



Warren County Climate Smart Task Force

warrencountyny.gov/climate



Meeting Details:

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

10am-12pm

Warren County Board of Supervisors – Committee Room

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Introduction to the Climate Smart Program
3. Warren County Climate Smart Program
4. Warren County Climate Smart Task Force
5. Grant Application
6. Certification Actions
7. Roundtable Discussion
8. Public Comments



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Meeting Notes

Present:

Chris Belden, AICP
Beth Gilles
Allison Gaddy, AICP
Claudia Braymer
Andrea Hogan
Tammie DeLorenzo
Amy Drexel, AEM
Sara Frankenfeld
Amanda Beck
Peter McDevitt
Scott Royael
Doug Beaty
Dan Durkee
Jim Lieberum, CPESC
Travis Whitehead
Jeff Flagg
Tara Donadio

*Assistant County Planner/Climate Smart
Coordinator*
Director
Senior Planner
County Supervisor, Glens Falls Ward 3
Supervisor, Town of Johnsbury
Assistant to County Administrator
Emergency Services Coordinator
GIS Administrator
Junior Planner
County Supervisor, Glens Falls Ward 2
Sustainability Coordinator
At-Large County Supervisor, Queensbury
Senior Health Educator
District Manager/Hazard Mitigation Coordinator
Member
Climate Smart Coordinator
Sustainability Planner

Warren County Planning
LCLGRP
LCLGRP
Board of Supervisors
Board of Supervisors
Warren County Administrator
WC Office of Emergency Services
Warren County Planning
Warren County Planning
Board of Supervisors
SUNY Adirondack
Board of Supervisors
Warren County Public Health
WC Soil & Water Conservation District
Queensbury Climate Smart Task Force
Glens Falls Climate Smart Task Force
CDRPC
Sun Community News/Lake George
Mirror
Lake George Park Commission

Thom Randall
Dave Wick

Reporter
Executive Director

*Task Force members *italicized*

Meeting began at 10:05AM

Chris Belden welcomed the group and asked to go around the room and give introductions, as well as have members and those in attendance to indicate what they bring or expect from the Task Force.

Introductions

Chris Belden: Serves as Assistant County Planner for Warren County. Indicated that he is serving as coordinator, but is looking for direction from this group. Additionally, he hopes that we can find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and find ways to make our infrastructure more resilient to climate change.

Jim Lieberum: Serves as District Manager of the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District and Hazard Mitigation Coordinator for Warren County. His office manages Warren

County's MS4 Program (visit <https://warrenswcd.org/ms4.html>) and is very involved with stormwater and green infrastructure projects around the county.

Dan Durkee: Serves as the Senior Health Educator for the Warren County Department of Public Health. He stated that in relation to climate change, his office is monitoring disease migration caused by warming temperatures. Right now that primarily includes 2 diseases, Zika and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. The New York State Department of Health has identified global warming as one of the largest public health threats facing the state.

Doug Beaty: Serves as an At-Large County Supervisor representing Queensbury. He is looking forward to being involved with this group – to help see what the County and Town of Queensbury can do to address climate change.

Scott Royael: Employed by SUNY Adirondack, as the Sustainability Coordinator. He is excited to be part of this group. Currently, the college is looking to improve energy efficiency and reduce contributions of greenhouse gases.

Peter McDevitt: Represents Ward 2, in the City of Glens Falls, as a County Supervisor. Peter also serves as chair of the Economic Development & Growth Committee of the Board of Supervisors. He stated that he is glad that Warren County is taking steps to address climate change. Peter referenced a few anecdotal references about climate change:

- The populations of lobsters along the coast of Massachusetts are diminishing. Lobsters prefer cooler water and are now moving north due to rising water temperatures;
- Insurance companies are beginning to raise insurance premiums along coastal communities because they understand that as a result of climate change we will be seeing greater damage along the coastal areas; and
- The Pentagon is looking at the issue of climate change very seriously.

Amanda Beck: Junior Planner with the County Planning Department. She indicated she is excited to be working with the committee on this issue.

