

MEETING MINUTES

Town of Aurora Climate Smart Community Task Force

Date: 9/16/26

Time: 6:00pm

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: **Ben Garvey** - Town of Aurora Council member, **Sharon Bachman**, Erie County Cornell Cooperative Extension, **Susan Russell**- ACES Representative & Village of East Aurora Zoning Board; **Lori Borowiak**- Village resident; **Steve Bjella** - Village resident;

Present via Zoom: **Annika Safford** - Village resident & U of Toronto Student

Public: **Bill Leslie** - Town Resident (via Zoom)

Absent: **Claudia Newton**- ACES Representative & Town of Aurora resident;

Agenda:

Old Business:

NRI update- Ben, Claudia, Sharon were not able to attend the most recent meeting but reports from the Open Space subcommittee are that goal to have report completed by year's end is still being pursued and progress is being made.

Comprehensive Plan Memorandum update-

All sections have been completed in draft and compiled. Review completed by Annika. Thank you Annika!

Circle at 400

Met with Mastersons. They will flag existing plants that will stay. Coordinated with High School volunteer day, there will be a cleanup on Friday October 2nd with a rain date of October 5th. Students will be supervised by Highway Dept personnel. Students will arrive around 9:30. If you would like to stop in sometime during the day to give a hand please do!

Carpool Incentive for Government employees- Ben

There is no movement on this to report.

Recycling in Government run facilities- Ben

Email sent to contact at Waste Management. Awaiting response.

Air conditioner/refrigerator recycling and freon harvesting- still awaiting response from Waste management. Possible funding sources are being reviewed.

Example of this being done in another community

<https://www.ny4cool.org/coolest-recycling-drive>

Active Transportation Plan (PE6: Planning for Biking and Walking- 3pts)

Awaiting proposal from Go Bike Buffalo- Searching for grant opportunities.

Municipal Composting update- Ben

We have been growing every week. Last week they collected about 1,248 lbs of scraps. To date we have collected about 5,536lbs. These are great numbers 5 weeks into the pilot.

Soil Stewards- Through WeRadiate (partner with Erie County)

See attached

We were asked if we can help circulate the attached flyer/information.

Any interested participants?- 4 classes- Each 90 minutes. 1x a week plus one weekend hands on session.

Looking to find community members that would want to eventually be “Compost Ambassadors” or community leaders for composting. Sue will promote in ACES Oct. newsletter.

Please Share!!!!

Link for Soil Stewards 2026 Fall Form

[Soil Stewards 2026 Fall Form](#)

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Pathway to Silver Start Status-

Claudia- Community GHG Program- Communication has been initiated with UBRI- pieces are falling into place.

Ben- Budget Line for Financing Green Energy- Budget meetings are ongoing. Exploring possibility of putting in the line.

Sharon- Local Forestry Program- no update at this time. Local ReLeaf meeting attendance may be sufficient for points. Sharon attends those meetings in her capacity with EC Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Dare to Repair Cafe update

Fantastic Success!! Sue will get back to Buffalo Tool Library to confirm our participation for a calendar date in October 2027. (Preference is for 10/2 or 10/16)

July 26th, 2025 55 Participants 75.56% Success Rate 338 lbs Landfill Diversion \$4,780 Replacement Value 2375.3 lbs Carbon Offset	August 27th, 2026 55 Participants 75.56% Success Rate 322.275 lbs Landfill Diversion \$4,270 Replacement Value 1891.1 lbs Carbon Offset	Total To Date 110 Participants 75.56% Success Rate 660.275 lbs Landfill Diversion \$9,050 Replacement Value 4,266.4 lbs Carbon Offset
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Greensheen Paint Recycling event- October 24th at Parkdale from 9am-1pm.

Looking for Volunteers to help direct traffic, paint unloading/sorting

Attached flyer for advertisement of event.

New partners- Village of East Aurora, State Senator Gallivan

Requested an updated “media toolkit” from GreenSheen (Social media post, The Advertiser blurb, graphics etc) Please share. Sue will ask for volunteers via ACES Oct Newsletter. Ben suggests another meeting specific to this event will need to take place prior to the event.

Battery Recycling

Still in early stages. Claudia has done some legwork establishing relationships with Erie County- The county just began their battery recycling program and can not offer assistance at the moment, but is open to discussions about their practices. They may be able to offer greater assistance in 2027

Year End Report

Bill has been working on drafting an outline for our year end report. Process is underway to define the scope of what we want to include. Strong examples from Erie County- smaller municipalities have more basic reports. Bill is sending everyone the following link to review his proposal. Please review and provide feedback! <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qFF7RNDTQqG8htoTwqOXOT17rIOxK6THjP1v-3mhtZo/edit?usp=sharing>

New Business

Sustainability Event

Hosting a sustainability fair- Coordinate with existing event in the future? Two category options: Sustainability Fair or Vendor Fair. Possible plan for next year? Sharon, Steve, Susan, and Annika will try to attend Lancaster Sustainability event on Sat, 9/19 and report findings at next meeting. Discussion centered around challenges with orchestrating an event of this nature with limited number of committee members. It could be difficult to pull off by next point submission entry deadline in May, 2027. Varying locations and ideas discussed, along with suggestion to combine with the Repair Cafe. The following link is Bill’s initial ideas on what such an event could look like in Aurora. Please review!

