

Saugerties Conservation Advisory Commission

June 18, 2026

Zoom Video Conferencing

MINUTES

Present: Skip Arthur, Stephen Shafer, Ken Goldberg, Mary O'Donnell, Elizabeth Shafer, Mike Harkavy, Bill Barr, Anna Herrod-McGrew, Evelyn LaFerriere, Nicole Roskos, and unidentified Zoom attendee 'CLAUDIA's iPad (2)'

Approval of May 21, 2026 Minutes

The motion passed.

Guests Welcome

Skip welcomed Lindsey Strehlau-Howay and Evelyn Laferriere. Lindsey was attending as the new primary Cornell Cooperative Extension contact for the resiliency-planning work previously introduced by Anna Herod McGrew. Evelyn had attended the previous meeting and was returning to continue discussing the Hudson Valley Regional Council's assistance with Climate Smart Communities work.

CSTF

Skip introduced Lindsey's presentation by recalling Anna's explanation at the previous meeting. Cornell Cooperative Extension had obtained funding to help municipalities establish or update their resiliency planning tools and undertake vulnerability assessments. Saugerties already had a resiliency tool, but it needed to be updated. The vulnerability assessment would be the next major component.

Lindsey explained that she works for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties. The Columbia-Greene, Ulster, and Dutchess County extension offices collaborate on regional resilience projects. During the current phase, the partnership is concentrating on municipalities in Ulster and Dutchess Counties. Lindsey will be Saugerties' primary contact along with her coworker Will McCall.

The first procedural step will be a relatively short questionnaire. The questionnaire is intended to establish a local leadership group that can guide both the resiliency-planning tool update and the vulnerability-assessment workshop. Lindsey said this group should include municipal officials and operational personnel with direct knowledge of emergencies, infrastructure, land use, public safety, and vulnerable populations.

The anticipated municipal participants include the Town Supervisor and representatives from emergency services, EMS, the highway department, fire services, police, and code enforcement.

The CAC itself will participate. Community organizations should also be included, particularly water and watershed groups, civic organizations, community-advocacy groups, and organizations that work with populations likely to be disproportionately affected by climate hazards.

The questionnaire will also ask about existing local plans and planning documents. Lindsey will use those answers to conduct what she described as a literature review. She will compare the municipality's current plans with the materials used when Saugerties completed the resiliency tool previously. She will update as much information as she can independently and identify gaps that require local knowledge. A longer stakeholder meeting will then be held so the participants can review the planning tool collectively and supply additional information.

Lindsey emphasized that the stakeholder-identification process needs to begin promptly. Coordinating the police, fire department, EMS, municipal officials, and community organizations for a common meeting can be difficult. Once the initial contacts are made, she wants to preserve momentum.

The second major component of the Cornell Cooperative Extension project is a municipal vulnerability assessment. Lindsey said the assessment workshop would probably be held toward the end of September, possibly during the week of September 21 or the following week. The exact date and venue had not yet been selected.

Cornell Cooperative Extension expects to bring approximately five participating Ulster County municipalities together at one location. The event will last several hours. It will begin with common presentations on regional climate conditions and available data. Participants will then divide into municipal groups and conduct mapping exercises focused on their own communities.

The mapping exercise will identify both vulnerabilities and strengths. Participants will examine the locations of hazards, infrastructure, shelters, vulnerable populations, emergency resources, and existing community assets. The workshop will be informed by a public survey that asks residents and local stakeholders how climate-related hazards are affecting them.

Lindsey explained that the public survey is intended to add ground-level experience to statewide and regional climate data. Cornell Cooperative Extension can provide information from sources such as New York State's CLIMAID reports, but those data do not necessarily show which roads repeatedly flood, which neighborhoods lose power, which residents cannot reach a shelter, or which hazards have become most disruptive in daily life. The survey will therefore ask residents to evaluate the importance or local effect of different hazards.

