

Monroe County Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

via zoom

April 7, 2022 (3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

Drafted: April 8, 2022

Approved: June 2, 2022

Members: John Botelho, Richard Milne, Matthew O'Connor, Michael Yudelson, Kathryn Walker, Leah Wirley, Helen Frank, Lola D'Ascentiis, Mike Garland

Absent: Sean Delehanty, Sue Hughes Smith

Staff: Clement Chung, Tina Stevens, Joe VanKerkhove, Yasmin Guevara, Isobell Haddad, Pat Gooch

Guests: Molly Gaudioso, John Steinmetz, Kiernan Playford, Elizabeth Pixley, Pat Gooch, Isobell Haddad, Pat Wartinger, Mary Moore, Matt Corona

Welcome, Introduction and Announcements (Co-Chair O'Connor)

1. Meeting called to order at 3:32 P.M. by Co-Chair O'Connor.

Approval of Minutes (Co-Chair Yudelson):

1. Minutes from the March 3, 2022 meeting were unanimously approved. Motion by Matt O'Connor; seconded by Kate Walker.

Legislative Update (County Legislator Yudelson):

1. Legislator Yudelson welcomed the newly appointed members to the Committee: County Legislator Sean Delehanty and Legislator Richard Milne, as well as the County Executive Student Appointee Lola D'Ascentiis.

Meeting Venue Change (Mike Garland/Clem Chung)

1. With the expected expiration of Covid Emergency Orders on April 15, all public meetings will resume using an in-person format. While Zoom is convenient and lends itself to participation, this is mandated by NYS Open Meetings Law. The Emergency Orders that supersede the Open Meetings law are expected to expire and not be extended on April 15. Climate Meetings will then be held in-person on the same day and time (first Thursday at 3:30) in the Conference Room at Monroe County Fleet Center Building 1.
2. In accordance with the Open Meetings Law, Board appointees are required to participate in-person. Mike Garland will follow up with County Law regarding attendance requirements for non-voting members and get clarification regarding call-in/listen-in options. John Bothelo asked about a map to the building, and that will be provided and distributed.
3. Any changes/updates to venue and format will be communicated to all members via email.

Climate Action Plan Update (Joe Vankerkhove / Bergmann Associates):

Molly Gaudioso and members of the Bergmann Associates team gave an overview of the latest draft of the Climate Action Plan:

1. Second draft was issued to the committee prior to the meeting. It includes revisions to Part 1: Intro to Climate Action Planning; Part 2: Existing Climate Conditions and Projections; and Part 3: Current Climate Initiatives.
2. Newly drafted section includes Part 4: Greenhouse Gases Inventory.
3. Sections in progress: Part 5: Climate Action Goals and Targets and Part 6: Expansion of Climate Action Planning.
4. Feedback from committee members was very useful to Bergmann and resulted in many enhancements to the first draft.
5. The committee will continue with the Google Doc format (using Draft 2) to submit their comments on this revision. Input will be due by Monday, April 18. Chairpersons O'Connor, Hughes-Smith and Yudelson will compile the comments.
6. Consultants will continue to finalize goals and targets by sector while refining actions to achieve targets. Staff and committee comments on sections 1-4 will be incorporated while sections 5 and 6 continue to be drafted for review.

New Business:

Matt Corona, Manager of the HeatSmart Monroe Campaign, gave an overview of the project, a program of the Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region.

1. HeatSmart Monroe launched on February 2, 2021 and has helped more than 300 clients, while installing more than 50 heat pumps.
2. Heat Pump Ready recommendations include:
 - Building Envelope Air Sealing and Insulation
 - Space Heating and Cooling Air Source and Ground Source Heat Pumps
 - Domestic Hot Water Heat Pump Water Heaters
3. Heat Pump technology is already available in refrigerators. It is the same technology with multiple applications: air source, ground source and hot water
4. Ground source also known as geothermal.
5. Air Source is ducted. For buildings without ducts, minisplit heads are utilized.

6. Why heat pumps?
 - Need to electrify
 - Energy efficient (200-400%)
 - Heating and cooling
 - Can improve indoor air quality
 - Will reduce bills if heat with propane, oil or electric (fossil fuels will rise over time)
 - Convenient, remote control or thermostat
 - Reduced environmental impact
7. Affordability:
 - No-cost home energy assessment
 - Grants for insulation / air sealing
 - Geothermal Federal tax credits (26%)
 - Utility Rebates
 - Low-interest NYS Financing
 - Biggest barrier to adoption is cost
8. Clem Chung stated there are questions about the rate of adoption of heat pumps and the meeting of climate goals. Matt indicated that the Monroe County group is partnering with Rochester District Heating to help disseminate the word about the program.
9. John Bothelo asked about the use of R410 refrigerant in heating and cooling systems and subsequent disposal issues. Matt indicated the ground source pumps use saltwater and antifreeze, no refrigerant.
10. Clem Chung informed the committee that Isobell Haddad would be leaving Monroe County to pursue her PhD in Environmental Systems at the University of California Merced, and thanked her for her contributions to the committee and the County's certification efforts over the last nine months.

Public Forum:

1. Pat Wartinger from Color Henrietta Green spoke about the need for more food compost sites throughout Monroe County.
2. Mary Moore from the Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists echoed Pat's concerns and added additional concerns about green space and pollinators.

Next meeting is Thursday, May 5, 2022, 3:30 IN-PERSON at the Monroe County Fleet Center, Building 1 Conference Room.

Motion to adjourn by Kate Walker; second by John Bothelo. Meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM.