

Town of Marlborough Conservation Advisory Committee

November 9, 2022 Meeting Report

Held at Milton Train Station, 41 Dock Road, Milton, NY 7 PM

In attendance: Presenter Kim Mayer, Gardner CSC member; Councilperson Sessa, Jannelle Koszarek, Anita Walters, Howard Baker, Niki Surceski, Brian Simonofsky, Maribeth King, Naseem Haidauoi, Ted Millar, Acting Chair Mici Simonofsky

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:05, with all members welcomed. Introductions were made and a brief explanation of the charge of the Conservation Advisory Committee was delivered.

All in attendance were attentive to a Climate Smart Community Presentation delivered by Kim Mayer and Jannelle Koszarek following these websites and links:

CSC%20Presentation050718.pdf www.dec.ny.gov
climatesmart@dec.ny.gov
ulstercountyny.gov/environment/climatesmart
<https://hudsonvalleyregionalcouncil.org/regional-initiatives/>

The advantages to the Town for becoming a Climate Smart Community were presented and explained, and it was suggested that we, the CAC, consider using this particular program to fulfill its responsibility to the Town members. No doubt our findings as we pursue our participation will bring up several suggestions or additional projects the CAC could present to the Town Board.

The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program began in 2009 and is an interagency initiative of New York State. It is jointly sponsored by the DEC, NYSERDA, Dept. of Public Service, Dept. of State, Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Health and the Power Authority with DEC being the main administrator of the program.

The intent of the program is to support local governments in leading their communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to the effects of climate change, and build a thriving green economy. The benefits of participating include leadership recognition for the Town, free technical assistance, and access to grant funds that the CAC can take the lead in pursuing.

Local governments begin participation by passing a resolution that adopts all 10 points of the CSC Pledge. Once the town passes the Climate Smart Communities Resolution the town becomes a registered Climate Smart Community and the work can begin! The town taskforce (the CAC) and an assigned coordinator with the guidance of the town board and other community members and local business owners can then utilize the CSC framework to guide progress toward creating attractive, healthy, and equitable places to live, work, and play. After becoming a Registered CSC, communities can implement certification actions at their own pace. There is no time limit between adoption of the pledge and commencement of the certification process.

We will need the Town Board's approval to participate in the CSC program. There is no expense to the Town. The program is long term in that the CAC can decide how much effort we want to devote to it, but it will take time to earn all of the benefits the program affords. It is, or could be, an ongoing program. There are several levels of achievement, and each level offers higher rewards.

It was very helpful to understand how the program works. We discovered that several of the Town projects already completed or in process could be utilized to help the Town qualify for grants related to environmental issues once we are a CSC member. For example, the Marlboro Trail, tree planting, the solar farm, and the switch to LED lighting are the types of projects that would show the Town's attention to adapting to environmental changes, or influencing change itself.

The group showed enthusiasm in pursuing registering as a CSC. At our December meeting, we will pay closer attention to how we can best participate in this program, strategize actionable steps to take throughout the coming year, and match existing and in process initiatives performed to date with CSC action items and to begin the process of formally documenting those programs. After the December meeting, the names of interested citizens who want to be named to the CAC roster will be offered. It is noteworthy however, that Jannelle Koszarek has offered her services to be CSC coordinator. We are off to a good start.

Respectfully submitted,
Mici Simonofsky, CAC Chair pro tem