Stephen asked what vulnerabilities, other than flooding, might be distinctive or especially significant in Saugerties. Lindsey responded that flooding is usually the first concern identified by municipalities, but it is not the only one. Drought, extended dry periods, sudden heavy downpours, severe storms, extreme heat and cold, winter storms, and the apparent increase in tornado activity are all relevant. Because Ulster County municipalities are geographically close

to one another, many of the hazards are region-wide. The local process is intended to determine how those hazards manifest themselves specifically in Saugerties.

Stephen noted that his own location is on relatively high ground and is not as vulnerable to ordinary flooding. Nevertheless, he has experienced what he called catastrophic rainstorms. Skip and Elizabeth Shafer both emphasized drought as another concern. The discussion showed that the assessment should not treat “flooding” as a single uniform event but should distinguish river flooding, flash flooding, extreme rainfall, drainage problems, erosion, drought, heat, and storm impacts.

The same core stakeholder group will ideally participate in both the planning-tool meeting and the vulnerability workshop. The workshop, however, should include broader community representation, particularly people or organizations representing vulnerable groups. Public responses gathered through the survey will provide another form of participation even when residents cannot attend the workshop.

Lindsey recommended several distribution methods. The survey can be posted on municipal and organizational websites, Facebook pages, digital community boards, and other social-media platforms. Paper notices can be placed in libraries, town buildings, and other public locations. The flyer includes a QR code, making it suitable for farmers’ markets, fairs, public events, and information tables where residents can scan the code and complete the survey on a phone.

After the workshop, Cornell Cooperative Extension will organize the findings in standardized templates. Those materials can be submitted for Climate Smart Communities points and incorporated into a municipal climate-adaptation plan. Lindsey described the planning tool and vulnerability assessment as interconnected pieces of a larger adaptation/planning process. Cornell Cooperative Extension hopes to help Saugerties complete the broader adaptation plan by approximately 2027.

Skip then turned to Evelyn’s work with Linda on Saugerties’ Climate Smart Communities certification. Linda introduced the subject as work involving both governmental and community greenhouse-gas inventories and deferred to Evelyn for the details.

Evelyn said she had reviewed the Climate Smart Communities actions Saugerties had completed, actions that were planned, actions that would soon expire, and actions likely to remain valid when the municipality next seeks certification. She and Linda then mapped out which actions would be practical and useful to undertake next.

They selected the Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory and the Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory. The government inventory will require substantial data collection from municipal buildings, facilities, vehicles, energy accounts, and other governmental sources. The community inventory should be comparatively straightforward because the Hudson Valley Regional Council already has a spreadsheet containing much of the required community-level

data. The principal task will be converting the spreadsheet information into the required report format.

Evelyn and Linda expect to work on the Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory near the end of the summer. They anticipate beginning the more labor-intensive Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory in the fall. Evelyn stressed that the municipality is not facing an immediate certification deadline. Climate Smart Communities certification lasts for five years, and Saugerties is working toward a later resubmission, discussed in the meeting in connection with 2029. This allows the committee to complete the more tedious actions in a controlled way rather than rushing.

Mary then presented several small revisions to the Community Climate Action Plan, or CCAP. The committee had previously voted to send the plan forward, but Mary identified changes arising from the prior meeting's discussion, particularly suggestions made by Stephanie Bassler.

The first change states that the final adopted Community Climate Action Plan will be posted on the Town of Saugerties website. The second clarifies why the plan concentrates on three particular emissions sectors. The revised summary now explains that those sectors were selected because they account for the greatest share of local greenhouse-gas emissions.

The third change concerns implementation. An earlier version recommended that the Town Board appoint one person to implement the plan. Following discussion, Mary revised this language to recommend that the Town Board appoint a "person/persons," making clear that implementation may require a team or shared responsibility rather than a single individual.

Mary also inserted the word "draft" in the section concerning public outreach. The revision makes clear that the CAC's public-engagement work would concern the draft implementation plan before its final adoption.

Skip asked whether the members wished to accept the changes as presented. Elizabeth said there should be a formal motion. The changes were then approved without opposition.

