

**Energy & Environment Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**DATE & TIME:** November 1, 2021; 6:15 PM or immediately following the Public Health & Social Services Committee

**LOCATION:** Powered by Zoom Meeting Dialing in by (646) 558-8656, Meeting ID: 859 4320 9517

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene

**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn A. Tantillo, Laurie Lichtenstein

**PRESENT:** Legislators Albert Bruno (left at 7:00), Peter Criswell, Laura Petit and Mary Wawro

**ABSENT:** None

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislator Eve Walter; Legislative Counsel Victor Cueva; Nick Hvozda, Department of the Environment; David Haldeman, UC EMC; Tim Degraff, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA); Patricia Doxsey, Kingston Freeman.

Chairwoman Greene called the meeting to order at approximately 6:45 PM and to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Motion No. 1:** To approve the minutes of October 4, 2021

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Criswell

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Wawro

**Discussion:** None

**Voting in Favor:** Legislators Greene, Bruno, Criswell, Petit and Wawro

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 5

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** Minutes approved.

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**Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA)** – Mr. DeGraff gave an update on the UCRRA. The agency sent direct mail to Town of Ulster residents to explain their composting operation and share contact information with them. They are conducting surveys with local transfer station to check the feasibility of local organics diversion projects. Mr. DeGraff explained that the agency is beginning preliminary work looking at soils and aquifers throughout Ulster County in anticipation of a feasibility study for potential landfill or other diversion projects. The agency has a grant they will use to develop informational TV ad and a virtual tour of the facilities and program they offer. (See transcript for complete details.)

**Environmental Management Council (EMC)** – Mr. Haldeman reported the Danskammer and Astoria applications were denied by NYSDEC. The committee had a brief discussion regarding NYS Clean Energy goals and how Ulster County can help achieve these goals locally. (See transcript for complete details)

**Resolution No. 515** - Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Enter Into An Agreement With The New York Energy Research And Development Authority (NYSERDA) For Acceptance Of A Clean Energy Communities Leadership Round Action Grant

**Resolution Summary:** Resolution authorizes the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to sign an agreement with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, and any amendments thereto, for use of the awarded Clean Energy Communities grant funding and authorizes the Director of the Ulster County Department of the Environment to submit an online application for the use of the awarded Clean Energy Communities grant funding,

**Motion No. 5:** Motion to approve Res. No. 515  
**Motion Made By:** Legislator Criswell  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Petit

**Discussion:** (See Transcript)

**Voting in Favor :** Legislators Greene, Criswell, Petit and Wawro  
**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Resolution approved**

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**Resolution No. 516** - Establishing Capital Project No. 611 – Development Court Lighting Retrofit -- Department Of Public Works (Buildings & Grounds)

**Resolution Summary:** Establishes Capital Project No. 611 for the Development Court Lighting Retrofit and amends the 2021 Ulster County Capital Fund budget

Chairwoman Greene gave an update on the Zero Waste Implementation Planning.

**Motion No. 5:** Motion to approve Res. No. 516  
**Motion Made By:** Legislator Wawro  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Criswell

**Discussion:** (See Transcript)

**Voting in Favor :** Legislators Greene, Criswell, Petit and Wawro  
**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Resolution approved**

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Chairwoman Greene opened a discussion on two draft resolutions:

**Resolutions under discussion:**

**☐ Establishing A Policy Requiring That A Climate Impact Assessment Be Performed Prior To The Commencement Of Development Projects Funded By The American Rescue Plan Act.**

Chairwoman Greene has been researching a model tool to evaluate projects that will be simple to use. The committee discussed asking how each project could simply state how it will have a positive impact on reducing climate emissions or providing clean energy to move toward reaching NYS Clean Energy Goals. (See transcript for complete discussion)

**☐ Establishing A Policy Prohibiting The Installation Of Systems That Utilize The Combustion Of Fossil Fuels In All Newly Constructed County Owned Buildings**

Legislator Walter discussed two existing lists of standards the County Executive is using to evaluate projects and suggested it may need to be updated. She asked Mr. Hozoda to send the list to the members to look over.

**Solar Mapping update**

Chairwoman Greene gave an update on Solar Mapping efforts throughout the Hudson Valley using a tool developed by Scenic Hudson. This tool helps municipalities determine good areas for the development of solar, renewables and storage in their boundaries as well as what areas to avoid.

