

New York Citizens Advisory Committee (NYCAC) on Lake Champlain Management

**Monday, January 30th, 2023
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY

Committee Members Present: Walt Lender (Chair), James C. Dawson, Steve Kramer, Ricky Laurin, Tom Metz, Vic Putnam, Fred Woodward, Charlotte Staats

Committee Members Absent: Jackie Bowen, Jane Gregware

LCBP Staff: Katie Darr, Sue Hagar, Lauren Jenness, Meg Modley, Erin Vennie-Vollrath (NYS DEC)

Presenters: Carlie Leary (ANCA)

Public Guests: Laura Klaiber, Colin Powers

Meeting summary by Katie Darr, Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)

1. Welcome and Introductions – Walt Lender

Walt welcomed attendees. Walt shared he has accepted a new position as the Vice President of Development and Government Relations at Silver Bay YMCA.

2. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

3. Climate Smart Communities – Carlie Leary (ANCA)

Carlie Leary, the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator for the North Country, provided an overview of the [New York State Climate Smart Communities Program](#). Her presentation is available with the meeting materials ([here](#)).

Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is a free, voluntary program targeted at counties and municipalities that helps local governments with climate action by providing information on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build community resilience and grants for climate-related projects. The program is flexible and can be adapted to local circumstances. The program is a way to help communities, particularly smaller communities with limited staff capacity, figure out how to take climate action. Resources include a categorized list of climate actions, priority actions, online certification reports, examples to guide and inspire communities. Assistance from CSC Coordinators includes guidance on forming a CSC task force, support for accessing the CSC portal and organizing documentation, and access to a statewide network to share best practices and expertise. The CSC Grants are competitive and require a 50/50 match, they cover both planning and implementation, and include greenhouse gas mitigation and climate adaptation. Education and outreach is a required component for many of the CSC actions or provides bonus points. Most projects are done in conjunction with another partner (master gardener program, LCBP, etc.).

- Jess asked if the actions are equally weighted. Carlie clarified they are not equally weighted and some actions have a range of points available. For example the points for

lighting upgrades vary depending on the percentage of municipally-owned buildings that replace their lighting.

- Vic asked if the grant funding for planning and implementation also includes design. Carlie confirmed that the grants can be used for design.
- Walt asked if an outside grant could be considered local match. Carlie noted the timing of using the grants as match can be tricky due to the DEC deadlines.
- Vic asked if the State has a budget within the program to cover updates for State lands, for example boat launches that require stormwater retention basins. Carlie clarified that the CSC Program is focused on municipalities and does not include anything the municipality doesn't own.
- Jim asked if an HOA within a municipality can apply for the program or undertake actions that would contribute to a municipality's certification. Carlie noted that the HOA can encourage work be done within the municipality, but the municipality cannot claim credit for actions completed on private lands.
- Katie asked if being a registered or certified community provides any bonus points for other NYS grant programs. Carlie was not sure.
- Walt asked how long it typically takes to go from being interested to registered to certified. Carlie shared that the registration timeline depends on the town, village, or city board. They just need to sign the resolution to indicate their interest. The pledge does not hold the municipality to any further action on a particular time scale.
- Tom asked how this program relates to LEED certification for buildings. Carlie noted that one of the actions within CSC gives points for having LEED certified buildings. Where possible, the CSC program credits municipalities for having certifications like that.
- Charlotte asked if there is a way for private businesses and nonprofits who would like to see their communities get certified to be part of the process. Carlie shared that there is a community-wide greenhouse gas inventory, a municipality's climate action plan might include desired actions and outcomes for private buildings, but the municipality can't take credit for things done in a privately owned building. Municipalities can get credit if they are able to demonstrate that they played a major role in making a particular action happen, even if they are not the main lead.
- Fred asked how Carlie is reaching out to communities so they know the program exists. Carlie has conducted a range of outreach for the program. Sometimes it looks like cold calling/emailing town supervisors or mayors, other times communities who have engaged with other programs like the Clean Energy Communities program reach out themselves, and some community members reach out themselves because they are concerned about climate change. ANCA is working to reach communities with limited staffing capacities as best they can to provide awareness of the program, resources, and support. Walt noted the NYCAC can play a role in getting the word out about the program. Carlie shared that if you are doing work with a community that is doing work related to climate and flood

mitigation, they can get credit for previous work (within a reasonable timeframe) which can be a good entry point for many communities.