Sara Frankenfeld: GIS Administrator at Warren County. Sara plans on assisting with some of the projects, such as the Natural Resources Inventory.

Amy Drexel: Emergency Services Coordinator for Warren County - is looking forward to being involved.

Andrea Hogan: Serves as the Town Supervisor for the Town of Johnsbury. She indicated that she represents a more rural perspective to the group. In the past, she worked with helping low-income families – so she will be viewing things through the lens of poverty.

Claudia Braymer: Represents Ward 3, in the City of Glens Falls, as a County Supervisor. Claudia also serves as the chair of the Real Property & Environmental Concerns Committee of the Board of Supervisors. She has been involved with advancing the Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program in Warren County. She's optimistic that by planning we can work to reduce expenses down the road.

Allison Gaddy: Senior Planner for the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board. Allison is a community planner and looks forward to working with the group.

Beth Gilles: Director of the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board. Her office has been involved with infrastructure planning, especially involving stormwater.

Tammie DeLorenzo: Serves as the Assistant to the County Administrator. She is glad that this group has brought all of these players together. She's looking forward to finding solutions that consider the reasonability of cost and where we can save money down the road.

Dave Wick: Serves as the Executive Director of the Lake George Park Commission. Not a member of the Task Force, but was interested in what the group is doing. Dave indicated that we are already seeing the indications of climate change in Lake George. Within the last 30 years there has been a 4°F increase in water temperature on Lake George. In addition, there have been increases in algae growth and aquatic plant growth. We are also seeing more icing versus snow events, which will inevitably change the way we clear our roads and use road salt. He indicated that he is part of a state group that is looking at some of these issues; however, he said that he will be looking to see what this group comes up.

Thom Randall: Reporter for the Sun Community News/Lake George Mirror. While not a member of the Task Force, he indicated that he has long had a passion for health and environmental issues.

Tara Donadio: Serves as Sustainability Coordinator for the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC). She can provide technical assistance to the group.

Jeff Flagg: Serves as the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator for the City of Glens Falls. Much of the work that the City has been doing, so far, has been focused on energy savings. He offered that something that we should be considering is not only unintended consequences, but 'unforeseen consequences'. For example, in California the power company is shutting off power to residents to avoid wildfires.

Travis Whitehead: Queensbury resident and serves on the Town of Queensbury Climate Smart Task Force and Clean Energy Committee. He has a longstanding interest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and exploring the use of alternative fuels.

Introduction to the Climate Smart Program

Chris Belden gave a brief introduction to the state's Climate Smart Communities Program. The purpose of the program is to encourage local communities to make strategies to:

- Reduce contributions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as, reducing energy consumption and landfill gas capture.
- Adapt local infrastructure and the way we do things to prepare for the changes we are seeing and will experience.

The State offers 50% reimbursable competitive grants for implementation actions, such as, culvert/bridge right-sizing, streambank stabilization, and relocation of critical infrastructure. The maximum award for implementation actions is \$1M. Additionally the State offers funding for the completion of priority certification actions, such as, Natural Resources Inventory and Climate Vulnerability Assessment. The maximum award for certification actions is \$50,000.

Completion of certification actions go toward awarding communities with becoming Certified Bronze, Silver, or Gold. Chris expressed that the County is working towards certification. Chris directed attendees to review the list of actions he passed out. He indicated that these actions advance the County's effort to become a Certified Climate Smart Community and noted that

these specific items were either being considered, underway, completed, or will possibly be grant funded.

Warren County Climate Smart Program

Chris Belden explained that in June 2019, the Warren County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported a resolution to adopt the Climate Smart Communities Pledge, thereby making Warren County a Registered Climate Smart Community.

Chris told the group that the Planning Department put a funding application in to the NYSDEC's Climate Smart Communities program to undertake a number of climate adaptation related certification projects. He indicated that there was broad support for assessing critical infrastructure that may potentially become more vulnerable as a result of climate change. Chris explained that as the program moves forward we should look at ways to reduce energy use/contributions of greenhouse gases.