Mary also explained the origins of the emissions data used in the Community Climate Action Plan. The plan includes a community inventory of Greenhouse Gas emissions data from 2022, supplied by the Ulster County Department of the Environment. New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation had previously supplied inventory data in 2010. Mary credited the county's providing the 2022 data as the impetus for completing the Community Climate Action Plan. Once the committee had a usable inventory, it could create the plan.

The government facilities inventory will be more difficult to update. Mary recalled that the CAC Climate Smart Communities Task Force had assembled the previous inventory themselves, with Patty Kelly performing extensive work. Mary said the task force would need substantial assistance obtaining and organizing updated data for municipal facilities. Linda responded that

she and Evelyn had already begun discussing this requirement, although the detailed work would come later.

Mike asked whether the Community Climate Action Plan would be sent to Ulster County. Mary said the formal procedure is to recommend it to the Saugerties Town Board for adoption, not to submit it directly to the county. She nevertheless agreed that the county should be informed about the result and thanked for supplying the inventory. The Ulster County Environmental Management Council, or EMC, provides a logical avenue for sharing the accomplishment. Carol could report it in connection with a future EMC discussion of municipal accomplishments.

Town Liaison

Bill reported on a disaster-preparedness training that he and Ken attended on June 5 at Department of Health headquarters. Presentations were given by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Anna Herod McGrew, the Red Cross, the Department of Health, and Ulster County emergency-management personnel.

One of the most striking statements presented at the training was that Ulster County ranked fourth among New York counties in the incidence of severe weather events during the preceding twenty-eight years. The hazards considered included extreme heat, extreme cold, flooding, rainstorms, snowstorms, fires, and occasional tornadoes.

Bill said a major emphasis was emergency communication. Municipalities need multiple ways to notify residents, including websites, Facebook, text messages, television, and radio. Those systems may fail when electricity, cellular service, or internet service is lost. The presenters therefore recommended that residents maintain battery-powered radios. Ham-radio operators can provide another communication layer. When electronic systems fail completely, police may have to notify residents door to door.

Bill reviewed existing shelter possibilities in Saugerties. The Town Hall, Senior Center, and ice rink have all been identified as potential facilities. Town Hall is generally the first location announced. Although its main entrances are locked after 4:00 p.m., the attached police department is open twenty-four hours a day and can provide access during an emergency.

The training stressed the importance of a current emergency-management plan and a clearly designated emergency-management team. Bill had spoken with Fred and understood that Saugerties had previously designated a team involving the Town Supervisor, Greg Chorvis, the police chief, and another police lieutenant or official. Bill nevertheless concluded that both the emergency-management plan and the formal team structure need to be reviewed and updated.

The County Executive is the official authorized to declare a county emergency. Within the town, that authority belongs to the Town Supervisor. If town resources are exhausted, the municipality can request assistance from Ulster County.

The presenters identified vulnerability assessment as a foundational planning step. A municipality needs to know who is most likely to require assistance during an extended power outage, evacuation, flood, heat event, or other emergency. Suggestions included examining tax-roll information for indicators related to income and using information held by Central Hudson concerning customers with medical or other vulnerabilities during power outages. Such information would have to be handled appropriately, but it could help the town understand the scale and location of emergency needs.

Red Cross assistance must be requested by a verified authoritative source. Bill said the Red Cross does not want to lose critical response time determining whether a request is genuine or whether the person making it has the authority to activate assistance. The Town Supervisor would be the likely authoritative source for Saugerties.

The Red Cross can assist with shelter preparation and staff training. It may also provide food, blankets, cots, and other shelter resources. The training included shelter standards, such as the amount of space required for a given number of occupants, the necessary ratio of restrooms to occupants, and guidance concerning showers.

Department of Health representatives emphasized hygiene, cleaning, infection prevention, and indoor-air quality. Bill and Ken discussed “dwell time,” meaning the amount of time a disinfectant must remain wet on a surface to work properly before it is wiped away. The training also covered ventilation and recommended aiming for approximately five complete air exchanges per hour in a shelter, depending on the building’s systems.

