

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

MEETING DETAILS

Project Manager: Luke Wochensky, Town of Aurora Council member

Date: 10/16/2024

Time: 6:08 pm

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: **Ray Wrazen**, Town of Aurora Council member representing Luke Wochensky; **Nicole Morris-McLaughlin**- Village resident; member of ACES; **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 East Aurora Zoning Board; **Sharon Bachman**- in advisory role from Cornell Cooperative Extension; **Michele/ Bjella**- Village Resident & member of Citizens Climate Lobby; **Steve Bjella**- Village resident

Present via Zoom: **Anika Safford** - unable to connect via lack of Zoom link.

Absent: **Lori Borowiak**- Village resident

Visitors: N/A

I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:00PM

II. Issues for Discussion

1. Aurora Solar Savings Update: Sue/Claudia-

Tabling Events/Outreach:

- **Taste of East Aurora (9/7/24)** ACES allowed us to use their table space. Brad Tito from Power Market stayed and interacted with the public the entire time. He was very pleased with the table, the info, and many good conversations with the public.
- **Co-op Day progress-** Co-op would prefer we table on a weekday the first week of November. A “give-back” is desired, ie., something that will benefit the co op such as order/buy something from the co-op and give away at the table to anyone who comes over to talk with us. Suggestion made to purchase apples instead of cookies.

We need to pick a day, and decide timeframe on the amount of volunteers we have. Follow up to be coordinated with with Zoë in marketing (marketing@eastaurora.coop) and Jessica Armbrust (gm@eastaurora.coop) Suggested date is 11/8/24 11am-8pm. Sue to confirm with co-op and volunteers.

- **Outreach to Senior Center-** no response. Ray offered to follow up with Donna Bodecker.
- **Outreach to ROC** - Claudia has volunteered to contact.
- **Update from Brad** - *“We currently have 41 Town of Aurora participants who have completed the enrollment process into the EDPRNA - Dickinson project. Additionally, there are 20 participants in a state of limbo; 16 are on our waitlist, and 4 have enrolled in the Altus Half Moon project. I have an update on this Altus Half Moon project. I recently learned that it has been designated for low-income households only. However, we have finalized an agreement with a developer named **Genie** for a new project that is expected to come online much sooner, this February 2025, as compared to the Half Moon project which was expected to come online next summer. The Genie project should be ready for enrollments on our platform within the next few weeks, at which point we plan to migrate the 20 participants currently in limbo to this Genie project. At that point, we will be in a much better position to achieve our goal of enrolling the 160 participants needed to unlock larger grants. Regarding the direct mail letter to Town residents: As soon as this new Genie project is ready to go, we would be happy to print and send the letter to residents. I haven't sent you a draft yet, but I will by the end of the week. ”*

2. **Building audit update:** Ray- Completed on the Senior Center by CJ Brown, PC. Bottom line: building is doing well- suggested improvements are to improve temperature control technology; repair damaged door sweeps; and improve kitchen ventilation controls. Consider heat pump water heater, replace current heat/air system with heat pump. \$140k, 244K for heat pump replacements are determined to not be cost effective. First 3 items are more affordable and do-able.

3. **UB One Region Climate Seminar:** Michelle/Sue -

- Local GHG data extracted from new regional data will be available by year's end.
- Our team reps won the interactive group game geared toward GHG reductions for municipalities.
- Good connections, eg deputy mayor of Williamsville, Niagara Falls councilman, Lancaster task force rep

4. **Comprehensive Plan Update: Ray/Sue**

At the first meeting held on 10/10/24, GCP Steering Committee members were asked to weigh in on what their vision is for the Town. The results of this exercise, as well as the vision statements from previous Town planning documents, and feedback from public surveys, will be catalogued and presented at a future Steering Committee meeting. The Committee will then finalize their vision, which then will be presented to the public for comment at a public meeting. Ray invites all Task Force members to weigh in with their thoughts and opinions.

Based on the visioning exercises from the first Steering Committee Meeting on October 8th, the top 5 identified values included:

1. **Cultural heritage**
2. **Environmental stewardship**
3. **Family**
4. **Tradition**
5. **Sustainability**

As CSC Task Force rep on the GCP Steering Committee Sue has started a draft of possible responses representing the goals of the CSC Task Force, for the LaBella survey. She has submitted the draft via email to Task Force members and would like to incorporate any and all feedback by 10/20/24. (To submit to LaBella by the 10/25 deadline.)

5. **Silver Status Recommendations from Jason Kulaszewski, UB Regional Institute, Clean Energy Coordinator: Sue**

Best Strategies Recommended to Pursue:

***Climate Vulnerability Assessment** - in the works via website research as presented on the pages “Challenges & Opportunities.” For certification, the information needs to be prepared in report form. The research also needs to meet outreach to the public criteria utilizing more strategies than just the website. Suggestion is to develop and implement a public engagement strategy- see “Evirofest” below as possibility.)

***Government Bldg Energy Audits-** See building audit update above.

***Community Regional GHG Audit-** localized data done by UB’s Regional Institute will be available by year’s end. Regionally emissions down 9% since 2010; highest emitters; transportation, housing, commercial, industrial, waste (7%) agriculture, energy generation

-Update Natural Resources Inventory- Ray to check with Open Space Committee

-Food Waste Management - curbside composting, drop spots, or promote backyard composting education campaign via supply bins at discount or apply for grant giveaways.

-Public Outreach Ideas - “Repair Cafe”. Letter from Jason to CSC Task Force:
“Hello town of Aurora CSC Team,

I am reaching out to connect the town of Aurora’s Climate Smart Committee with Darren Cotton at the Tool Library, and their Dare to Repair Cafés.

*During a recent Climate Smart meeting in town, the group noted interest in hosting a Repair Café as part of your work in the community. Darren (**Darren Cotton, darren@thetoollibrary.org**) and the Tool Library help facilitate these events locally, so I wanted to make the connection for you to work together to bring the Repair Café to Aurora in the coming year.*

Darren – Luke, ACES, Claudia, and Ray are all part of the Town’s Bronze Certified Climate Smart Team, and have been tremendous in organizing various outreach and educational workshops in Aurora. Hosting a Repair Café would help Aurora reach their goals of earning the Silver Climate Smart Certification, and reducing electronics waste in the Region.

Please let me know if there I anything else I can do to help facilitate the discussion moving forward.”

Other Public Outreach Ideas: Sharon/Sue - Envirofest Idea. Discussion of possible lead agency, locations, time of year, partnerships, & participants. Opportunity for public education and engagement of CSC goals and progress.

6. **Social Media:** Anika reports post meeting via email, that there have been no social media updates this past month.

7. **Review priority and goals** - N/A

III. OPEN DISCUSSION - N/A

IV. CLOSING REMARKS - N/A

V. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

NEXT MEETING DATE: 11/20/24 at 6pm.

Minutes submitted by: Susan Russell

