

**Town of Stuyvesant**  
**Climate Smart Community Task Force Meeting**  
**March 25, 2025**

Present: William Schneider, Maria Ausherman, Seamus Donahoe, Lee Jamison, Carol Leber, Kathryn Schneider, Jim Werkowski

Guests: Steve Powers and Tistrya Houghtling (virtual via zoom), Mark Browne

Absent: Brian Chittenden, Bob Green, Keegan Oneal, Hannah Shepard

**Minutes:** Minutes of the February 25, 2025 meeting were approved.

Walkable Communities and Complete Streets - We had an informative exchange with Tistrya Houghtling and Steve Powers from New Lebanon about their experience acquiring support and funding for a grant to make New Lebanon a more walkable community in the Route 20/22 corridor near the high school, where there are significant safety concerns. They stressed that we absolutely needed the support of the town board to move forward and that we should try to identify people and businesses in Stuyvesant that have political influence. In New Lebanon this was achieved by putting their proposal out for a referendum to the town. They also urged us to include complete streets in our comprehensive plan. Stuyvesant has petitioned the state for reduced speeds in the hamlets without success and adopting plans for complete streets has helped sway the state on speed limits because it shows a concerted local effort. It is helpful to demonstrate a need, especially if there have been accidents. The engineering firm they worked with, Creighton Manning, wrote their grant proposal for them.

Mark Browne, from the Village of Kinderhook explained that they benefitted from the political connections of people in the village in obtaining their grant from NYS DOT to connect the village to the Albany Hudson Electric Trail. In his experience the development of a conceptual plan for Complete Streets typically costs about \$2 million. DOT has NYS Alternative Transportation Grants that are due in February with awards made in June. Some engineering firms are prequalified by DOT to do this kind of work.

**Reports at Town Board Meetings:**

- Jim reported on the prenotification and goals of the Natural and Cultural Resources Inventory at the March 13 town board meeting.
- Kathy will attend the next meeting on April 10.

**Old Business—Reports and Updates**

Trex Recycling – Carol reported that Stuyvesant has collected 685 pounds of plastic film, including what we have been credited for from what is brought into the library. We have until October 7, 2025 to collect the 1,000 pounds needed for another bench.

Columbia County Climate Smart Committee – Kathy reported the Columbia Land Conservancy has tree planting opportunities coming up in April.

Comprehensive Plan – Jim announced that there will be a public meeting about the comprehensive plan on April 30. They have been reviewing current conditions for Cultural and Historic Resources.

Stuyvesant Solar Credits – Kathy shared some email correspondence with Tara Donadio about consolidating our billings for electricity and possibly using the towns solar credits to offset electric costs at the town garage. To do this, the town needs to make a billing inquiry to learn options for our situation and have our case assigned to a billing specialist. She turned the information over to Ron Knott who has begun to pursue the issue

### **New Business**

Partners for Climate Action, Funding Futures Fellows - Kathy attended a webinar by Partners for Climate Action about the new Funding Futures Fellows program. Four fellows will be selected from counties bordering the river. The Fellows must have a tax-exempt municipality or nonprofit as a sponsor to receive the \$22,000 grant, of which \$12,000 can be used for staffing and \$10,000 for hard costs. These are not grants for specific projects, rather they are designed to help build capacity in communities by providing training and teaching financial models. Since Hannah thought she might be interested in applying, Kathy will share this information with her along with the recording of the webinar.

PE -7 Evaluate Policies for Climate Resilience – Kathy contacted Lindsey Strehlau-Howay of Cornell Cooperative Extension, who confirmed that Stuyvesant on their project list for this year for this action. They are just waiting for the green light from their funders to begin the work which they think will go through in March/April after which they will set up a project intro meeting.

PE – 6 Natural and Cultural Resources Inventory Prenotification – We expect an official announcement of this award in May.

**Next meeting** – Our next meeting is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22, 2025, 7:00 pm, Town Hall.