The participants received a HEPA air-filter unit. Bill said it would be given to Greg Chorvis for future use in a shelter.

Bill’s broader conclusions were that Saugerties should determine whether it has a current continuity of operations plan, create or update a debris-management and debris disposal plan, and prepare draft emergency messages before a crisis occurs. Emergency orders and messages should include expiration dates so the public knows how long restrictions or instructions remain in force.

Bill intended to prepare written recommendations for the Town Board. Cornell Cooperative Extension had also produced a practical booklet for municipal leaders, and copies were expected to be supplied to the board.

Mike asked about coordination with the Village of Saugerties. Bill had not asked that exact question during the training, but he assumed coordination would occur because the same police force serves the town and village and because the village mayor has emergency authority within the village. The existing coordination used during water emergencies could provide a model, but the details still need to be confirmed.

Stephen asked how the town should calculate the shelter capacity it needs. Bill said the vulnerability assessment might help answer that question by identifying the number and distribution of people likely to need shelter. He observed, however, that different emergencies produce very different needs. Flooding can be mapped to some extent, but the path and housing damage caused by a tornado are far less predictable.

Lindsey said the vulnerability assessment will map current shelters and compare them with the locations of vulnerable populations and hazards. A gap may become immediately apparent if, for example, a flood-prone population has no nearby shelter. The assessment itself will collect information; the later adaptation plan will convert that information into recommendations. That next stage is expected to occur during the following year.

Elizabeth said Town Hall appears to have limited capacity and is most commonly associated with heat emergencies. She believed additional facilities should be evaluated for emergencies lasting longer or affecting more residents. Bill reiterated that the Senior Center and ice rink were also possible facilities.

Bill reported on the Drinking Water Source Protection Plan being developed jointly by the Town and Village. New York State awarded the municipalities technical assistance for the project. Planning support is being provided by Laura Beyer of Byerness Planning and Haley Gallo, a hydrologist with LaBella Associates.

The project includes several phases. Bill believed the initial preparation phase had probably been completed and that the group was entering plan development. The technical team will help produce drinking water source protection maps showing the water sources themselves and the surrounding areas that feed or influence them.

A stakeholder group has been established. The CAC was identified as a stakeholder, with Skip Arthur named as the initial contact. Laura Beyer had reportedly sent an email asking Skip either to confirm his participation or designate another CAC representative.

The first stakeholder meeting was expected in mid-July. The group will formulate a vision and goals, inventory possible contamination sources, complete source protection maps, identify protection and management methods, and develop an implementation schedule. Technical consultants will help prepare the plan, but implementation will ultimately depend on municipal decisions and resources.

Stakeholders had recently toured the Blue Mountain Reservoir. The participants discussed whether the plan would include other water districts, including the Glasco, Malden, and Kings Highway. Mike said most of those districts receive water from the village reservoir, although one district might involve a private supplier.

Mary asked whether the planning process protects residents who rely on private wells. Bill believed the current program was limited to municipal water sources. Mary then asked whether the plan would address aquifer protection more generally.

Skip understood the technical assistance program to focus on sources already used by the municipal system, principally the Blue Mountain Reservoir. He had previously hoped the process could investigate aquifers that might become future public-water sources, including the aquifer associated with the Winston Farm area. His understanding, however, was that potential future sources might fall outside the program's present scope.

Bill raised the related issue of drought. If reservoir levels continue to decline during prolonged dry periods, the town and village may eventually need to evaluate alternative sources. That makes the distinction between current sources, potential future sources, municipal wells, and private wells consequential.

Mary asked Bill to clarify whether the plan protects only customers of the municipal water system or whether any provision covers the broader population using private wells. Bill agreed to investigate.

"Claudia" added a site-specific concern. She said KCE had labeled a body of water at the proposed battery-storage site as a pond, but her understanding was that the feature might be connected to an aquifer. She expressed concern that a fire, explosion, or contaminated runoff from the battery-storage facility could enter the aquifer through that connection.

