



**ONEIDA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

Boehlert Center at Union Station
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ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
James J. Genovese II
Commissioner

Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting #3 - Minutes

October 1, 2024 at 2:00 PM

Oneida County Department of Planning

Conference Room, 3rd Floor

Union Station 321 Main St.

Utica, NY 13501

Introductions and Attendance

Ed Stevens	Director, Oneida County Emergency Services
John Waters	Technical Assistant, Oneida County Water Pollution Control
Alisson Cox	Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency
Kristin Campbell	Chief Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Amy Heiderich	Senior Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Grace Whiffen	Planning Specialist, Oneida County Department of Planning

The meeting opened at 2:04 PM by Amy Heiderich, speaking on behalf of the Climate Smart Communities Task Force Coordinator, James Genovese. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency or department they represent.

Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program

After looking more closely at the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Grant, which is a grant that funds community-driven projects that address climate challenges and reduce pollution while strengthening communities, awards under Track 1 are expected to be \$10-20 million each and Track 2 awards are expected to be \$1-3 million each. Kristen explained that the grant is too big for the committee at the moment since we don't have anything to spend the amount of money, but it is an example of what we should pursue in the future. We should also look for other grants.

Department of Energy- Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program

Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grants Program is designed to assist states, local governments, and tribes in implementing strategies to reduce energy use, and fossil fuel emissions and to improve energy efficiency. Amy Heiderich has been looking for an energy conservation project for this grant, but she needs to pin down an energy conservation project soon and asked if anyone had any ideas about where this grant money could go. She still needs to make a budget and send in the application by October 31, 2024.

A question was asked if any county-owned buildings needed upgrades and Kristen said to look at the county-owned building (120 Airline) because they have no outdoor lighting, and the grant money could invest in some lighting for outside. The Finance Department should have a list of every County-owned building for insurance coverage.

Certification Activities

While discussing that we needed another priority action to receive our certification it was brought up that the GHG Tracking System (PE 3.31) is a priority action and that could be a project that future interns work on. The Levitt Center at Hamilton College would be a good resource. Jeff Rehler in Planning talks to Hamilton College. Kristin also worked with Maxwell School of Syracuse University and Amy was a TA for an Energy Audit class at SUNY ESF.

Allison Cox asked if you could investigate community-based not-for-profit organizations to see if they could help with actions within the CSC checklist. Everyone agreed that would be helpful and Kristen asked if we had a list of the nonprofits. Ed Stevens said James should have one around.

Allison also inquired about a HEAP outreach public information campaign. They typically work on those actions this time of year.

The Planning Department went through the final actions on the spreadsheet during the meeting to identify some final actions that can be taken before submitting the CSC application:

PE 7.13 Not applicable for Oneida County because we don't have Critical Conservation Areas.

PE 7.10 Oneida Lake 9e Plan is still being worked on but it will be completed in 2025. While the Sauquoit Creek and Oriskany Creek Soil & Debris Management Plans are completed.

PE 7.20 Oneida Lake 9E, Black River, and Mohawk River action plans have designed flood elevation and flood maps.

PE 7.19 Oneida County is not interested, already extended freeboard from 10-12 inches

Pe 7.16 Sauquoit Creek Flood Plain Restoration Projects 1 and 2 are complete and need to be uploaded to the application. The drawings and photos are in the folder.

PE 7.21 Removal of dams and fixing bridges and culverts are being funded. Some are in development like the Clinton Street bridge, which will be an example of a green building, and the NYS Rte 69 Bridge over the Sauquoit Creek, which is being replaced, modeling has been completed and design is at 90%.

PE 7.12 Dunham Manor Park is working on a project to conserve, re-vegetate, and reconnect floodplains and buffers in riparian areas. They just uploaded their drawings.

PE 7.14 A residential buyout project in Whitesboro facilitates a strategic relocation of residents to areas that are not flood prone. The houses will be removed, and the area

will be restored to a natural habitat. There are approximately 150 homes involved in this project. A map of the project area and the Drainage study will be added to the CSC application.

PE 7.18 Not applicable to Oneida County

PE 7.15 Not applicable to Oneida County

PE 7.1 Oneida Lake 9e Plan will create or update a watershed assessment to identify flooding and water quality priorities and will be completed in 2025

PE 7.25 Clayville, Boonville, and Bridgewater have already implemented a source water protection program and Kristen is working on another program.

PE 7.23 Operation Ripple Effect through Water Pollution Control and the rain barrel program at OHSWA

PE 7.24 Not applicable for Oneida County

PE 7.22 Oneida County already has a general evacuation plan and warning system, but each municipality should have its own.

PE 8.1 MVCAA had green job training before COVID but Allison will check on the progress to see if they have continued after COVID. Amy will check with Venancio Fuentes at MVCC to see if there are any green jobs-specific programs. He teaches electric.

PE 8.2 Not applicable for Oneida County

PE 8.3 – We can research here to see how many industries in the area are green.

PE 8.6 Flyer is uploaded to help promote local farmers' markets

PE 8.7 Not applicable for Oneida County

PE 8.8 Redevelop a brownfield site – there is one on E. Dominick St. in Rome that Edge should have information on.

PE 8.9 Establish incentives for green industry or businesses to locate in a community

PE 8.11 Not applicable for Oneida County

PE 8.12 Pace financing was completed in 2019.

PE 8 (N/A) Not applicable for Oneida County

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PE 8 (N/A) Community-scale campaigns can be an effective way to encourage the adoption of new, innovative technologies to generate value and savings for consumers while simultaneously advancing New York State's clean energy goals. Oneida County currently has a heat pump campaign open. We are in search of a list of installs within the County.

PE 9.1 Create a climate change education, outreach, and engagement program, focusing on mitigation and adaption

PE 9.2 Create and support an energy reduction campaign or challenge

PE 9.3 Census and Community Resilience Training was a climate-related educational seminar.

PE 9.4 Maintain a website on local climate protection efforts

PE 9.5 Not applicable for Oneida County

PE 10,11 and 12 are not applicable for Oneida County at the moment but will reevaluate after Oneida County has the certification

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

There will be another meeting held sometime in November.