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Chairwoman Greene asked if there was any other business, hearing none;

**Motion to Adjourn**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Criswell  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Petit  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Time:** 7:43 pm

**Respectfully submitted by:** Fawn Tantillo  
**Minutes Approved:** November 29, 2021

**Energy & Environment Committee  
Meeting Transcript**

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**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene

**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn A. Tantillo, Laurie Lichtenstein

**PRESENT:** Legislators Albert Bruno (left at 7:00), Peter Criswell, Laura Petit and Mary Wawro

**ABSENT:** None

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislator Eve Walter; Legislative Counsel Victor Cueva; Nick Hvozda, Department of the Environment; David Haldeman, UC EMC; Tim DeGraff, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA); Patricia Doxsey, Kingston Freeman.

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**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And this is the November 1, 2021 meeting of Energy and Environment Committee. A virtual meeting. And Fawn, would you kindly call the roll?

**Fawn Tantillo**

Manna Jo Greene?

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Present.

**Fawn Tantillo**

Mary Wawro is not with us yet. Al Bruno? And there's Mary coming in now. Peter Criswell?

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Here.

**Fawn Tantillo**

Laura Petit?

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Here.

**Fawn Tantillo**

And Mary Wawro is here. Okay, so I think we're just waiting for Al. So he may just take a minute between meetings to get here.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay. I think we'll go ahead and do the Pledge of Allegiance. And maybe by then he will be there. So, okay. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**Fawn Tantillo**

And for the record, Al Bruno has joined us now.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay, very good. I would like to ask for a motion regarding the approval of the minutes and transcripts from our last meeting on October 4th.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I'll make that motion.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

I'll second. Any discussion? All in favor, please signify by raising your hand and are saying aye.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Aye.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Opposed? The motion carries, and the minutes from the October meeting are approved. And at this point, I'd like to welcome Timothy DeGraff. Tim, would you kindly give us an update on UCRRA and what's new there, and in particular, maybe a focus on, this is budget season. And I believe everyone's had a chance to look at, at the budget but I don't know if there are key points you might want to make. So, this point, turn it over to Tim.

**Timothy DeGraff**

Yeah, um, I have a couple of updates outside of the budget before I get into it. I did spend a lot of time at the September meeting, speaking about the budget, so there's also that audio that you can also go back and listen to. Our home composting demo site is progressing well, and we hope to have that ready to go for the spring. The interior of the compost bagger and Education Building Construction is about to begin. We received quotes and we did POs for purchasing materials to get that going. Um, we see what I've seen in your board packet. Um, Angie and Melinda put together new dual stream recycling brochures and those went out in both English and Spanish. We did a, in an effort to educate the local community in the town of Ulster, we put together some Every Door Direct mailings, just educating the, you know, the local residents with regards to our compost operation and what it is and what we do there rather than what they might see or even, you know, what they hear. It was also the opportunity to give them contact information for us if they ever have any questions or concerns. We also sent out surveys to several of the towns to be handed out at the town transfer stations to residents to see if there's any interest in doing composting at their local transfer stations. Not necessarily composting, but at least organics diversion at the transfer stations just so we could gauge some