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jJGo3Y_nD0Fu0YFzOfDxY28r2zoamWOs6D_gBzqrv-4/edit?usp=sharing

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:03pm

Next Meeting: 10/21/2026

Minutes Submitted by Susan Russell



**Turn Food Scraps and Organic Waste Into Compost:
Become a Soil Steward!**

Curious about composting and want to improve soil health at home, in your garden, or on your farm? Join our **FREE Soil Stewards Program** starting in late September. This engaging 4-week course, offered as part of the Plate to Field Initiative, facilitated by Erie County and WeRadiate, combines four interactive sessions with a hands-on workshop to help you reduce food waste, build healthier soil, and make a lasting impact in our Western New York community. By the end of the program, you'll have the knowledge and practical skills to become a Compost Ambassador—turning what you learn into action and helping create positive, local change. Come learn, connect, and grow with us!

FILL OUT THIS FORM TO REGISTER AND GET UPDATES:

<https://forms.gle/BwUn15KF1ypqpwRz6>



WeRadiate

**PLATE TO
FIELD**
Organic
Management
Program

Have Questions? Email us at weradiateny@gmail.com

TOWN OF AURORA CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY TASKFORCE AND THE VILLAGE OF EAST AURORA



AURORA REUSES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AURORANS



Reduce items going to landfills

Reuse your kitchen scraps!

- Municipal Composting Program- Open now for all residents!
- Soil Stewards- Free Classes to learn about composing and soil

Fix your broken household items!

- Dare to Repair Cafe- August 27th- Aurora Senior Center-Register Now!

ReBicycle to keep that bike rolling!

- EA Rotary Club- August 27th- Aurora Senior Center-5-8pm

Recycle unused paint to be new again!

- GreenSheen Paint Recycling Event- October 24th
Parkdale parking lot- More info coming soon!

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
PLEASE VISIT**

WWW.CLEANGREENAURORA.COM

SUMMER/FALL 2026

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM TO
STAY UPDATED!**





PE6 Action: Natural Resources Inventory

8 Points

10 Points

A. Why is this action important?

A natural resources inventory (NRI) maps and describes the natural resources in a community and provides an important foundation for municipal land use and conservation planning. NRIs typically include information about topography, geology, soils, water resources, wildlife habitats, and farmland, and sometimes include cultural resources such as scenic views, recreation areas, and historic sites. NRIs can also bring attention to local climate projections and natural features vital to carbon sequestration and climate adaptation, such as coastal shorelines, stream corridors, floodplains, wetlands, forests, and connected habitats. A complete and up-to-date inventory can be helpful for communities updating municipal plans, developing ordinances or overlay zones, and reviewing development projects, as well as a tool for county or regional planning and project assessment.

Maintaining the integrity and ecological health of natural areas is a key part of preventing the release of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that is associated with development. In addition, certain natural, undeveloped areas serve as a buffer against some types of extreme weather that are increasing with climate change: for example, wetlands often have the capacity to absorb floodwaters and, as a result, they help prevent flood damage to infrastructure in developed areas.

B. How to implement this action

Developing an NRI can be part of an existing effort, such as the development of a comprehensive or open space plan, or it can be a standalone project. Project leaders are advised to work with the public and stakeholders to collect input and feedback to ensure the NRI will meet the needs of users.

When implementing this action, local governments are advised to closely follow the process and report components described in the DEC's comprehensive guide: [Creating a Natural Resources Inventory: A Guide for Communities in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed](#). This guide focuses on the Hudson River watershed but the process it describes is applicable to any region. Although the guide includes information on doing on detailed inventory studies, it is not necessary to complete a highly detailed inventory in order to be eligible for points under this Climate Smart Communities (CSC) action, although communities are encouraged to do so. It is required, however, that the NRI cover the entire community. In other words, a local government cannot earn points for an NRI that, for example, only covers one watershed within the physical boundaries of its community. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with neighboring communities to develop NRIs that cross political boundaries and that are consistent with the overlapping and interconnected characteristics of most natural resources. For collaborative, regional NRIs, each local government that was involved is eligible for CSC points, as long as each applicant demonstrates that it had a substantial role in creating the NRI.

At minimum, for CSC points, the NRI report must include a descriptive summary of each map that is created as part of the NRI process. The narrative should describe each of the resources shown, discuss relevant aspects of resource distribution throughout the study area, draw attention to significant areas of resource concentration or concern, and discuss any major or emerging threats to the resource. The NRI report must also include a short summary of the process that was used to create the inventory (e.g., information on stakeholder outreach and public input, how information was obtained, etc.); this information should show that the process was consistent with the DEC guide. In addition, the NRI report must have been completed within 10 years of the application date to be eligible for CSC points.

Note that an open areas/open space inventory (OSI) is similar to an NRI but goes a step further to set parcel-level conservation priorities for the community. General Municipal Law § 239-y defines a conservation open areas inventory as "an inventory of open areas within the municipality with each such area identified, described and listed according to

Natural Resources Inventory

Town of Aurora

(initial draft)

Rennie Selkirk
Town of Aurora Open Space Committee
March 27, 2025