

Minutes of the Putnam County Climate Smart Task Force Meeting January 30, 2026

Call to order: 11:01 a.m.

Attendees:

In Person: Ilona Campo, Barbara Barosa, Gary Redlon, Neal Tomann, Joe Bellucci

Microsoft Teams: Anne Campbell, Jennifer Caruso, Victoria DiLonardo, Savannah Usher, Shanna Siegel

1. **Review: August Meeting Minutes**

- No comments, questions, or concerns

Recap: Introduced the CCARP process; discussed Transit Facility landscaping and solar projects; shared updates on fleet equipment (vector/vacall trucks and electric golf carts); reviewed Southeast's solar regulation hearing; and noted NPR coverage of Hurricane Katrina's 20th anniversary.

2. **Discussion: Climate Smart Activities Updates**

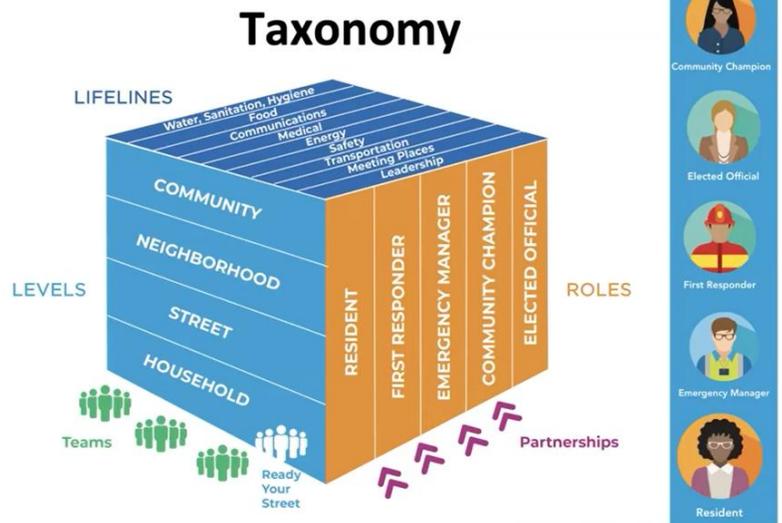
- **Community Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CCARP)** development with HVRC.
 - o The public survey period closed January 5th, generating approximately 142 responses over about a month which was higher than BES's Hazard Mitigation Plan survey, which received 130 responses over six months. HVRC is currently drafting a summary of the findings. Anne will follow up with Sofie to include her responses.
 - o A Partnership Survey has also been distributed to more than 130 agencies across the County to help broaden outreach and awareness of the project. The deadline has been extended indefinitely.
 - o HVRC is finalizing the CSRSP summary report (the Excel tool reviewed during the November workshop), which will assess opportunities to expand resilience planning through additional county-level plans.
 - o Part 1 of the Scenario Planning Workshop for the Working Group will be held February 9 from 2–3 PM in the Planning Department conference room. The workshop will examine four potential climate and county-capacity scenarios and possible response strategies.
- **Solar and EV Charging Station Projects at the Transit Facility:** The solar project design is complete and awaiting bid release. Gary has contacted several EV charging contractors for price quotes, and Joe B. noted the need to circulate specifications soon. Gary added that unresponsive companies are being eliminated from consideration. Barbara shared that MV has a team dedicated to EV charging maintenance and safety and recently presented on charging infrastructure considerations, including the need for additional safety measures (such as containment areas) for larger EV equipment in the event of "thermal incidents". She noted that these factors may influence the final location of the chargers. Gary clarified that the Level 2 chargers being considered are smaller units and differ significantly from those used for larger EV fleets. Barbara added that all New York transit systems, including school buses and the MTA fleet, are mandated to transition to zero-emission vehicles by 2035. Gary also noted that Pawling recently had to replace new 25,000-lb lifts with 40,000-lb lifts due to the weight of electric vehicles, though this is unlikely to affect our facility since our fleet will consist of smaller EVs.
- **Solar Carport at DBS:** Gary has developed a shortlist of companies; however, the carport project will be incorporated into the broader parking lot improvement project. Neal noted new "washdown" requirements requiring separate sewer systems for bus washing areas at both the Transit Facility and DPW.

- **Vector and Vacall Trucks:** The Planning Department’s application to repurpose an EPA Community Grant to purchase four vehicles (two Vector trucks for storm drain vacuuming and two Vacall street sweepers for clearing leaves from stormwater drains) was approved. Joe and Barbara noted that updated quotes and a budget justification will be required, similar to CREST grants. While the funds are secured and the trucks qualify, documentation and performance measures demonstrating water quality improvements must also be submitted. Barbara asked whether Kent currently has vacuum trucks or street sweepers, as they may be included in the shared services agreement with the towns. Anne noted no, but this has been a priority for the Kent Highway Department Superintendent, who would like additional details once the agreement is further developed. Delivery timelines for the equipment are still uncertain.
- **Department Updates:**
 - o **Health:** Shanna reported that Vicki completed the climate and health infographic, which is now available on the Climate Smart website. The department plans to continue working with BES to identify a potential cooling center for the Putnam Lake area, which has a relatively high Climate Vulnerability Index (ranked 4 out of 7), and to evaluate additional locations. They are also developing a scenario involving a prolonged summer power outage affecting Putnam Lake to ensure residents have access to cooling centers and nutrition services. The effort will include assessing the vulnerability of households with residents over age 60 and those with young children. Barbara asked how close the potential locations are to the EI/Pre-K school; Shanna noted that the facility would need to be within the same jurisdiction.
 - o **BES:** Ilona reported that BES has officially partnered with Tetra Tech again to update the HMP. Tetra Tech requires approximately one year to complete the plan update. There is significant crossover between the HMP and the CCARP.
 - o **DPW:** Joe B. reported that several BridgeNY culverts and bridges will be repaired or replaced this spring and summer to improve stormwater infrastructure and right-sizing. Ilona asked that photos of the improvements be taken for potential CSC credit. Neal provided an update on the eminent domain process for the Continental Village dam. The South Lake upper dam is also being decommissioned, and the middle dam will be reconfigured this summer, pending SEQRA review once final plans are received. In Kent, culvert replacements are also underway. Anne noted that while funding has been secured for one culvert, DEC has requested reinforcement of the associated dam, which remains a concern. The town is also pursuing funding for improvements to the Lake Carmel dam and anticipates \$1–\$1.5 million for South Lake dam work. Anne asked Neal to coordinate with the Town Supervisor on renewed public outreach; Neal added that DPW and consultants Barton & Loguidice were invited to present at the February 17th Kent Town Board meeting.
 - o **Transit:** Barbara reported that the County has launched a countywide Transit Study to evaluate route efficiencies and identify system improvements. A final report is expected by June 2026, with several opportunities for public input. Ilona added that the Maybrook Bikeway Bridge #5 project was completed in early November. Barbara also noted that the County’s transportation contract with MV expires in April 2027, which is why the Transit Study is being conducted now, as the County will need to issue an RFP for services and may consider expanding the microtransit program.

3. **Discussion: Recent Webinars/Meeting Takeaways**

- **PCA’s Funding Futures [Webinar](#) – “Prepare Your Community Out of Love, Not Fear”:** This webinar from January 2026 gave an overview of Bainbridge Island off of the coast of Washington connected to the Olympic Peninsula. As a west coast island community, they are very susceptible to flooding and earthquakes. Ilona shared their community preparedness [website](#) developed to promote whole-community engagement, including a “Ready Your Street” program that encourages neighbors to connect and builds a network of walkable community

hubs for use after extreme weather events. Key strategies from their 15-year effort include making preparedness engaging (e.g., summer block parties with short preparedness presentations) and using a framework, illustrated with a “Rubik’s Cube” model (see pic), to outline the social support structures needed during emergencies. The presenter emphasized that residents are often willing to help but may not know how; recommended introductions include free Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training offered by many fire and police departments and designating an outgoing community member to help organize preparedness events.



- **PCAHV Webinar** – “A Look at Climate Across the Hudson Valley”: This webinar from December 2025 highlighted regional climate trends, noting that 2023 was the warmest year on record and that New England is among the fastest-warming regions globally. The presenter emphasized that hydrological impacts—particularly increased precipitation intensity—may be more significant than temperature changes. The region can expect more frequent Nor’easter storms, and events like Tropical Storm Irene (2011) underscored the area’s flood vulnerability. For context, NYC’s drainage system can handle about 1.75 inches of rain per hour, while storms in 2021 produced 3–4 inches per hour. Rail infrastructure along the Hudson, including Metro-North and Amtrak, was cited as particularly vulnerable without further resilience investments. Additional points included approximately 4–5 inches of regional sea level rise since the 1990s, the likelihood of climate-driven migration northward from southern states, infrastructure designed for early 20th-century climate conditions, and declining insurance coverage for coastal properties due to long-term sea level rise risks.
- **HVRC Meeting w/ ARC Copenhill – Denmark’s Waste to Energy Facility**: This webinar from November 2025 highlighted Copenhagen’s innovative waste-to-energy plant, opened in 2019, which operates similarly to the [Wheelabrator Dutchess facility](#). While the plant is not open to the public for safety reasons, it features recreational amenities on its roof, including a ski slope, running trail, and climbing wall. Europe currently has 498 waste-to-energy plants, collectively processing 100 million tons of waste annually. The ARC plant processed 590,000 tons of waste in 2023, generating 283 GWh of electricity—enough to power roughly 94,000 households. Environmental concerns are mitigated by strict EU and Danish regulations: bottom ash is treated by private companies to remove heavy metals, and residual water is scrubbed before release. They also have different municipal waste collection standards. Varying by city, Copenhagen residents are required to separate waste into five bins, with hauling trucks using two compartments, and private companies separately handling metals, organics, paper, and cardboard that comes into the same waste stream.
- **NYS MOSS November Meeting – EV Chargers**: November’s Meeting of Sustainability Staff focused on municipal experiences with EV charger installation and featured a presentation by NYPA on their [EVolve NY](#) statewide fast-charging network program. NYPA aims to install 400 DC fast chargers statewide in 2026, prioritizing “charging deserts” with limited private investment. Chargers are competitively priced with no session or idle fees, they accept credit cards, and include 24/7 support. NYPA funds construction and maintenance, handles

permitting, collects revenue, and pays site owners an annual fee; site hosts primarily benefit from increased traffic. NYPA owns the equipment, making this ideal for communities lacking capacity to maintain chargers. Communities can submit site addresses to be scored and waitlisted; sites must offer 24/7 public access and sufficient utility capacity. Barbara and Gary noted that park-and-ride lots and other county properties could be suitable locations. NYPA prioritizes commercial areas and sites near thruways and interstates. Niagara County also presented on its first public EV charger, noting that rural residents face longer travel distances, higher transportation costs, and fewer alternatives, requiring different planning approaches. In contrast, Westchester County has a larger EV fleet with 140 Level 2 chargers for fleet operations, with grid capacity as their main constraint. Westchester also offers municipal grant programs; the City of Yonkers leveraged a shared grant through this program. Barbara noted that Putnam attempted a similar shared grant initiative, but it did not pass the Legislature. Ilona offered to contact meeting participants for insights if needed, and Gary mentioned that Westchester uses ChargePoint as their installer, which Putnam hopes to leverage for future projects. Anne asked if the County had heard of [PlugIn Stations Online \(PISO\)](#); Ilona confirmed they have not yet, as quotes are still in progress. Anne noted that Kent recently installed municipal chargers, a Level 2 at the Library and a Level 3 at the Police Department, using PISO via the NYSERDA bid list and grant funding; PISO works with ChargePoint as the installer. They County's current challenges involve Purchasing and bid process requirements. Barbara asked if Kent has EV vehicles; Anne replied the Police Department is expected to receive a support EV, while the Library charger is for public use. Anne expressed interest in NYPA's EVolve program, and Ilona will provide contact information. Kent is also exploring solar panels on the Highway garage roof with nonprofit Municipal Solar Partners. Public chargers along NY Rte. 311 could attract residents and visitors. Barbara recalled prior efforts to locate chargers near I-84, including the Park and Ride on Rte. 311, which was not funded due to limited nearby amenities. Gary suggested the Southeast Park and Ride near Kohl's may be a better site. Ilona concluded that the County will share its best practices with Kent and the other towns once more details are available.

- **NY MOSS January Meeting – Building Electrification/Upgrades:** January's meeting focused on building electrification, heat pumps, and district heating. Tompkins County highlighted its installation of geothermal systems at DPW garages and offices using 50 wells, resulting in heated floors in three of five garages and replacement of boilers and RTUs. They leveraged the 48c Clean Energy Tax Credit, covering 30% of the \$6.8 million project (reducing cost to \$5.1 million), and also installed instant hot water heaters for vehicle cleaning. While energy bills increased by 173.5%, carbon emissions were reduced by 187 metric tons of CO₂.

4. Discussion: Other Business / Comments

- Sustainable Putnam's upcoming [events](#):
 - o Green Drinks: Feb. 5th 5:30-7:30pm @ Thai Golden (Carmel)
 - o Brainstorming Session on Feb. 28th 10:30-12pm @ Mahopac Public Library
- Putnam Valley has a new Climate Smart Coordinator: Allison Hogue who is also on Sustainable Putnam's Board. Their goal is to get Bronze CSC certification.
- Upcoming NYS Climate Connections Summit: Hosted by NYSDEC's Office of Climate Change, June 10-11 in Utica, NY.
- Frequency of CSTF meetings: the Task Force came to the consensus to continue the meetings on a quarterly basis.

Next meeting: Spring 2026

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.