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**Town of New
Castle**

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Agenda

**New Castle Climate and Environment Commission Virtual Commission Meeting
Thursday, January 20, 2022, 6:00 PM**

Due to concerns related to COVID-19, this meeting will be open to the public as a virtual meeting only.

[To join by computer, smart phone or tablet click HERE](#)

If you prefer to telephone in:

Please call: 1-346-248-7799

Meeting ID: 709 658 8400

Follow the prompts as directed. Be sure to set your phone to mute until called on.

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Meeting Notice

Conflicts of Interest

Citizen Comments on Items NOT on the Agenda

-Comments are limited to three minutes-

Agenda Changes

Items for Consideration

- [A.](#) Review Climate and Environment Plan for 2022**
- B. Discussion: Possible Activities for Earth Day on April 22, 2022**
- C. Discussion and Possible Motion to Change Regular Meeting Time**
- D. Update: Volunteers Wanting to Participate in CEC Projects**
- E. Consider Items for the February 17, 2022 meeting**

Commission Comments

Adjourn

Climate and Environment Commission Plan for Future Actions

History of the Climate Action Plan

On April 3, 2007, Mayor Frank Breslin signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as the Town Council fully committed to developing and implementing strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Action Advisory Commission, later named the Climate and Environment Commission (CEC), was created to help the town pursue the goals of this agreement. The goals included inventorying greenhouse gas emissions in city operations; adopting land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space; promote greener transportation options, such as bicycle trails and incentives for public transit or carpooling; making energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, upgrades to water and wastewater treatment facilities, and purchases of vehicles and equipment; promoting tree planting for shading and carbon dioxide absorption; educating the public, schools, businesses, and the community about reducing greenhouse gasses.

Over the next thirteen years, the town made strides in addressing these goals, by installing roof-top solar on municipal buildings, installing electric vehicle charging stations, adopting efficient building codes, planting trees, gaining efficiencies at wastewater and water treatment facilities, and more. In 2020, the CEC decided to update and build upon these goals, **and the work continues.**

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT GOALS

1. Advise the council and educate the community about environmental issues, **including** climate change and its effects.
2. Provide guidance on individual and community activities that serve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment.
3. Advise and assist the town and community in transitioning to a more renewable and energy efficient future.
4. Advise the town in planning for and mitigating climate change impacts.

FOUR KEY STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

1. Leading by example. Municipal government will continue to make its buildings and operations a model of energy efficiency and renewable energy while reducing energy costs.
2. Strengthening communication and education efforts of the CEC. The CEC should provide accurate and helpful information regarding climate change and environmental protection to stakeholders.
3. Networking with local and regional partners to provide incentives for wiser energy use, to increase local renewable energy supplies, and **to encourage public awareness of likely impacts of a warming world.**
4. Collaborating to acquire funding. The CEC and the Town Council will collaborate to seek funding to carry out environmental protection and climate mitigation goals.

MEASURABLE ACTION STEPS TO MEET THE LONG-TERM GOALS

1. **Providing educational programs and outreach [Bruce?, Michael?, Denise]**

- a. Create and implement educational programs for the public

Measurement of progress: development of an educational program about climate change and environmental protection that can be shared with community groups

Measurement of progress: development of an Earth Day activity

- b. Serve as a resource for individuals seeking more information about the topics of climate change, environmental protection, energy conservation.

Measurement of progress: additions to the CEC website, information provided to residents in the monthly town newsletter and weekly on-line newsletter.

- c. **Providing educational materials during the parade and community activities.**

Measurement of progress: distributing age-appropriate materials to children about wildfires from the USFS and other government sources, distributing information to adults about wildfires, solar energy, pollinator gardens and other topics related to the CEC goals.

2. Creating opportunities for individual and collective action [Tom, Emily?, Michael?]

- a. Explore opportunities for planting of appropriate tree and vegetation species, with guidance on use of water-saving mulches and soil amendments

Measurement of progress: Providing list of native trees and vegetation, as well soil amendments, irrigation techniques, and proper planting procedures to reduce water consumption

Measurement of progress: Encouraging and helping the town plant trees/vegetation

Measurement of progress: Networking with the Garden Club and other organizations

Measurement of progress: Plant pollinator gardens and create educational signs

- b. **Explore opportunities for composting and encourage effective recycling.**

Measurement of progress: establishing partnerships with local or regional organizations to increase composting and reduce waste

Measurement of progress: distributing educational materials about the environmental and community benefits of composting and effective recycling

3. Transitioning to a more renewable and energy efficient future [Denise/Jean]

- a. Encouraging energy efficiency activities and audits by homeowners

Measurement of progress: Encourage homeowners to have an energy audit and inform homeowners of free or low-cost energy audits

Measurement of progress: Connect and coordinate with regional partners such as GCE, CLEER, CORE and inform the public through various communication avenues **about cost-effective ways to reduce energy use**

- b. Encouraging energy efficiency audits by businesses

Measurement of progress: Encourage business owners to have an energy audit and inform business owners of access to free or low-cost energy audits, incentives, and rebates

Measurement of progress: Connect and coordinate with regional partners such as GCE, CLEER, CORE regarding effective ways to work with local businesses

c. Communicating with stakeholders regarding incentives for renewable energy, addition of insulations, storm windows, electric vehicles, **residential** solar panels, lighting, air conditioners, and other ways to save costs

Measurement of progress: Communicate information in town newsletter, website, and other appropriate media

Measurement of progress: work with GCE to promote the Solarwise program

4. Planning for and mitigating climate change and environmental impacts [Myrna, Jean, Michael]

a. Understanding the increased risk of wildfires and how to mitigate and respond

Measurement of progress: Meet with appropriate town and fire officials to learn how to prepare and to improve fire-mitigation/prevention around homes and businesses

Measurement of progress: Communicate and offer guidance to residents. Consult with fire officials on how to best provide information to the community regarding fire dangers and how to minimize fire risk. Offer at least one outreach and educational program.

Measurement of progress: review programs underway in other communities, including the Clearance Evacuation Time planning and other similar measures, to ensure a safe and timely evacuation

b. Understanding the increased risk of drought and how to mitigate and respond

Measurement of progress: Meet with appropriate town officials and water conservationists to learn about how to prepare and minimize water usage among the public and the town

Measurement of progress: Understand how the town obtains water and the risk of water insufficiency as part of the development of the town, review water conservation planning considering climate change.

Measurement of progress: Communicate and offer guidance for residents.

c. Fine-tune use of water and other environmental resources by town and community

Measurement of progress: Communicate with residents regarding most effective and efficient watering strategies through the CEC website and other communication avenues, including building permits

Measurement of progress: Work with the town in monitoring irrigation in parks and other spaces