



# Minutes

## Climate Smart Task Force of Saratoga Springs

Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Meeting Date:** Monday, October 24th, 2022

**In Attendance:** Chair Rayna Caldwell, Ben Foster, Anita Morzillo, Laura Faulk, Dan Barusch and Deirdre Ladd

**Absent:** Jim Gallagher, Heather Crocker

**Staff in Attendance:**

Tina Carton, Marilyn Rivers, Michael Dutre

**Public Comment:** No public comments.

**Minutes:** Last meetings minutes were approved by the Climate Task Force.

**National Grid Resiliency:**

Tina Carton gave an update that the new fire station on Henning Road is moving forward as originally planned. Due to scheduling conflicts, the efficiency upgrades were not possible.

**Transportation:**

Tina Carton updated the Climate Task Force that the Downtown Connector project is nearly complete and is scheduled to be completed by years end. The Cycle Track will be where the parking is. Missing Sidewalk Links is progressing on Seward and Grand Avenue.

There has been no CDTA Update on Electric Scooters so far. Marilyn Rivers pointed out that there is currently no legislation on E Scooters and the City will need basic protocols. Tina Carton used White Plains, NY as an example of a city that has successfully integrated E Scooters in recent years.

Trolley Bike Share Program data shows there has been increased usage.

Union Avenue had its first public meeting and some residents are concerned about the street's enhancements. The plan is for the roadway to receive granite curbing, storm water upgrades, revised median, north-side sidewalks and a bike lane. The next meeting will be in late November or early December. Anita Morzillo added that the slope of Union is awkward and the road would need to be leveled and repaved.

**Update on Grants:**

Tina Carton has not heard back on the Safe Streets for All grant application yet.

RAISE grant winners were recently announced by the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Reconnecting Communities grant is designed to assist areas cut off by rail roads.

The DOT Thriving Communities grant was sent to Delta Development to review.

Delta has identified CDTC planning funds for a potential traffic and truck study. Marilyn Rivers responded that this may help get trucks off Broadway.

Laura Faulk updated the Climate Task Force on the CDBG grant. The application criteria should be finalized in Q4 of 2022. The grant includes a conservation development strategy that would allow for the retention of technical consultants that would help in energy audits for buildings and secure Complete Streets funds.

Laura Faulk referred to the Community Geothermal Heating and Cooling Design and Deployment grant. Tina Carton already looked into this opportunity. Ben Foster asked if we need to do a traditional application or if it is more like the block grant system. Tina Carton answered it is the standard application process.

Tina Carton noted the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) hired a grant consultant that will provide a free 24 hours of use. Their services are helpful for navigating complex applications and government websites.

#### **Toward Net-Zero:**

Chair Caldwell impressed that the city of Ithaca worked to decarbonize buildings and reduce their energy footprint. They have created a blue print for smaller cities which includes creative financing, bulk purchasing power as well as public and private partnership.

Chair Caldwell highlighted that BLOC Power, a climate technology company, is helping Ithaca implement many of their energy-smart upgrades.

Chair Caldwell and Tina Carton talked about how Luis Aguirre-Torres of Ithaca helped champion Net-Zero programs and may be willing to speak with the Climate Task Force.

Laura Faulk suggested that Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) information be made available on the City website in order to reach more people. Individual residents may be eligible for rebates for energy efficient upgrades. Funds are also available for builder and contractor education.

Ben Foster recommended that the Climate Task Force find out which trainings are the most relevant and important to the community. He also advised that the group coordinate with Skidmore for the educational side.

Chair Caldwell and Laura Faulk expressed that the IRA site can be difficult to navigate so it may be best to provide just the savings calculator from the IRA or Rewiring America pages to audiences instead.

Deirdre Ladd put forth that the Climate Task Force should work closely with Sustainable Saratoga and The Chamber of Commerce on future green energy opportunities.

#### **Streetlight Update:**

Tina Carton explained that the streetlight report is in progress. Jason West of Albany said they have saved \$2.67 million on their streetlight program so far and with few problems.

**Retreat:**

Chair Caldwell proposed the Climate Task Force hold a pre-meeting on the retreat. That way the team can go over what needs to be discussed and how they interface with City Council, businesses as well as residents.

Laura Faulk brought up the Presbyterian Church, Adirondack Trust or the Library as potential locations for the retreat. Anita Morzillo offered the Music Hall as an option. Marilyn Rivers mentioned the Recreation Center and Art Center as possibilities.

**Sustainable Saratoga:**

Laura Faulk informed the Climate Task Force that Sustainable Saratoga and Skidmore are putting on a Sustainability Fair set for Sunday, April 16th, 2023. There will be keynote speakers, workshops, tabling and an electric vehicle show ideally with local vendors.

**The next meeting is Wednesday, November 16th at 9:00AM.**

Meeting adjourned.

*Minutes were respectfully submitted in joint effort by Michael Dutre and Deirdre Ladd.*