

MINUTES
CHESTER CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 29, 2023 – 7:00 PM Senior Center, 81 Laroe Road, Chester

Inaugural Meeting

Attendance:

In-person: Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn, Jane Dysinger, Helen Flavin, Brandon Holdridge, Kimberly Manson, E J Szulwach

On-Zoom: Susannah Devine, Don Devine, Justin George, Grayson Sussman Squires

Via email communication: Tracy Schuh

Committee Member Ideas:

Each member introduced themselves and shared their goals and ideas for the committee. In summary, some of the goals included:

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Increasing solar usage, especially in town buildings
- Pursuing certification as a Climate Smart Community (refer to [link](#))
- Considering infrastructure improvements and climate resiliency
- Organizing environmentally friendly educational events in Chester
- Aquifer protection
- Creating a pollinator garden/pathway and tree plantings
- Addressing misinformation about climate change
- Exploring solar power in agriculture
- Understanding climate issues from a human perspective, including health concerns such as asthma and water access
- Posting all future meetings on the Town's website calendar to raise awareness and encourage public participation
- Requesting a dedicated link on the Town's website for the Climate Change Advisory Committee
- Sharing/posting educational brochures already available, such as stormwater management and invasive species information
- Establishing a town tree program, e.g., "Adopt a Tree Program" (similar to Albany, NY) (refer to [link](#))
- Participating in the NexTrex Recycling Challenge (refer to [link](#))
- Exploring partnerships with other communities, including contact with Orange County Planning/Climate Task Force
- Considering special events and collaborating with Kiwanis for their annual clean-up day while potentially adding more clean-up days throughout the year
- Assisting the Town's new Comprehensive Plan committee in incorporating climate preparedness strategies into Town Code updates for future development
- Creating a budget for the Climate Change Advisory Committee
- Addressing environmental issues in the community, including compliance and enforcement procedures

Initial Priorities:

- Schedule a meeting with Kate Schmidt from Orange County
- Consider a meeting with Lisa Linst(?) from Woodbury
- The committee wants to pursue becoming a Climate Smart Community (CSC)
- We would like to consider the committee name, considering that "Climate Smart" may have a more positive connotation than Climate Change
- We will consider operating without a designated chairperson
- Elizabeth was elected as the recording secretary

Next Meeting:

Friday, November 10, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Senior Center

Note: Apologies if I have left out any ideas or people. Please email me with any corrections or omissions.