

Canaan Climate Smart Task Force Meeting

September 16th, 2025 – 7PM

In attendance

Task Force Members:

- Victoria Mills
- Elyse Mason
- Tom Potter
- Becky Meier
- Nick Adams

Outside Contributors:

- Brenda Adams (Town Supervisor)
- Tara Donadio (CDRPC)

Approval of August meeting minutes

Becky motion to approve, Elyse seconds

Debrief on July's Silver application

- We submitted 36 different actions, each requiring multiple forms of documentation.
 - Only three came back as “must revise;” none were not approved.
 - We gained 118 points, rising from 140 when we got Bronze to 258
 - Most communities don't get silver on the first try
- The first area we lost points was on PE7 – Culverts and Dams 4 points
 - We needed to add dates on when the assessments were done
 - The town highway superintendent does an annual condition report on all culverts in town
- Second area was the website, PE9 – Local Climate Action Website, 3 points
 - The climate smart webpage on the town site was difficult to navigate
 - Reviewers wanted to see more about what people could do to participate in CSTF initiatives and how they can reduce their GHG emissions
 - Both the existing pages could be merged into a better webpage with good design that could exceed the requirements for the 3 points
 - Nick volunteered to lead this with help from Becky, Marion and Mark
- Third area was PE12 – Performance: Reduce GHG's from Government Facilities

- The primary reason was we didn't have data yet to show an actual reduction in emissions from our heat pumps and solar array.
- Reviewers require towns to demonstrate GHG reductions from a baseline to a comparison year; our upgrades were too new to do that.
- Tara's analysis: there are also some issues
 - 2020-2021 vs Sept 2024-2025. Electricity use was the same, but there was an increase in fuel oil use. Propane stayed the same. Heat pumps should have reduced propane use in the library.
 - Calculations of emissions from heating oil is based on fuel delivery
 - We have a regular delivery schedule – local fuel companies make money by topping off the tanks which may be skewing the data
 - The oil burning furnaces seem to be working at efficient levels and there are no oil leaks
 - Tom will review the fuel data and try to identify any reasons for the projected increased emissions

Moving Forward

- While grant opportunities are not necessarily tied to Silver, the status can help
- There are other possible paths to silver. The PE6 Action Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements could yield up to 21 points which could replace nearly half of the points from PE12. Tara could review Canaan's draft comp plan and see how many points would be achieved out of the possible 21 points
 - Elyse to send Ghent's plan (done with the same consultant) to Tara and have her evaluate it against the PE6 requirements
- Short discussion on solid waste
 - Is solid waste a factor in the comp plan?
 - Source water protection should be addressed in the comp plan
 - The State has a water well location database – although most of Canaan's existing wells are not on the list as they predate it
 - We should do community outreach/education around solid waste. This could be a focus of our work for Earth Day in 2026.

Building Blocks to Silver and Additional Actions

- Revisit the dates for PE7, rebuild the webpage for PE9, and get data for PE12 (and sort out the emissions reduction concern)
- Our starting point is 254 points (not 258) because the 4 we earned for interior lighting upgrades at Town Hall expire on 9/30/25 (they were done 7+ years ago).

- Good news! The town approved funding to replace the EV charging station
 - This will yield 8 points, 6 for the two ports and 2 because it's for public use
 - To earn the 2 bonus points, registry on PlugShare or ChargePoint showing recent use will be sufficient.
- We will have a hazard mitigation plan. The Town Board approved it last Monday night and went on to the county. FEMA approval is required for points, and FEMA will not approve the plan until EVERY town and village in the county approves the plan. Plan is already approved by NYDHS.
- Local climate action website
 - Revamp existing content and improve the page
 - Look at feedback from the reviewers
 - Nick, Marion, and Heather will work on this
- Total possible points from these actions are:
 - EV charging – 8 points
 - Culverts and dams – 4 points
 - Hazard Mitigation – 4 points
 - Website – 3 points
 - These yield an additional 19 points: $254 + 19 = 273$.
 - Adding 21 points for the PE6 comprehensive plan would raise us to 294.
- Other potential actions:
 - PE7 - Heat Emergency Plan, 6 points
 - Victoria will review our Emergency Management Plan and talk to Brenda about this.
 - PE3 – Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy, 4 points
 - Victoria will reach out to New Lebanon about this and inquire how their policy works
 - PE3 - Interior Lighting Upgrades, 1-4 points, if we can upgrade the lighting in the highway garage and library.
 - Mark is volunteered for this, Nick can also help Mark as he did the exterior lighting inventory.
 - PE5 Actions regarding waste
 - Construction and Demolition waste policy: 2-6 points. The town already issues MSW and C&D permits for the transfer station so it's possible that this could count. Elyse will work on this.
 - Waste Reduction Education Campaign, 2 points – we could launch this campaign that includes info on recycling. The cost of permits has increased due to the systemic issue of people putting improper materials into recycling bins. There could also be information about

reducing use of single use plastic in town and the environmental and economic benefits to residents. Becky will work on this.

- Other items
 - Highlands Conservation Act resolution for Canaan
 - The town board has to pass a resolution, and then if land comes up for sale there would be a 50% contribution for land purchasing.
 - Tom to send Brenda the draft resolution and other relevant information.
 - East Chatham Repair Café September 27
 - Solar siting law excluding prime farmland from solar sites
 - This could help any future solar development to occur without using land that could have a better use
 - Can also stipulate that the energy generated power local homes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM, next meeting: Tuesday October 21st at 7pm