

## **Minutes to the Village of Ardsley Conservation and Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC), 02/04/21, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

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**Attendees:** Asha Bencosme, Trustee Liaison Steve Edelstein, Michael Fischgrund, Eda Kapsis (facilitator), Lorraine Kuhn, Dave Lew, Carol Sommerfield (minutes)

### **1. Opening (Dave)**

Dave Lew opened the meeting with a quote from Carl Sagan. The group congratulated Michael Fischgrund on his early acceptance into Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Science. Michael will enter Cornell in the fall focusing on a major in Sustainability and Environmental Economics.

### **2. CEAC Goals for 2021**

#### **Summary:**

- Eda provided the attendees with the CEAC 2021 goals (see Appendix A) for the CEAC Committee and used the document to drive the status updates in the meeting.

### **3. Recommended Resolutions with focus on development of key programs and reduction of emissions:**

#### **A. Climate Smart Communities (CSC) and Coordinator (Asha)**

##### **Summary:**

- The Village of Ardsley BoT passed two important resolutions on 2/1/21: Creation of a Climate Smart Communities/Clean Energy Communities Taskforce and the assignment of the CSC/CEC Taskforce Coordinator, Asha Bencosme. Members of the CSC/CEC Taskforce are Asha Bencosme (Coordinator), Village Manager Meredith Robson or her designee, Eda Kapsis (Chair), Dave Lew (Technical Coordinator) and Carol Sommerfield (Recording Secretary). The term for the taskforce positions is three years.
- In addition to supporting Ardsley in its goal to reduce emissions and increase sustainability, the CSC/CEC points earned enable Ardsley to receive grants to support their climate smart goals. Bronze certification, the first level, will open a larger pool of grant money and will also enable Ardsley to gain more points in the Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program, which also allocates grants based upon the number of points acquired. Therefore, CSC and CEC point acquisition are priorities.
- The committee is focused on achieving Bronze level certification for Ardsley in 2021. Asha said she believes we have more than the 120 points needed for the Bronze certification and the task for the team is to ascertain the status of actions, gather documentation, close gaps, and submit the

completed actions into the portal. The team is targeting the July 2, 2021 submission date. If that date is missed Ardsley will be unable to apply for Bronze certification until January 2022.

- The CSC/CEC Taskforce had their first meeting on February 2, 2021 with the next meeting scheduled for February 9, 2021 at 1 pm.

## **B. Unified Solar Permit, and Low Embodied Carbon Concrete (Eda)**

### **Summary:**

- The Village of Ardsley BoT passed a resolution on 2/1/21 to promote the use of low embodied carbon concrete (LECC) in construction, where permitted. Not only does LECC use less fossil fuel to create concrete, but it is less expensive. Eda is creating documentation for Larry Tomasso, Building Inspector, to provide to contractors applying for permits.
- Information on low embodied carbon concrete can be found at <https://www.openairforum.org/t/lecc-action-seminar-nov-16-q-a/83>.
- The CEAC will work with Larry Tomasso to see if the Unified Solar Permit would provide benefit to Ardsley in streamlining the permitting process.

## **C. EV Charging Stations - Update (Dave)**

### **Summary:**

A handful of potential charging station locations were visited in December to ascertain their suitability for housing one or more EV charging stations. Two locations appeared to be viable: two parking spaces in the Village Hall parking lot, next to an electrical transformer; one parking spot near the Ardsley Community Center, also adjacent to an electric pole with a transformer. Cost estimates are being received and reviewed.

## **4. CEAC Budget (Asha)**

- The first draft of the CEAC budget is ready and will be discussed with Village Manager Robson on February 10. The committee has allocated funds for in-person activities for the **Ardsley CAN by 2030!** initiative in the 2021/2022 budget cycle under the assumption that the pandemic will be over.
- In a separate meeting Asha and Meredith will review the CSC and CEC actions to identify short- and long-term capital items.

## **5. Seizing Opportunities in the New DPW Building (Asha)**

- There is an upcoming meeting between NYPA and the Village concerning the new DPW building to determine how and if NYPA can assist Ardsley in the project. NYPA may be able to aid with 3<sup>rd</sup> party financing, consulting, design,

and advisory services at low cost. Ardsley may also be able to unlock savings and discounts for installing energy efficient infrastructure and services.

