

**Town of Jay Climate Smart Task Force --- 02/19/2025, Community Center, 4:00 – 5:30 pm**

**Participants:** Knut Sauer (Chair), Wally Walters (Recorder), Robin Licari, John Culpepper, Olivia Dwyer, Lana Gokey

**On-line (Go-To-Meeting):** None

**Handouts** (email): Agenda, Jay Climate TF meeting minutes 01282025, Memo to guide 19 Feb C&I WG focal topics discussion, PE6 CSC Comprehensive Plan Climate Initiatives

1) Call to Order (Knut S) 4:05 pm.

2) Minutes of 01/28/2025 meeting (Knut S): unanimously approved

3) Energy Fair Date (Knut S): 6 Sep 2025 (T)

- Knut unavailable 12-28 Sep

- discussion of title

  - last year was “Sustainability & Energy Fair”

  - broader title may be more inclusive for vendors and participants

4) EV Chargers & Grants Update (Knut S):

- Au Sable Forks chargers grant is complex/requires redundancy

  - have to have contractor estimates before you get grant; then have to solicit bids later with varying workplans

  - awaiting some county info; have to get grant info in by deadline 28 Feb 2025

- Solar panels: had a design meeting with APEC Solar; everything is moving forward; reconfirming US content

- Jay/Upper Jay EV chargers

  - had 3 quotes (DEC requirement); have to have same contractor overall but they have different capabilities; cheaper firm can't do light post work

  - thinking through possible options: how to package bid; use of highway dept; can't put together firms as subcontractors; meet with supervisor and town lawyer to come; have to also consider timing re winter; we'll get there

5) Comprehensive Plan Discussion as Climate & Infrastructure Working Group (Wally W):

- timing: trying to advance from focal topic identification to research to enable public engagements once winter ends; depth and precision on topics can come later

- immediate goal is to identify the range of alternatives available for the town by topic; what options the town has to use money/grants or authority/activity; won't solve world's problems; each alternative for the town also has tradeoffs, e.g., achieving a desirable goal may cost money or effort or use town authority limiting individual options; examining topics also helps identify who should added to discussions/process or should be interviewed, e.g., the highway supervisor for transportation issues.

- overlapping issues: some other working groups interested in examining issues which overlap, e.g., Parks and Spaces WG interest in natural community resiliency; Human Services WG

interest in transportation for seniors; at CP Special Board last week decision was to let WGs go ahead in defining their own topics and group chairs can deconflict any conflicts/overlaps

- participation: WG participation builds on town committees; allows for additional participants; we'll need additional expertise on some topics such as infrastructure
- topics: focal topics involve broad alternatives for the town board following public input; also may involve complexity and need research; can have additional issues which are less involved and will be addressed in more detail later; discussion today on the focal topics

#### 6) Focal Topic Transportation Master Plan:

- existing conditions prompted lots of public feedback on roads, especially Ausable Acres, concerns about conditions, drainage, whether to pave, desires for more sidewalks and accommodation of bicycles; also an interest in pathways but this is something Open Spaces WG can take up in detail as they consider a recreation master plan
  - be nice to have durable service trail through FEMA properties
  - painted bike lanes or more segregated shoulders; Black Brook also interested in this; possible to move road centerlines to have shoulders on one side
  - be nice to have a pedestrian bridge over the river at some location with walking trail
  - if looking for eco-tourism be nice to have map or something on Main Street which identifies the pathways
  - bus transportation: need to evaluate every bus schedule; Human Services WG may do this
- money & means to fund a transportation master plan: uncertain
- our focus is primarily to the infrastructure
- tradeoffs: at some point community has to decide how much it wants and will pay for
  - maybe sources of funds associated with recreation, e.g., Ironman
  - maybe tied together with neighboring communities
- to be researched:
  - talk with highway dept and water dept supervisors; maybe a bus driver
  - need for highway inventory; define the problems; understand signage & needs
  - opportunities for grant funding

#### 7) Focal Topic: Climate Action Plan:

- funding: grants may be available to help with this; grants for the plan or for components of it
- guidelines: from CSC silver certification and NYS goals/requirements & incentives
- range of alternatives is considerable; a lot has been done
  - direct action: reduce town emissions (and save money)
  - require/regulate: update building codes to green standards
  - facilitate/encourage/educate: possible solar farm, improvements which get individual tax credits or reduce carbon emissions; events such as the Energy Fair
  - other impacts: NYSEG may not have adequate capacity for electrical distribution
- discussion:
  - possibility improved soil health/farming techniques can contribute to carbon capture
  - Tyler Eaton may have insight to contribute expertise on climate action
  - other stakeholder interview prospects: ANCA and APA, ADK Action Executive Director
  - to research: baseline emissions and energy use

#### 8) Focal Topic: Resiliency:

- principal concerns: flooding & potential future of wildfires
- wildfires: not much a problem now, but history of large million acre fires over 100 years ago, legacy of fire towers; potential for blowdowns, spells of dry weather and invasive insects killing trees; no forest management to reduce risk; would need to engage specialists to understand risks
- river:
  - interest in river recreation, rafting: only seasonal possibility
  - existing plan/work to improve river by Ausable Freshwater Center; plan for 13 projects rank ordered by town board; work as funding available; not all hazards are preventable due to setting of the river and its two 90-degree turns within the town
- upstream tributaries: possible encouragement of beavers; rewilding out west using beavers or man-made beaver like dams; interesting work but structures can be overwhelmed in large storm events; what made Hurricane Irene bad was losing Marcy Dam
  - new FEMA proposed updates to flood map released a few weeks ago for comment at Essex County
- also natural community resilience; a topic for Open Spaces WG, including animal habitats
- possible expertise to draw on: APA or DEC

#### 9) Focal Topic: Materials Management:

- intent of topic: address full cycle of reduce, reuse, recycle, waste streams, pollutants, blight
- blight could involve improving streetscapes, junk control laws, free junk removal days, portable toilets, facilitating cleanup
  - not clear how much town can act on private property blight, abandoned property or structures; more difficult but there can be standards and action
  - concern on impacts of low-income residents
  - could have a community housing initiative to look for rehab opportunities
- waste streams: garbage, compost, plastics
  - might be useful to have an alternative term for waste; "unutilized resources?"
- range of alternatives: authority vs discretion of individuals
- to research/learn more: potential grants, extent of problems and innovative solutions

#### 10) Focal Topic: Infrastructure Enhancement:

- intent: what do we need to support the future of the town over next 10-15 years?
  - including what's in private hands and ability of town to provide services
- need inventory of what we have and limitations, e.g., internet/cell communications
  - NYS broadband standards of 100 Mbits/sec
  - limits of fiber optic connections for growth
  - availability of broadband is a factor limiting/enabling tourism and town growth
- need to identify possible future needs: buildup analysis
- town alternatives: can't entirely limit or direct growth; APA zoning defines most, although possible to request expansion of hamlet taking into account FEMA buyouts and flood mapping
- ongoing initiative to expand cell service availability
- issue of adequacy of power available to town: to be asked of NYSEG
- ongoing management of water availability; metering, water loss
- managing of old septic tanks near water bodies; alternatives to septic systems?
  - urine diversion and creation of high-value compost

11) Next Meeting: Wed 5 March 2025 4-5 pm at Community Center

12) Adjourned at 5:30 pm

Notes taken by Wally Walters including review of recording of meeting