Supervisor Braymer agreed that we should begin to do more to reduce energy consumption at the County, such as the purchase of more hybrid/electric vehicles. She added that the City of Glens Falls and Town of Queensbury are working together to complete a greenhouse gas inventory. She asked could Warren County also work with Glens Falls and Queensbury.

Chris responded that he had reached out to other Climate Smart Coordinator's in Warren County, as it was his belief we needed to improve coordination. However, the City of Glens Falls received grant funding for the development of its Greenhouse Gas Inventory – it was his understanding that the City and Town were going to try and do a combined report, but couldn't due to funding limitations. In his estimation, it was probably unlikely that Warren County could do so.

Jeff Flagg told the group that it had been discussed originally, but as Chris indicated they weren't able to include Queensbury with the funding they received. Jeff stated that this inventory has been useful for highlighting buildings requiring energy efficiency improvements.

Warren County Climate Smart Task Force

Chris Belden told the group that the Task Force consists of a diverse group of representatives. The reason being that climate change will put stresses on a variety of services and infrastructure in Warren County. As we go forward with creating/implementing strategies the Task Force will be instrumental in prioritizing actions Warren County takes.

Chris identified that while Global Climate Change is still a controversial subject – the evidence at this point is irrefutable. To that end, Chris made clear that while members of the public may have disagree with the existence of climate change or how Warren County plans to respond to it, he is looking to maintain decorum and will not tolerate abusive comments at Task Force meetings.

Meeting dates and times can be found online at www.warrencountyny.gov/climate. These meetings will be open to the public and time will be made at the end of the meeting for public comment. Additionally, those wishing to make written statements to the Task Force can share them with Chris Belden for distribution.

The County's Climate Smart Communities program is allowing Warren County to become more prepared and less reactionary. As an example, Chris asked Jim Lieberum to share some of the recent shifts in rainfall over the past 30 years. Jim explained that the commonly used 100-year

storm event is a method of describing a type of event that has a 1%-annual chance of occurring in a given year (it doesn't mean you will get that event once every 100 years). Jim indicated that according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University, the 100-year storm event, 24-hour rainfall (in inches) for Warren County was between 5.0"-5.5" in 1990. Today that number has risen to 5.5"-6.0". While seemingly minor, these changes (which are expected to increase) will put added stress on local infrastructure.

Dan Durkee stated that local codes and zoning can have an impact too. For instance the unused parking lot for the former Kmart on Dix Avenue [7.5acres], which was constructed to accommodate the zoning requirements but has gone underutilized for years – doesn't allow the stormwater to get into the ground easily.

Dave Wick stated that the Lake George Park Commission has proposed changes to stormwater regulations in the Lake George Park to mitigate impacts from stormwater runoff. – see <https://lgpc.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2018/08/summary-proposed-stormwater-regulations-changes.pdf>

Supervisor Beaty stated that while the County was making positive steps to deal with climate change but he is concerned about the number of people leaving New York State because we're overtaxed. Mr. Beaty questioned how we advocate with Albany to get additional resources to deal with these problems.

Chris Belden stated that it's an age-old dilemma. However, we can improve our prospects of dealing with these issues by coordinating with each other to access funding and resources from various sources. Dan Durkee stated we need to begin by taking local action. Allison Gaddy indicated that efforts should be taken to plan, as State and Federal funding agencies appreciate well thought through strategies.

Grant Application

Chris Belden explained that the Planning Department submitted an application to the NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities Program to undertake six (6) priority certification actions, which include:

1. **Climate Vulnerability Assessment**
Utilize existing resources, such as the County Hazard Mitigation Plan, to identify operations and infrastructure that will be made more vulnerable as a result of climate change.
2. **Climate Adaptation Strategies**
After identifying climate related vulnerabilities in Warren County, through the Climate Vulnerability Assessment, we will develop strategies for addressing those concerns.
3. **Climate Smart Resiliency Plan**
Review existing plans, policies, and projects to determine the adequacy of Warren County's effort to become more climate resilient.
4. **Natural Resources Inventory**
Warren County GIS will create an online resource for finding geological and biological natural resources in Warren County. Most other Natural Resources Inventories are done in a report format, we feel that having an interactive interface will allow be more useful to the public and local review boards. Assistance will be provided by Warren County Soil and Water.