## **6. Ardsley CAN by 2030! (Carol)**

- The next informational session, focused on the home, is complete and will be delivered on February 11 and 24<sup>th</sup>. This session focuses on developing a strategy and plan for becoming more carbon neutral, the external forces that will drive the move to renewable energy (e.g. CLCPA), financial incentives available for moving toward energy efficiency, and low cost actions to reduce the household carbon footprint in heating, cooling and electricity. As of this morning a total of 27 participants have signed up to attend. We will be holding the dress rehearsal on Sunday at 11 am.
- The GREEN Living communication stream has kicked off with the first two communication focused on reducing your carbon footprint through food choices and conserving water in the home and bathroom. The next GREEN Living will also focus on water conservation in the home.
- The **Ardsley CAN by 2030!** website, [www.ardsleycan.org](http://www.ardsleycan.org), is now complete and currently being reviewed by Mayor Kaboolian, Village Manager Robson, and Trustee Liaison Edelstein. The **Ardsley CAN by 2030!** website will provide the following service to the Ardsley community:
  - Educate the Village, residents and businesses about climate change and sustainable practices;
  - Define and measure Ardsley's ambitious climate reduction program;
  - Provide information on how to reduce carbon emissions through the simple to more complex actions;
  - Present reference material for residents and businesses to assist them in reducing their carbon footprint and acting sustainably;
  - Assist residents with climate change adaptation;
  - Deliver information on upcoming sustainability and climate related seminars, events and actions;
  - Provide links to other resources and organizations;
  - Leverage existing programs in surrounding municipalities that can be used by Ardsley residents;
  - Highlight opportunities for community volunteer action in Ardsley and surrounding municipalities.

Once approval is received the website will be announced publicly.

- Work is underway to identify pandemic-responsible **Ardsley CAN by 2030!** activities for Earth Day. Lorraine described her intent to hold an invasive plant removal event at Pascone Park where the Trees for Tribes were planted along the stream. It is now being overrun by invasive plants.
- The next **Ardsley CAN by 2030!** Zoom session for the Carbon education pillar will be deliver in late spring and will also focus on the home carbon footprint.
- Work is also underway to document **The Ardsley CAN by 2030!** Initiative as part of our Climate Smart Communities completed actions.

## **7. Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Project (Carol)**

The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Project will be announced on February 22. Everything for the kickoff is ready to go. Key milestones since the last CEAC meeting are:

- The Pollinator Pathway Project website (<https://www.ardsleypollinatorpathway.org>) was approved and is now enhanced to include a robust section on Quick Start Guides to help new gardeners take the first steps to create an eco-friendlier yard.
- A section on water-wise gardening has been added to the website and more educational information on this important topic is planned as a response to climate change and climate adaptation.
- A banner was created and will be displayed in town for the kick-off of the initiative.
- The Introductory Zoom seminar, *The Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Project: How You Can Save Pollinators*, will be delivered on March 2 and 10.
- Carol has joined the intervillage group, Pollinators and Big Lawns. The purpose of this group is to influence owners of big lawn areas to move toward native plant and meadow landscapes. Most of the owners of the properties are schools, religious organizations, and villages/towns. The group is seeking to identify potential large demonstration gardens to help persuade landowners to consider reducing their lawn areas.
  - Lorraine Kuhn mentioned 'Parcel Q' in the Village of Ardsley, which is a piece of open land by the OLPH school, as having potential for a future project. Ownership of the parcel would need research.
- A guide to planting native plants in containers and small areas is underway. The target audience is Ardsley businesses, though the guide would also be of use to apartment and condo dwellers.
- Work is underway to identify remote and/or socially distanced Earth Day events related to Pollinator Pathways.

## **8. Other/Open Discussion/Q&A**

None.

## **9. Closing (Eda)**

Next CEAC meeting (open to the public) will be April 1, 2021 from 7 pm – 8 pm via Zoom. CEAC weekly working meetings are held Tuesdays from 1:00 – 2:30.

## **10. Adjournment (Eda)**

Dave congratulated the team on the progress achieved to date and provided the closing quote:

*“Change is the essential process of all existence”, Mr. Spock, Star Trek.*

## APPENDIX A. CEAC 2021 Goals

Quarters 2020/21	Proposed policy advisory and actions	Community education and engagement
January to March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommended Resolutions with focus on development of key programs and reduction of emissions. In order of development / presentation:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEC / CSC Task Force with a named coordinator (adding at least 30 program pts.) as a subset of CEAC volunteer members in collaboration with Village Hall as needed.</li> <li>Recommended use of low embodied carbon concrete</li> <li>Unified Solar Permit</li> <li>Extend work for EV charger stations (with SW)</li> </ol> </li> <li>Work with Village Hall on budget as needed and guidelines to protect habitats and teams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue programming of Ardsley CAN by 2030!               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete phases 2 and 3 (Home energy &amp; Pollinators) of Ardsley CAN and ongoing follow up communications / measurement</li> <li>Launch the pollinator pathway website and program</li> <li>Develop and launch an Ardsley CAN website similar to the Ardsley Pollinator Pathway.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Announce emission reductions for 2020</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
April to June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend work of CSC and CEC Task Forces to ensure timeliness in seizing opportunities with NYSERDA and related organizations, especially as new Village DPW building is designed and developed.</li> <li>Open Space Inventory: review of draft.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earth Day – Ardsley CAN 2 open Zoom sessions sharing is caring               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete phase 4 (Transportation) of Ardsley CAN by 2030! and ongoing follow up communications / measurement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>