Mary said she had briefly reviewed the project's Environmental Assessment Form and recalled a reference to an aquifer, although she did not want to overstate what she had found before examining it more closely. Mike and Skip noted that the EAF contains a water-resources section and said that an identified aquifer impact should be addressed through the environmental-review process.

Skip cautioned that the Drinking Water Source Protection Plan might be too narrowly focused on the Blue Mountain Reservoir to address Claudia's concern directly. The KCE site's hydrology and aquifer effects may instead need to be examined through the project's EAF and State Environmental Quality Review process.

Skip had not yet selected the CAC's permanent stakeholder representative. He asked Ken whether he would serve because Ken had previously shown strong interest in drinking-water protection. Ken said he was willing in principle but needed the meeting schedule because he already had other obligations. Skip agreed to obtain the dates before confirming the appointment.

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

The committee then discussed Battery Energy Storage Systems, or BESS. The committee initially prioritized safety, while also recognizing that the Town Board needed a basic explanation of why utility-scale battery storage is being proposed.

Stephen had performed much of the research and had helped prepare two informational reports. One report addressed the utility and grid function of battery storage. The other concentrated on fire risk, safety systems, standards, and the experience of existing facilities.

Skip used a reservoir analogy to explain how a BESS facility can absorb electricity when production exceeds immediate demand and return electricity to the grid when demand rises. This makes it easier to integrate variable renewable generation because excess solar or wind output can be stored rather than discarded. At the grid level, networks of battery facilities can help replace or reduce reliance on peaker plants. Peaker plants are typically activated during short periods of high demand, such as hot summer evenings when air-conditioning use peaks. Skip characterized many of those plants as old, inefficient, and highly polluting.

The safety report examined widely reported battery fires. Skip said the research suggested that spectacular incidents receive substantial attention but remain statistical outliers. Improved battery technologies, manufacturing standards, fire codes, monitoring systems, and lessons learned from earlier accidents have reduced the incidence of fires.

Skip emphasized that the reports are informational. They were prepared for the Town Board, which had requested background information. The Town Board is not the lead agency conducting the environmental review of the KCE proposal; the Planning Board holds that role. The CAC reports therefore should not be treated as findings in the formal State Environmental Quality Review process.

Ken asked how battery storage relates physically to electricity generation. He had read that utility batteries are not necessarily attached directly to solar arrays or other generating facilities. Skip explained that the proposed KCE system would connect to the electric grid rather than to one specific generator. It could draw electricity from the grid when supply is abundant and return it when needed. The facility therefore needs access to a suitable grid interconnection, not physical proximity to a particular solar farm or power plant.

Skip and Bill explained that Saugerties currently lacks zoning provisions specifically authorizing residential battery-storage installations. The town is developing a tiered regulatory system addressing different scales of storage, from small residential systems to large industrial facilities such as the KCE proposal. The requirements would become more extensive as the size and potential impact of the system increases.

Bill added that the New York Independent System Operator must continuously match generation and demand. Battery storage adds elasticity that the conventional grid lacks by creating a temporary buffer between production and consumption.

Bill confirmed that the CAC reports were responsive to the Town Board's request. He also said he had spoken to Planning Board members and believed they were examining the proposed facility rigorously and generating their own detailed record.

Skip explained his understanding of the ongoing State Environmental Quality Review, or SEQR, process for the KCE project. The applicant completes Part One of the Environmental Assessment Form, describing the project, location, existing land use, natural resources, utilities, and other basic conditions.

The lead agency then addresses Part Two, using the form to identify areas in which the project may create environmental impacts. Although the checklist may appear simple, the supporting answers can require extensive technical information. Skip said the Planning Board was repeatedly asking KCE for clarification and additional documentation rather than accepting incomplete responses. This is evidenced in the memo responses from the Town's consultants, Nelson, Pope, Voorhees, which are open to public viewing.

Part Three brings the information together and evaluates the magnitude, duration, probability, geographic scope, and cumulative character of the potential impacts. That analysis informs the lead agency's decision to issue either a negative declaration, finding that no full Environmental Impact Statement is required, or a positive declaration, requiring a more extensive environmental review.