4. ACTION ITEM: Review and vote on Draft December 5th NYCAC Meeting Summary

- Vic submitted a written correction in advance of the meeting.
- Motion to approve meeting summary by: Ricky Laurin
- Seconded by: Vic Putman
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

5. NYCAC Planning and Governance – Walt Lender, Katie Darr, Erin Vennie-Vollrath

Katie reviewed the NYCAC's 2022 accomplishments and outlined some goals for 2023, the presentation is available with the meeting materials (here). Members discussed 2023 goals.

Jim asked if the IJC is doing any more work that will require CAC feedback. Katie shared that the IJC study is complete and has submitted their [recommendations to the US and Canadian Governments](#).

Walt shared that public outreach and engagement should be a focus of the NYCAC. At the LCBP Steering Committee meeting, it was shared that there was a lack of grant applications from the NY portion of the basin. The NYCAC should ensure groups are aware of these funding streams. Fred agreed it is important to get information out to others beyond the committee. The NYCAC can play a role in bringing information to and from the various groups and communities the committee members are connected to.

Colin noted that the timing of the LCBP grants was tricky for the Boquet River Association and suggested opening grants on a revolving basis or having a second period of grant applications during the year.

Sue shared that LCBP is having a World Water Day celebration on March 18th from 11am-3pm at the Champlain Centre Mall in Plattsburgh. Over 17 partners will be present, including Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Miner Institute, and others. This might be a good way to get the NYCAC's name out there. Katie will be present and plans to split time between the NYCAC and Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Network. Members asked if the CAC's outreach materials could be ready by that event.

Ricky noted that Meg and Erin have both presented to the Lions Club, there are many different clubs and groups to connect with who may have an environmental interest.

Jim proposed hosting a conference or in-person forum in 2024 with a couple of significant speakers held in a central location. Katie suggested partnering with LCBP or others on a speaker series, like "Love the Lake" since the CAC does not have a budget.

Erin suggested having speakers help develop a synopsis of what they'd like to share so the NYCAC can reach out to communities with consistent messaging and reduce the load on the NYCAC to develop the messaging.

Meg suggested following the Champlain Valley Hudson Express work. Monitoring for round goby in the Champlain and Richelieu Canals continues. Vic agreed it would be good to get a presentation about the Champlain Valley Hudson Express and what types of projects they're looking to fund.

Walt shared that the Lake George Watershed Action Plan has been finalized and the mandatory septic inspection program will be underway, the CAC may want follow up presentations on those items.

Erin shared that NYSDEC is releasing the Lake Champlain Watershed Implementation Plan soon and will be open for public comment. Walt requested a highlight/summary memo about the plan.

Vic shared that BRASS has been trying to get involved with the Whallonsburg Grange which can seat about 100 people. They are seeking programs (though do not accept federal funds).

Approval of Outreach Materials

Rack Card

Members supported tweaking the language at the bottom of the rack card to invite people to participate and learn more about the committee.

- **Motion to accept the rack card by:** Fred Woodward moved to accept the rack card.
- **Seconded by:** Charlotte Staats.
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** None

Focus 2023 Document

Members were supportive of adding language directing people to the website if they are interested in being a member or attending a meeting.

- **Motion to accept the Focus 2023 Document by:** Vic Putman.
- **Seconded by:** Charlotte Staats.
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** None

6. Updates

NYSDEC

Erin will share when the Lake Champlain Watershed Implementation Plan is out for review. NYSDEC fisheries staff will be surveying anglers at King's Bay, Willsboro Bay Boat Launch, Bulwagga Bay Campground, and South Bay Boat Launch for the [creel survey](#). DEC has a grant out for eligible dam repairs on high hazard dams due on February 10th. DEC issued a final [Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations \(CAFO\) permit](#) effective January 23rd.

LCBP

LCBP is hiring for 2023 season Boat Launch Stewards and is in need of stewards on the Northern NY portion of Lake Champlain- Chazy Landing, Point Au Roche Boat Launch, Point Au Roche State Park, and Wilcox Dock.

The State of the Lake Fisheries meeting will be held on Saturday March 25th from 9am – 5pm in Hudson Hall at SUNY Plattsburgh, Meg will share more information as it becomes available.

Miner Institute

On April 8th, Miner is hosting a Science Saturday with SUNY Plattsburgh. The event is open to the general public and is targeted towards high school students. Steve plans to run some field experience labs in May.

Other

Charlotte Staats was featured in the Adirondack Explorer, Katie will include the article with the meeting follow up materials.

7. Meeting Wrap-up Discussion

The NYCAC meets next on **Monday, March 6th from 1 – 3:30pm via Zoom.**