

Canaan Climate Smart Task Force Meeting

October 21st, 2025 – 7PM

In attendance

Task Force Members:

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

Outside Contributors:

- Brenda Adams (Town Supervisor)

Approval of September meeting minutes

Elyse motion to approve, Becky seconds

Silver certification: progress and planned new actions (see [tracker](#))

- We have **254** points. Next [deadlines](#) to clear 300 points are January 9 or April 10
- [PE3 Action: Interior lighting upgrades](#) (up to 4 points)
 - Town Hall already upgraded to LEDs over seven years ago.
 - Mark completed inventory of lights in Library and Highway Garage. No new fixtures are required, only replacement of lamps with LEDs.
 - Budget to replace lamps this year is very limited.
 - Next steps: (1) calculate denominator for points. More than 50% of square footage or total number of lights gets us 4 points. (2) determine cost to replace lamps with LEDs. (3) upload supporting documentation. Victoria to follow up with Mark to gather this information.
- [PE3 Action: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy](#) (up to 4 points)
 - Canaan has a procurement policy that sets limits on what the supervisor and others can purchase without board approval.
 - We would need a board resolution to amend it.
 - Before making a recommendation, we need to determine the impact of the new policy on staff functions and budget.
 - Next step: Victoria to follow up with Brenda on details of policy.
- [PE5 Action: Construction & Demolition Waste Policy](#) (TBD)
 - Elyse to consult with Brenda on feasibility. Worth 2-6 points if we can do it.

- PE5 Waste Reduction Education Campaign (2 points)
 - This topic is of broad interest to the community and there's a lot we can do on it. Start by meeting requirements for the PE5 Action, then continue into next year, including activities for Earth Day 2026.
 - We need to do outreach for the campaign, starting with the town newsletter and flyers posted and promoted on social media (Marion to create).
 - Further content could be short articles with links that education on best waste practices posted on the climate smart website.
 - We could also do community engagement through challenges like the [Clean Bin Project](#), a 2010 film about living 100% waste-free. Consider asking the Canaan Congregational Church to screen the film for the community.
 - Next steps: Becky, Elyse and Marion to continue developing campaign.
- PE6 Action: Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements (up to 21 points)
 - We need to review the draft strategies for Canaan's comprehensive plan against the required sustainability elements for the PE6 Action. Further input from us on sustainability elements must be grounded in the public input.
 - Lindsey's work on the appendix in the Ghent comp plan was a major project funded by a grant.
 - Next steps: (1) Marion to review the two documents to determine overlap. (2) Elyse to convene subgroup to provide comments to Comp Plan committee by 10/30.
- PE6 Action: Electric Vehicle Charging Station (8 points)
 - Replacement EV chargers are on order. Hoping for installation before Thanksgiving.
 - We can use NYSERDA's [EV station locator](#) to show proof of public use.
 - Next steps: (1) determine budget-neutral rate for public charging (2) once installation is complete, send out notice to community. Marion to create flyer, post on social media. Include in newsletter.
- PE7 Action: Climate-resilient Hazard Mitigation Plan (4 points)
 - No update. FEMA hasn't moved, still waiting on a few towns to pass their resolutions.
- PE7 Action: Heat Emergency Plan (6 points)
 - We have many of the required elements in our Emergency Management Plan.
 - Next steps: Victoria to create a draft Heat Emergency Plan based on Canaan's existing Emergency Management Plan. Review with Brenda and key stakeholders (e.g., Highway Super, Fire Company, Office of Aging). Adoption will require a board resolution.
- PE7 Action: Culverts and Dams (4 points)
 - Next step: Elyse will get required dates from Stephen before he leaves
- PE9 Action: Local Climate Action Website (3 points)

- The page must address (1) what actions the town is taking, (2) how the community can get involved, and (3) what actions people can take on their own (e.g., waste reduction, energy savings).
- Town is switching to a .gov domain. We will design the Climate Smart page as we want it (not in Wordpress) and link to it from the town home page.
- Next steps:
 - Nick to coordinate with the website subgroup and get a site that works before the next meeting.
 - Nick to ask Tara which towns got full points for their websites and see what they have on them.
- [PE12 Action: Reduce GHGs from Government Facilities](#) (TBD)
 - We need to show a 10-14% reduction in GHG emissions to earn the minimum of 15 points.
 - Next step: Tom and Victoria to review utility bills to track reductions in energy consumption due to heat pumps and solar panels.

Tally of points for planned and potential actions

- We are currently at 310 points with these planned actions IF they all receive the maximum number of points. Comprehensive Plan is biggest variable.

Highlands Conservation Act next steps

- Revisit in early 2026, once the Comprehensive Plan is complete.
- Columbia Land Conservancy will also have finished identifying land that's most important to conserve.
- Becoming Highlands Conservation Act community will require a Town Board resolution.

Other notes:

- We should create a consistent design for flyers, materials and communications from the Climate Smart Task Force. This would make our outreach more recognizable. Marion can help with this.
- The final newsletter for the year will go out the week before Thanksgiving. Anything we want to put in the newsletter must be submitted to Brenda a week in advance.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday November 18th at 7pm