Skip offered the emergency-response plan as an example of how different regulatory systems overlap. An emergency-response plan is critically important to battery safety, but some requirements may arise principally under fire, building, zoning, or other local codes rather than directly under SEQR's environmental criteria. A positive declaration would not automatically substitute for code compliance.

Mike said the CAC's central responsibility is to advise the Town Board. Preparing and forwarding Stephen's reports falls squarely within that responsibility. He believed the CAC should remain institutionally separate from the Planning Board while that board performs its lead-agency work. The CAC should not attempt to direct or preempt the SEQR determination.

Mike said that if the Planning Board issues a positive declaration, the CAC could potentially participate as an interested body during scoping and Environmental Impact Statement review, as it had done in connection with Winston Farm.

Claudia later asked for copies of Stephen's reports. Skip and Mike explained that the reports would also be posted on the CAC website. They intended to send them to Mike Campbell to post them online.

EMC

Carol could not attend the meeting, but she had submitted an Environmental Management Council report. Skip distributed it before the meeting and did not read it aloud because it was informational. No substantive discussion or vote followed.

Earlier in the meeting, Mary had suggested that the completed Community Climate Action Plan could be reported to the EMC as one of the Saugerties CAC's significant accomplishments. The

EMC's anticipated August discussion of municipal achievements would provide an appropriate opportunity.

Tree Ordinance

Nicole reported on the developing tree ordinance. Bill had provided the Town of Bedford's tree law or policy as a comparative model. Nicole found several useful ideas in the Bedford document and delayed finalizing the Saugerties draft so she could determine which provisions should be incorporated.

The Bedford application process is more detailed than the current Saugerties draft. Nicole believed its permit application requirements could improve the local proposal by ensuring that applicants supply clearer information about the area to be cleared, the trees affected, the purpose of the work, restoration, and other site conditions.

Nicole also wanted to add an exception or appropriate recognition for property owners participating in a New York State forest-management program. Landowners following an approved sustainable forest-management plan should not necessarily be subjected to redundant or contradictory requirements under the municipal ordinance.

Another proposed revision would explicitly recognize shade as a public benefit of trees. Nicole said the draft discusses ecological functions but does not adequately state that tree canopy reduces local temperatures. She also discussed transpiration, through which trees release moisture and contribute to atmospheric cooling and cloud formation. In her view, increasing development and rising temperatures make preservation of tree cover especially important.

Nicole identified an outdated threshold in Draft 13. The document still referred in one location to one-quarter acre, although the committee had changed the threshold to one acre. She intended to correct that inconsistency.

She also reconsidered the restoration section. The current language appeared to require restoration principally when trees were removed without a permit. The Bedford model requires restoration even when the removal was permitted. Nicole argued that lawful tree removal can still leave erosion, destabilized soils, damaged vegetation, or a need for replanting. Restoration should therefore be treated as part of responsible permitted work, not merely as a penalty for violations.

Nicole described the central purpose of the ordinance as minimizing large-scale clear-cutting and preserving as much shade and tree canopy as reasonably possible while allowing necessary development and land management.

Ken questioned the proposed two-year terms for the three members of the Tree Commission. Many boards use staggered terms so institutional knowledge is not lost when terms expire. With only three commissioners and identical two-year terms, the entire commission could theoretically

turn over at once. Reappointment is possible, but Ken observed that no one can assume current members will always be willing or able to continue.

Ken's also voiced concern about appeals. The draft allows a person aggrieved by a Tree Commission decision to appeal to the Town Board. Ken questioned whether the Town Board was the proper appellate body, especially if the ordinance eventually produced a substantial number of cases. The board already has a heavy workload.

Mary responded that the subcommittee had discussed the appeal question extensively. It chose the Town Board because appeals from some other municipal bodies also go to the board. She said the practical question remains: if the appeal does not go to the Town Board, what other body has the authority and competence to hear it?

The committee then discussed portions of the Bedford law that would regulate tree removal on properties of four acres or less according to the number of trees removed. Mary was concerned that adopting such a provision would undermine an earlier Saugerties principle: the local ordinance should not impose unnecessary applications, fees, and permitting requirements on small property owners.

The Saugerties draft generally exempts clearing of one acre or less, except when a heritage or specimen tree is involved. Nicole said she had already decided not to import Bedford's four-acre and tree-count thresholds because they would make the Saugerties law substantially stricter and more complicated. She acknowledged that the current local draft is weaker than ordinances in some other communities but believed a moderate initial proposal would have a better chance of adoption.

Mary raised Bedford's provision that a tree-removal permit expires after twenty-four months. The Saugerties draft did not contain an expiration period. Nicole thought a permit-expiration provision could be incorporated.

Nicole said she would revise the draft and circulate it to the Tree Committee for proofreading and confirmation. The proposal would then be sent informally to LeeAnne for preliminary feedback based on her Town Board experience.

Skip described the purpose of this informal review as identifying provisions likely to encounter administrative, political, or legal resistance before the CAC formally presents the ordinance. LeeAnne could help the committee understand how the Town Board might interpret the proposal and what revisions would improve its prospects.

The meeting then distinguished two related but different objectives. One is obtaining Tree City USA recognition. Tree City USA requires a municipality to assign responsibility for public trees to a department, board, commission, or staff member and establish procedures for planting, maintaining, and removing trees from streets, parks, and other public spaces.

The second objective is preventing destructive clear-cutting on private or developing land. Mary stressed that a policy governing public trees and a legally enforceable ordinance protecting forests are not the same instrument. The subcommittee had originally discussed a tree policy but concluded that preventing extensive private-land clearing requires an ordinance with the force of law.

Skip said Tree City USA recognition remains worthwhile, but the broader forest-protection goal may require a more ambitious ordinance. Nicole will incorporate the agreed revisions, correct the drafting errors, and seek preliminary feedback from Leanne before the committee decides how to proceed formally.

Announcements

Claudia asked whether the CAC had discussed changes affecting New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals and whether Saugerties had adjusted its planning in response.

Mary explained that the Community Climate Action Plan originally aligned the town's emissions-reduction schedule with the state's targets. One draft contemplated a forty-percent reduction by 2030, followed by additional reductions in 2040 and 2050.

The task force ultimately concluded that achieving a meaningful local reduction by 2030 was not realistic, particularly in transportation, one of the town's largest emissions sectors. Transportation emissions depend on infrastructure, vehicle turnover, land-use patterns, public transit, state and federal policy, and individual behavior that the town cannot transform within only a few years.

Mary said developments at the state level also influenced the decision to revise the schedule. Mike clarified that the Community Climate Action Plan going to the Town Board does not mirror the state's original 2030 timetable. The first major Saugerties target year will be 2035 rather than 2030.

Mary stated that Saugerties previously had a climate-action plan for government operations but had never adopted a comprehensive community-wide plan. If the Town Board adopts the document now being submitted, it will become the town's first Community Climate Action Plan.

Linda reported that the most recent Repair Café was highly successful. Approximately seventy people attended, compared with a previous high of eighty. The event included seventeen fixers and eight additional volunteers. Eighty-three items were successfully repaired. Seventeen additional items were sent home with instructions about possible repairs, replacement parts, or other ways to keep them in service rather than discard them in a landfill.

Clothing repair was particularly popular. The sewing volunteers remained continuously occupied for approximately four hours. Linda said future events may need a more streamlined system for receiving and processing hemming and other sewing work.

The next Repair Café is scheduled for October 3. The organizers are now holding three events each year. Linda said she would prepare a report and send it to Bill so he could share it with the Town Board. Copies would also go to CAC members.

Skip reminded Linda to retain attendance, repair, diversion, and volunteer documentation for Climate Smart Communities credit.

Adjournment

The motion carried at 6:57 p.m.

Prepared by: Kevin Freeman, Secretary