

EMC minutes June 8, 2021

Present: Julia Craner, Dave Haldeman (chair), Steve Landsman, Patty Lee Parmalee (scribe), Dave Tompkins, JoAnne Warren, John Valk, and Jeff Domanski (guest speaker)

The meeting was primarily devoted to learning from Mr. Domanski about Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) of renewable energy supply in NY State.

In short, the CCA option makes the town in essence a buying club, with advantageous pricing of supply. By current law (since the 1990's) Central Hudson must permit each customer to choose, individually, from what energy source (company) they want their power supply, to be delivered by Central Hudson - an opt-in procedure. If the town signs on for CCA, everyone in town will be supplied by default from renewable resources - an opt-out procedure. This is not only good for the planet, but generally also cheaper for the customer. And opting out is made very easy, no reluctant customers wanted.

The first one was in Westchester in 2016; at this point ca. 148 communities in the state have passed an enabling law.

Shawangunk would need to pass a local law, choose an Administration approach (which could be entering into an agreement with a State-approved Administrator), and then there would be a 60-day period for local outreach and education (which would be the responsibility of the Administrator team).

John Valk requests a sample local law, which Mr. Domanski promises to send, and John estimates Shawangunk could become part of the 2022 cohort, not 2021.

Dave H. will work on a letter advocating CCA to the Town Board, with John's help.

Charging station:

Dave H. will also write a letter to the Town Board advocating installing a charging station for electric vehicles. There are many advantages to doing it: e.g., presumably future town vehicle purchases will be electric, and it encourages visitation by traveling tourists. Dave T. points out that Central

Hudson has an enabling program. Julie and Dave will make a presentation to the Town Board, adding encouragement to buy electric vehicles.

Battery storage: A moratorium needed on battery storage facilities until we have a law which clearly states the rules for any future battery storage. Julie says Bonnie Franzen is helping write the law.

Stream buffers: Dave T. is working on a proposal to the Town Board that the number of feet required in a buffer be made law.

Other things that should be considered when new commercial establishments - especially large ones like warehouses - are evaluated: A roof should be strong enough for solar panels; consider a charging station; LED lighting; water conservation; roof runoff into the ground. Dave H will write a letter to the Planning Board about future environmental considerations for commercial establishments, with input from Dave T.

Rail trail: Too many trees have been cut in the grading process. But it does need grading, at least the 1 1/2 miles from RR Ave (or 208) to Birch. The Rod and Gun Club widened it 3 years ago, but they made the sides high, center low, resulting in wet accumulation. Then the Highway Dept. (working after hours) may have widened more than necessary, knocking down some trees.

Ideas: 1) ask Watchtower to come back again; 2) or DEC? 3) Wallkill Valley Land Trust? 4) local contractors? 5) a PR effort, getting a newspaper reporter to cover a volunteer work trip with hand tools; 6) if it ends up being the Highway Dept. again, several of us should work with them, marking the trees to save.

Next meeting: Dave H. will call it for the second Tuesday of either August or September, depending on need and availability.