

MEETING MINUTES FOR: 01/18/2023
Town of Aurora Climate Smart Community Task Force

MEETING DETAILS

Project Manager: Luke Wochensky, Town of Aurora Councilman

Meeting Led by Joe McCann and Matthew Bourke

Date: 1/18/2023

Time: 6:00pm

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

II. CALL TO ORDER - 6:08PM

III. ATTENDANCE

Present: **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; **Lori Borowiak**- Town of Aurora Resident; **Sharon Bachman**- in advisory role from the Cornell Cooperative Extension; **Catie Jantzi**- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Emma Dolan**- President of East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Pat Lally**- East Aurora HS Sustainability Club; **Jeanne Beiter**- Senior Program Manager for Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Village of East Aurora Planning Board; **Nicole Morris-McLaughlin**- Senior Energy Development Specialist, County of Erie; **Elizabeth Cassidy**- in advisory role as Aurora Town Code Enforcement Officer;

Present via Zoom: N/A

Visitors: **Michele Bjella**- Village Resident/member of Citizens Climate Lobby; **Bob Sowyrda**, Village Resident, member of ACES

Absent: **Luke Wochensky**- Town of Aurora Councilman; **Ryan McPherson** - Chief Sustainability Officer, University at Buffalo; **Jennifer Brazill**, Borderland Festival Organizer ; **Jeffrey Shelley**- Environmental Science Instructor, East Aurora High School, Faculty Student Liaison for EAHS Sustainability Club

IV. OLD BUSINESS -

A) Overview from Claudia Newton on her research regarding planning procedures for Government Operations GHG Inventory (priority P2 action) and Government Building Energy Audits (priority P3 action).

GHG Inventory: Joe McCann reported that the Town of Aurora properties/buildings currently being tracked meet the inventory requirement for Energy benchmarking (every building over 1000 sq ft.) Kathleen Moffat (Town of Aurora Assistant to Supervisor) is tracking the data. The Town of Aurora pool is less than 1000 sq ft. and not required for inventory, however the pool has also been benchmarked by the Town and boiler was just replaced with a high efficiency model. Streetlights require additional data gathering. Also, fuel use from Town fleet. Energy use data is on Town website for the years 2016-2021.

Claudia Newton volunteered to work on data collection team. Suggestion to recruit additional team members at upcoming ACES general meeting was approved.

Matthew Bourke notified the committee that a GHG inventory Resource information to assist data collection has been added to Google Drive.

Nicole Morris-McLaughlin reported that the municipality of N. Tonawanda is currently hiring a Clean Energy Intern. Suggests that NYSERDA might pay for this for the Town of Aurora.

B) Discussion of codification at local level for de-carbonization of new construction projects:

Lori Borowiak- Reported that the recently passed NYS Climate Leadership and Community Protection ACT (CLCPA) has deadlines which address small building benchmarks by 2025; large buildings by 2028. Discussion led by Joe McCann ensued about whether Town should take a “wait and follow NYS” approach or be proactive by getting ahead of NYS CLCPA. Lori Borowiak recommend a path whereby the Town could employ a Stretch Code, which is an overlay over existing code for energy conservation. For example, this would hold a higher energy performance standard for new construction. Many municipalities have already adopted it. Lori will research and report at next meeting.

Nicole Morris McLaughlin added to discussion of NYS CLCPA and cited additional initiatives as well as federal Incentives for consumers of green technology/heating and household appliances/autos, etc.

C) Nicole Morris McLaughlin reported on Community Choice Aggregation. There may be a ruling (possibly on 1/19/23) that addresses problems with CCA at the energy provider level. Public Service Commission will be rewriting rules. Nicole’s recommendation is that the committee revisit this idea when rules are rewritten and put into effect.

D) Priority issues - Matt and Luke met to discuss priority issues for bronze certification. They are continuing to document/upload completed actions. (120 points required for Bronze level). Town already has or is in process of completing documentation worth 145 points. Three priority actions are also required. One priority action (EV Charger) has been completed. GHG inventory for government operations will be 2nd. Government building energy audit will be 3rd.

Matt Bourke: Discussion of Clean Energy Communities Program. Town currently has 2000 points accrued in this program. At the 3000 point level there is a \$10K grant available. Bronze certification when attained can be applied to the CECP Program and is worth 600 points.

Joe McCann: Reported that the Town of Aurora did not win grant for creating a General Comprehensive Plan.

V. NEW BUSINESS -

A) Joe McCann called for vote on adoption of goals for 2023. The following goals were approved by all present with no abstentions:

- 1) Attain bronze level certification**
- 2) Plan a road map for silver certification**
- 3) Plan and deliver Climate Pledge progress presentations to Town Board/ACES**

- 4) Prepare and deliver an additional presentation to Village Board to encourage them to act on their 2012 pledge commitment and join the certification process.
- 5) Outreach and Education suggested as additional goal by Pat Lally
- 6) Acknowledge the need for general comprehensive plan as precursor for addressing code challenges.
- 7) Conduct exploratory work on codification issues, including Stretch codes and solar friendly codes at the commercial and residential level.
- 8) Explore municipal composting options. (Nicole Morris-McLaughlin reported that Erie County is looking for a municipality to conduct a test pilot project.)

B) Other:

- 1) Suggestions made for outreach tables at summer festivals utilizing QR codes instead of paper collateral.
- 2) Website design offer from Sue Russell
- 3) Recommendation from Nicole Morris-McLaughlin to adopt additional committee member who is a college student studying sustainability and marketing in VT.

C) Task Assignments:

- 1) **Claudia to start GHG inventory**
- 2) **Sue Russell- Website**
- 3) **Luke Wochensky and Matthew Bourke to continue documentation**
- 4) **Matthew Bourke to email info on Inflation Reduction Act Incentives**
- 5) **Lori Borowiak- Research Stretch code.**

Next meeting: (2/15/23 @ 6pm)

VI. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting adjourned at 7:06pm

Submitted by: Susan Russell