to begin content process/procedures for a web page under the Town's existing "Committee" format. Susan will provide text, content, etc and Rob will add to page per existing Town website format. Hope to have it in place by Earth Day with a QR code link that can be displayed on a banner at public events. Will also link page to Social Media Accounts for No-Drive June. Request from Anika noted to discuss with Rob feasibility of embedding visual interactive map of GHG Inventory onto the webpage.
- 10) Stretch Code Update:** Lori- Reports she has met with Lou Vogel from Ithaca. (Stretch Code consultant for WNY) He will do a Zoom call for the first meeting. Question: will length of presentation be suitable for Board meeting or does the length require separate meeting? Luke suggests that Village Board members could be invited as well.
- 11) Training Opportunities Cornell Climate Stewards:** Sharon- There is a handful of applicants so far. Sue has signed up to attend. Registrations will remain open until start.

## **12) Review of Priorities and Goals:**

- a) Luke- Encourages all members to speak freely if they feel discouraged, if they perceive committee to be off-task, or would like to see other directions or actions.
- b) Matt- reports that 3rd priority action for Bronze is most difficult. Audit can be the 3rd. Can audit be done by July deadline for application submission? If missed, next available opportunity isn't until January. Complete Streets would be other option for 3rd priority action. Definition offered of "Complete Streets": Considering users beyond cars, eg pedestrians, cyclists. Luke said that Town Board would need to adopt policy that states future projects will consider complete streets criteria. Michele, speaking as new resident recently moved to EA, sees need for pedestrian and bike safety awareness in village. Luke says police are willing to do bike safety education.
- c) Joe- reports that \$300,000 in County Budget will be available to pay for comprehensive plans for municipalities. Dan Castle (Director of Erie County Planning) said Town of Aurora is prime candidate for funding because current plan is very outdated. If this happens, County provides planner to assist and Dan would act as liaison. Open Space committee would be part of plan as well as Complete Streets.

**IV. OPEN DISCUSSION:** Nicole- Reminds members of the following education opportunities:

- a) Erie County Climate Plan roll out event to take place at D'youville College on 3/18/23 from 11am-2pm; Paul Hawkins will speak at Teaching and Learning about Climate Event at Erie BOCES 1 West Seneca 4-8pm on 4/13/23 from 4-8pm.
- b) Claudia- Announces that Erie County Climate Action Plan will also be presented at the East Aurora Senior Center on 3/29 from 6:30-8:30pm

**V. ADJOURNMENT** - Meeting adjourned at 7:14pm

**Next Meeting Date: 04/19/2023 at 6pm**

Submitted by: Susan Russell (Attached:: No Drive June)

## **No Drive June**

**Program Goals:** Encourage Village of Aurora residents to engage in sustainable alternatives to driving during the month of June in order to promote energy-efficiency and an environmentally and socially healthy community

**Timeline:** To be conducted during the month of June

**Team:** CSC Task Force members (optional village members, students)

**Participants:** Village of Aurora current residents, including non-drivers

**Marketing:** Aurora Advertiser article; flyers; email local clubs and organizations; Facebook account; Instagram account; google drive/email account

**Sign-up:** Google form attached to all marketing materials in which participants record first and last name and email; email sent to all participants with further information

**Point System:** Google form to record mileage walked/biked instead of driven (rounded to nearest .5 mi), name, email, short description, optional photo, and option to share photo

**Prizes:** Each week, participants who make it to a certain number of points are put into a raffle to win a prize (ideas: bike helmet, Aurora Outfitters gift card, 2 tickets to Borderland Festival, bike from Chain Ring Rhythm)

**Social Media Posts Outline:** Post explaining program; daily leaderboard posts; 2-3 posts per week about program benefits; weekly post with metrics (total miles saved by the community); post google form photos from willing participants; encourage participants to post on their own social medias and use #nodrivejune

**Email:** 2 weekly emails sent out to participants with leaderboard updates and information about program benefits (essentially putting social media information into an email)

**Program Benefit Ideas:** Health benefits; save money; connect with nature; good for the environment; good for the air; increased wellbeing; should also include bike safety and safe walking habits

**Budget:** Prizes based on donations; outside expenses up in the air