

Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council

Minutes – March 14, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM by Barbara Mansell, Chair.

Members present: Marian Thompson, Barbara Mansell, Bill Relyea, Jean McAvoy and Norene Collier.

Member of Town Board present: Eliot Werner

Barbara welcomed new CAC member, Jean McAvoy

Special Guest – Europa McGovern - Planner and Clean Energy Communities Coordinator
Hudson Valley Regional Council

Subject: Climate Smart Community and Clean Energy Community – What does the Town need to do?

Local governments must complete **four** of the following **10 High Impact Actions** found on NYSERDA's website: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities/Action-Items> to earn a Clean Energy Community designation and qualify to apply for **Block 3 grants of \$5,000** funding. At least two actions must be completed after August 1, 2016.

High Impact Actions:

- **Benchmarking – Adopt a policy to report the energy use of buildings** Benchmarking is a policy that a local government adopts that requires the annual reporting of energy used in local government buildings and, in large municipalities, also requires the annual disclosure of energy used in large private buildings. It's important because buildings account for more than 60% of the energy used in New York State. Setting up a system for measuring and sharing data on building energy use over time will allow owners and occupants to compare energy usage against other buildings, and better identify opportunities to cut energy waste. Collecting, reporting, and sharing benchmarking data regularly also helps the public and government agencies make smarter investment decisions, reward efficiency, and drive widespread, continuous improvement.
- **Clean Energy Upgrades - Achieve 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings** By replacing outdated equipment with new smart and efficient technology, local governments are well positioned to save energy and money over time. If there have been any energy efficiency upgrades or solar, etc. project **since 2014**, these can be used in the benchmarking reports to calculate the emissions and energy savings.
- **LED Street Lights - Convert street lights to energy efficient LED technology**
- **Clean Fleets Install electric vehicle charging stations or deploy alternative fuel vehicles** Clean Fleets is an effort by local governments to invest in alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure while increasing opportunities for constituents to access electric vehicle charging stations. Compared to gasoline-powered cars, Electric Vehicles (EVs) are more energy efficient and cost about 50 to 70% less to operate per mile. Clean vehicles reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants that cause smog and acid rain. Charging stations are being installed at a wide variety of locations across New York State.
- **Solarize - Undertake a local solarize campaign to increase the number of solar rooftops** Solarize is a short-term (approximately 6-9 months, including planning and outreach), local effort that brings together groups of potential solar customers through widespread outreach and education. This model helps customers choose a solar installation company that is offering competitive, transparent pricing.
- **Unified Solar Permit** – Adopting a New York State Unified Solar Permit will streamline the approval process for installing solar in the community. This standardized permit is expected to cut costs by creating a uniform permitting process in municipalities across the State.

As municipalities adopt the permit, installers and municipalities will save time and resources permitting solar electric systems. An expedited process will allow these standard systems to pass quickly through the jurisdictional review process, freeing up time for all involved parties, decreasing the overall installation time for customers, and allowing nonstandard systems the necessary time for detailed review. <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities/Clean-Energy-Communities-Program-High-Impact-Action-Toolkits/Unified-Solar-Permit>

- **Energy Code Enforcement Training** - Train compliance officers in energy code best practices
 - April 16, 2018, 8am – 5pm
- **Climate Smart Communities - Get certified by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation** The Climate Smart Communities Certification (CSC) program provides local governments with a robust framework to guide their climate action and enables high-performing communities to achieve recognition for their leadership. Designed around the CSC pledge elements, the certification program recognizes communities for their accomplishments through a rating system leading to four levels of award: Certified, Bronze, Silver and Gold.
- **Community Choice Aggregation – Put energy supply choices in your community’s hands** Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is an energy procurement model that replaces the utility as the default supplier of electricity for virtually all homes and small businesses within your jurisdiction. CCA puts control of choosing energy supply in local hands. By pooling demand, communities build the clout necessary to negotiate lower rates with private suppliers, and are able to choose cleaner energy. A CCA can allow whole communities to participate in the clean energy economy by ensuring that a greater percentage of electricity is coming from renewable sources. CCA has the potential to simultaneously deliver lower monthly bills and cleaner energy for your constituents.
- **Energize NY - Finance Offer energy upgrade financing to businesses and non-profits** Energize NY Finance, also known as Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Financing, is a program adopted by an eligible local government that allows property owners to pay back the cost of clean energy upgrades to their commercial or non-profit property through a special charge on their property tax bill.

Comments:

The Town of Clinton passed the Climate Smart Pledge in July 2017. The resolution must be sent to the DEC to become registered as Climate Smart Community.

Benchmarking seems to be the first task to be undertaken. It measures the Town’s energy use (fuel oil, gas, electric...) for buildings over 1,000SF. Europa will send the benchmarking templates for the creation of/data entry for the EPA Portfolio Manager.

United Solar Permit increased the limit from 12kw to 25kw per residence. Barbara and Eliot thought the Town of Clinton’s Solar Law did not meet this criteria, however, the law limits peak power to 20kw.

Eliot said he would encourage Louis Fiorese, the Town’s Building Inspector, to attend the Energy Code Enforcement training on April 16th. Others are encouraged to attend.

There are 120 Climate Smart actions. One of the first actions of interest was to apply for a grant to install EV charging stations in the town. Europa will send the details for the grant as well as the list of actions.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Mansell
Barbara Mansell, Chair

Next CAC meeting: April 11, 2018 at 4pm