

Climate Smart Communities Task Force

August 19, 2026

ATTENDANCE

Present: **Ben Garvey**, Town of Aurora Council member; **Claudia Newton**- ACES Representative & Town of Aurora resident; **Susan Russell**- ACES Representative & Village of East Aurora Zoning Board; **Steve Bjella**- Village resident; **Annika Safford** - Village resident & graduate of University of VT, Sustainability & Marketing Program; **Lori Borowiak**- Village resident

Absent: Sharon Bachman, Erie County Cornell Cooperative Extension;

Visitors: Pat Lally – Student and Resident; , Michelle Bjella, Village resident, Present via Zoom: Bill Leslie

OLD BUSINESS

Sharing Documents - Ben sent around access to a shared drive.

Natural Resources Inventory - Update – progressing at a good pace, still in the compiling phase. We have a set of Maps to work off of, expecting to complete the draft by November, to have it completed by May 2027.

Comp Plan Memorandum Update – currently 30+ pages. Compiled all sections into one document, please review by next months meeting. UBRI will review to ensure it meets the criteria for points. Annika will review the document and put it in consistent formatting.

Traffic Circle at the end of the 400 – Ben is working with Masterson's Nursery to propose a plan for a Water-Smart landscaping and pollinator garden. This will get us points toward Silver status. Depending on the cost, it may need to go out to bid. We may want to do a "clean up day" to go out there and pull weeds at the end of September, prior to planting. Planting would be expected for 2nd week of October. Sharon Bachman previously expressed interested in recruiting participants from 4H and students from the Gow School. Sue will send out to the ACES mailing list or place in newsletter if the schedules align.

Carpooling Incentive for Govt Employees – still working on it.

Waste Management – You will be able to request a smaller bin on the Town website. AC/Refrigerator refrigerant recycling, it is too expensive for them to do this remotely.

Waiting for proposal from Go-Bike Buffalo regarding the Active Transportation Plan initiative. Looking for grant opportunities.

Composting – Currently active and taking in food scraps for Town and Village composting. Filled more than 3 bins on Day 1. This is being collected at the end of Pine Street, Village DPW, along with cardboard and yard waste.

WeRadiate – Erie County is working them to advise on setting up composting activities. They offer a *Soil Steward* Workshop program. Information session to be held on 9/10 and 9/11, to find compost ambassadors to teach how to compost correctly. The full program is 4 weeks long with one 90-minute learning session per week, plus a hands-on session on a Saturday. We want to promote this to anyone who may be interested. This program is free to us. Depending on interest, the County may do a session just for the Town of Aurora.

Pathway to Silver Status –

- Green energy financing, looking into this as part of the Budget process.
- Ben is also looking to see if we can fund CSC activities through a line in the Town Budget.
- GHG Inventory – Claudia is reaching out the County to get access to what they already completed.

Dare to Repair Café – Rotary will be there for bike donations, and Manny's Ace Hardware will be there, Go-Bike Buffalo will be there to help with bike repairs, Erie Co will be there. We will need people to help set up and break down. Sue shared an issue with the Senior Center not being available to set up until 3:45/4:00; we can't use the round tables for repairs; and we have to be very careful of the newly refinished floors when we set up the rectangle tables.

NEW BUSINESS

Green-Sheen – collecting and recycling old paint and cans. Ben is speaking with them to host an event, and track what is being recycled, no cost to Town, they just want us to promote it. Planning an event at Parkdale, on 10/24/2026, from 9-1:00. Looking for volunteers. Ben will send out an email to line up any volunteers.

Aurora ReUses – The Dare to Repair Café, Composting, and the paint recycling combined and marketed together may help us qualify for a *waste reduction awareness campaign* for additional points to silver status. Ben prepared a flyer, please review the flyer and let him know if you have any feedback.

Battery recycling – Claudia recommended reaching out to UB or Lancaster to look into recycling batteries, to combine with one of our events.

Annual Progress Report – Points are available for preparing an annual progress report. We could use our meeting notes to help populate a template, perhaps based off of the format that Erie County uses for their annual update (members, goals, mission, activities, funding opportunities). Bill will look into creating a template.

Sue will ensure that our CSC Facebook page is linked on our website. Annika will also post all of the events to our Social Media pages.

Virtual attendance will be available going forward.

Next Meeting - 9/16/2026 6pm