

**Orange County Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2020**

Members Present: E. McClung, T. Gottlieb, J. Wolfe

Climate Smart Task Force Members: Carla Castillo, Elinor Hart, Kelly Collins

Staff: D. Church, J. Richmond, K. Morris, K. Schmidt, M. Tennermann, E. Russell

Meeting was called to order at 4:33 PM.

The minutes from the February 4, 2020 meeting were approved.

There is currently one vacancy and three reappointments to the Board pending. The three current members who are up for reappointment are all interested in continuing on the Board. We should think about suggestions for a replacement. We prefer to have a geographic distribution throughout the County, if possible. The Board usually makes suggestions to the County Executive. We should decide if we want to suggest a replacement and some alternates. Since there is not a quorum, this discussion will be tabled to the next meeting. It was noted that areas of Montgomery, Chester, and Minisink are not currently represented on the Board. It was suggested that we put out a notice asking for letters of interest. K. Collins suggested a member of Orange Environment. If you have any suggestions, send them to E. Russell.

Review of General Municipal Law Planning and Zoning Permit Reviews – M. Tennermann presented the GML 239 Referrals report for the month of February, 2020. There were 42 mandatory GML 239 referrals sent to the Department by municipalities throughout the County. A total of 146 dwelling units and 299 thousand square feet of nonresidential development were proposed. Also referred was 1 utility scale 5-megawatt solar facility in the Town of Deerpark.

Department Updates:

County Comprehensive Plan Updates:

Housing – Megan Tennermann

The CDBGDR funding is not available for the Housing Needs Assessment Study. This study will cost about \$150,000. We will have to seek another funding source.

Open Space – Kelly Morris

There are no updates. We are working on an application for Hudson River Valley Greenway Grant which will be used for Orange County Land Trust to help with Open Space. We are working with the Land Trust and Grants team on application.

Census - M. Tennermann spoke about current census activities. She and Census Intern, Ryan Denisco have been scheduling presentations to municipal boards and community groups about the census. New York is losing one congressional seat and on the cusp of losing a second. There is only a 65,000 person gap before losing the second seat.

Census Grant - The application for an allocation from the state for census outreach was submitted on Monday. We had seven responses from non-profit groups and will try to fund them all. One of the groups will hire a Census Promotion Coordinator. Translation services will be included in the budget.

Climate Smart Communities Task Force:

Effects of Solar Arounds the County – A handout was distributed showing the number of utility scale solar installations from 2014 – 2020. The number is down in 2020. There are 43 municipalities in the County and only 16 have experienced this trend. Town of Minisink has the most referrals. New York State has very good incentives. The Ag Board has a policy that we factor into reviews which restricts building solar facilities on prime soils. There were 31 applications for solar in 2018 and the number has dropped off since then. There could be a policy requiring all large buildings to have solar on the roofs. It was recommended for the new warehouses in Montgomery. K. Schmidt will research sample policies about what other municipalities are doing. K. Morris will research having IDA require solar on large scale developments.

LEED Certification Update - USGBC developed a certification process with a point system for different actions. It's a new pilot program and Orange County is the only county in the U.S. and the only community in the northeast participating. We currently have about 28 of the 40 points required for certification. We are in a good position for the Climate Smart Communities certification. We will be certified and possibly get silver. We could add some quality of life goals. M. Tennermann will send the criteria used to measure quality of life.

Countywide Climate Report – A water based Natural Resource Inventory has been completed. It includes an analysis of vulnerability and adaptation strategies. After one more round of edits, it will be posted online. We will be asking the Planning Board to review this and hope to accept it at the April meeting.

Countywide Resiliency Plan – We will be hiring a firm for this study. The RFP will be published soon. The CSC Task Force will serve as advisory for this plan. This project should be starting some time this summer.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Community Climate Action Plan - We will be updating the Greenhouse Gas Inventory from 2012, which was prepared with 2010 data, and writing a Climate Action Plan based on the Inventory. This Task Force could be an advisory committee steering both of these projects.

Community Choice Aggregation – K. Schmidt discussed this NYSERDA program. Municipalities together could participate and ensure lower rates while choosing cleaner energy. There is a meeting scheduled for March 30th with a representative from NYSERDA.

Benchmarking Municipal Buildings – This is very labor intensive. Working with Energy Star, there is an online tool for energy and water use tracking.

Discussion was held on membership for the Climate Smart Communities Task Force. It was decided to have eight members. Send ideas for new members to E. Russell. The Task Force will review the Climate Report and two project summaries will be sent with guidance and links to the documents. The Task Force will meet again in April.

The next meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for April 7, 2020. The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.