5. Fleet Inventory
The fleet inventory would build off what Warren County uses already for tracking its vehicle fleet. However, this inventory would include other equipment/machinery and specialty vehicles. The purpose of this inventory is to help the County with planning for energy reductions.
6. Heat Emergency Plan
Assistance will be provided by Emergency Services and Public Health to ensure that the County is prepared for heat wave events, which are expected to become more frequent.

Certification Actions

Chris Belden asked the group to review the different actions available for certification points. Chris indicated that if there is an action that he hadn't already mentioned as being done or considered, to let the group know.

Roundtable

Chris Belden said he had 2 questions to ask before the roundtable:

1. He was asked if there a desire to have video recording of the meetings?
The group responded 'no'.
2. We can obtain certification points for maintaining a social media page. Did anyone have thoughts about the County having a page for that?
The group was supportive. Amy Drexel suggested first developing a social media policy – Amy said she would share the Emergency Service Office's policy.

Dan Durkee: Mentioned the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index. Indicated that this could be useful, especially in developing the heat emergency plan. See <https://svi.cdc.gov/>. Dan also mentioned that there was an upcoming announcement on the results of the Governor's Cancer Research Initiative. See https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/docs/warren_executive_summary_2019.pdf

Doug Beaty: Mentioned that he was very encouraged by what was being discussed by this group. He believes many of these ideas are very capable of moving forward.

Scott Royael: Highlighted that SUNY ADK is moving towards becoming STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System) certified.

Peter McDevitt: Indicated that he was very interested in Warren County pursuing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory at the Municipal Center building. Tara Donadio indicated that an easy first step is to complete the Energy Benchmark for Government Buildings. Chris Belden agreed to look into the matter more by the next meeting.

Sara Frankenfeld: Mentioned how she thought more could be done at the County to encourage recycling.

Chris indicated that the next meeting would be held in January 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher R. Belden, AICP

CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES (CSC) PROGRAM

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)



Climate Smart Communities

Program Overview

WHAT is the Climate Smart Communities Program?	Funding opportunity enabling local action to plan and implement strategies to mitigate the contributing factors of global climate change and adapt to its impacts.
WHY should Warren County be involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌍 The actions (or inactions) we take today will impact future generations; 🌍 To reduce the probability of the loss of life, property, and critical infrastructure; 🌍 Benefit from cost savings and operational efficiencies; and 🌍 Improved scores on grant applications for some state funding programs.
Is FUNDING Available?	<p>Yes – 50% Match Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌍 Certification Actions – Maximum Award \$100,000 (\$50,000 grant) 🌍 Implementation Actions – Maximum Award \$2,000,000 (\$1,000,000 grant)
Climate Smart CERTIFICATION	<p>🌍 DEC identifies specific actions that are eligible for Certification Points (see checklist)</p> <p>🌍 When applying for funding, a higher certification level results in improved application scores</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Registered CSC (Current Status)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Certified Bronze (120 Points)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Certified Silver (300 Points)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Certified Gold</p> </div> </div>
EXAMPLES of Implementation Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Culvert/Bridge Right-Sizing <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Sidewalks/Multi-Use Trails <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Drainage Improvement <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Enhanced Landfill Gas Capture <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Critical Infrastructure Relocation <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Emergency Heating/Cooling Center <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Organic Waste Management Infrastructure <li style="width: 50%;">🌍 Streambank Stabilization
Program NEXT STEPS	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; text-align: center;"> <p>December 2019</p> <p>Grant Award Announcements</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; text-align: center;"> <p>March 2020</p> <p>If awarded, begin certification projects</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; text-align: center;"> <p>May-July 2020</p> <p>Consider application for additional certification or implementation actions</p> </div> </div>
Climate Smart TASK FORCE MEMBERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌍 Chris Belden, AICP – Assistant County Planner/Climate Smart Coordinator, <i>Warren County Planning Department</i> 🌍 Sara Frankenfeld – GIS Administrator, <i>Warren County Planning Department</i> 🌍 Amanda Beck – Junior Planner, <i>Warren County Planning Department</i> 🌍 Beth Gilles – Director, <i>Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board</i> 🌍 Allison Hargrave-Gaddy, AICP – Senior Planner, <i>Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board</i> 🌍 Jim Lieberum, CPESC – District Manager/Hazard Mitigation Coordinator, <i>Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District</i> 🌍 Amy Drexel, AEM – Emergency Services Coordinator, <i>Warren County Emergency Services</i> 🌍 Emma Lamy – Environmental Analyst, <i>Warren County DPW</i> 🌍 Dan Durkee – Senior Health Educator, <i>Warren County Public Health</i> 🌍 Tammie DeLorenzo – Assistant to the County Administrator, <i>Warren County Administrator</i> 🌍 Scott Royael – Sustainability Coordinator, <i>SUNY Adirondack (Non-Municipal Member)</i> 🌍 Claudia Braymer – Glens Falls – Ward 3 County Supervisor, <i>Warren County Board of Supervisors</i> 🌍 Peter McDevitt – Glens Falls – Ward 2 County Supervisor, <i>Warren County Board of Supervisors</i> 🌍 Andrea Hogan – Johnsbury Supervisor, <i>Warren County Board of Supervisors</i> 🌍 Doug Beaty – Queensbury At-Large County Supervisor, <i>Warren County Board of Supervisors</i>
Additional Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌍 www.climatesmart.ny.gov 🌍 www.warrencountyny.gov/climate 🌍 www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities

CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES (CSC) PROGRAM | Warren County Roadmap to Certification

Legacy Action #	Action	Description	Points	Status	Implementation
1.2	Climate Smart Communities Task Force	Designate group to promote/support CSC Program	20	Complete	Board of Supervisors
1.3	Climate Smart Communities Coordinator	Designate individual to promote/support CSC Program	10	Complete	Board of Supervisors
PE3	Fleet Inventory	Full inventory of County fleet	4	Grant App.	Planning & DPW
PE3	*Energy Code Enforcement Training	Practical application of Energy Code on active construction sites	5	Complete	Building Department
6.3	*Unified Solar Permit	Standardized application to streamline approval process	5	Complete	Board of Supervisors
6.11	*Alternative-Fuel Infrastructure	Installation of EV charging stations	14	In-Progress	Warren County DPW
6.17	Natural Resources Inventory	Online inventory of natural resources to aid with conservation planning	10	Grant App.	Planning, GIS, Soil & Water Conservation District
7.1	Climate Vulnerability Assessment	Assess threats posed by climate change to existing infrastructure	16	Grant App.	Planning, GIS, Emergency Services, Soil & Water Conservation District
7.2	Climate Resilience Vision	Community-based vision and goals	3	Opportunity	Planning
7.3	Climate Smart Resiliency Planning	Review of plans, municipal codes, policies, and projects to assess climate resiliency	6	Grant App.	Planning, GIS, Emergency Services, Soil & Water Conservation District
7.4	Climate Adaptation Strategies	Using Climate Vulnerability Assessment, develop strategies to reduce risks	8	Grant App.	Planning, GIS, Emergency Services, Soil & Water Conservation District
7.7	Heat Emergency Plan	Develop plan for protecting vulnerable populations during heat waves	6	Grant App.	Planning, GIS, Emergency Services, Public Health
7.10	Watershed Assessment	Champlain Watershed: Complete Upper Hudson Watershed: Under Development	6	In-Progress	Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board
8.12	*Financing Program for Building Energy Efficiency	Create financing method for improving commercial building efficiency (C-PACE)	7	Complete	Board of Supervisors
9.4	Local Climate Action Website	www.warrencountyny.gov/climate	3	Complete	Planning
9.5	Social Media	Create social media page for program	3	Opportunity	Planning
10.1	Annual Progress Report	Report on accomplishments, etc.	4	Opportunity	Planning
10.3	Partnerships with Other Entities	Cooperation with neighboring communities on advancing program	3	Opportunity	Planning
TOTAL			133		

*Denotes High-Impact Action from NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities Program

Climate Smart Action Status		
Complete	Grant Application	Opportunity
50	20	13