interest. Um, we also submitted our 2022 MWRR grant and some, there were some new items on that we're hoping to get into. Some television advertising. We're looking to put together actually a virtual tour. That's something we obviously, we wish we could have had during COVID, but it will still be helpful because we'll be able to direct people to that, if they, you know, they can't make it on site. Obviously, it's easy, much easier and accessible. And myself and some of the staff have gotten together and have had a couple of kickoff meetings. But we also have plans to try and launch our own podcast. We're going to be appearing on another one. I'll forward along the name of it when it happens, but this individual is from Silver Hollow Audio, and they had done some work for us about five or six years ago. So as part of that grant, we would be purchasing equipment and getting the ball rolling on that. I'd also like to mention that I was at a STEM, STEM event over in Dutchess County at the Rhinebeck High School. I took my kids over there, and there was a composting table there. One of the people who was there, two of the individuals at the table were from the local Climate Smart Community group. One of them was a Village Trustee in Rhinebeck. And we just got, you know, chatting about everything with regards to, you know, the recycling industry and organics diversion and all that stuff. And it's always nice, because it seems whenever I speak to somebody outside the agency, especially over in Dutchess County, they're, they're quite envious of Ulster County and what we do, and you know, she pointed out, I would say the lack of support that they get over in Dutchess. They wish they could do, you know, what we do, and she also specifically spoke about the agency as well. Um, I know that they have, they're trying to get some local composting programs done over there as well. They're working with the woman who runs the ozone, Amelia, who actually brings some of her food waste to us. It's a very small amount because they actually do composting on-site with Greig's Farm there, but it's still nice to be interacting with other people who are so involved in the same types of activities and programs as well. It's always nice to hear good words from them. Um, so as far as the budget goes, I just want to let everybody know, because every time I see an article in the paper about our budget, it kind of drives me nuts that it's referenced as a spending plan. That is what budgets are, but we don't do municipal budgeting or proprietary funds. It's not a spending plan. Budgets, as you would know, I'd say for even Ulster County, this is what we would want to do. This is what we plan to do. The agency's budget is much more of a forecast or projection, which is, you know, projections are based on averages. It's what we're, by definition, it's what we're forecasting what we think is going to happen. So, when I do that, you know, everything is based off of our cost driver and our revenue driver, which is volume. And I take, you know, three, three and a half, four years' worth of averages to come up with that, and that flows through the rest of the budget. So, as I'm doing that, I can't predict, you know, for example, COVID last year. You know, construction and demolition volume was, was high. I couldn't have predicted a pandemic. So, what has happened over the last several years is that our numbers have been coming in over budget, and so that ends up turning into surpluses. Our surpluses end up going into reserves. So, the plan over the next four years because that service is coming off the book, as I explained in my budgetary summary as well, is I was using those reserves, which is essentially prior year surpluses, to offset any, any increases that we didn't need. And that's, that's the easiest way to explain the bottom line. I don't know if anyone has any questions. Our budget was formally approved because it has to be. It has to be submitted by November 1 to the Authorities Budget Office, so it was already approved at the agency. Any questions?

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Is the budget also on your website?

**Timothy DeGraff**

Yes, it has. It has to be posted. Yes.

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Okay. I couldn't find it on... Probably looking at the wrong page. Would it be on your homepage?

**Timothy DeGraff**

About us, and then Authorities Budget Office. Scroll down to the bottom where the financial reports are.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

I'd like to particularly, if he's still here, ask Legislator Bruno if he has any questions because I believe he said he has to leave.

**Legislator Albert Bruno**

Not off the top of my head. Sorry.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay. Anyone else? Any questions on the budget or anything else that, to bring to order?

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Um, we did just get a, and I wasn't involved with that at all, a resolution that went through the channel of Esopus, about not citing a landfill here. And, you know, according to newspaper articles, that information is not being provided. Has the list been reduced at all for like the top five or 10 sites, or are you any closer to starting?

**Timothy DeGraff**

Oh, no, the problem with that entire situation is once again, it was misreporting by the Daily Freeman as it always is. At no point in time did we ever say this is mapping work. We were not looking for a potential landfill site yet. This is the same story I've been telling the entire time. We are doing GIS mapping work so that we can eliminate potential areas, that way we will see, when we actually do a feasibility study, if there is some place to look for. But the Daily Freeman reporter, you know, puts it out there like we're looking for sites, and now in turn, I've got all the towns, you know, passing these resolutions saying you're not putting it here. We're not there yet. We're not, we're not even close to it yet.

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Thank you. I'm sorry. Is that the work you're doing with HydroQuest?

**Timothy DeGraff**

Yes. Yep.

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Okay.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

I just want to say, you know, this is my own perspective, but, um, it gives me a lot of confidence that you are working with HydroQuest on that process. They have been doing work in this region for a long time and have a really solid reputation, so I just want to make note of that. Okay.

**Timothy DeGraff**

Yeah, it's a very, it's a very, very technical start, so I'm probably going to have to have a Webster's Dictionary next week when I read the report, so.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

I'm actually, on our agenda a little later this evening, we're working with municipalities to do a similar process to evaluate potential areas for solar development, using a very good tool that Scenic Hudson developed, but we'll get to that. Let's see. Anything else on the UCCRA, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency? Okay. And, Nick, I'm glad to see that you're able to join us tonight, because there may be some questions on the resolutions. Environmental Management update is, I think I saw Dave Haldeman. One is here.

**Fawn Tantillo**

He's here.

**Dave Haldeman**

I am here.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Good. Okay. Dave, is there anything you would like to report back?

**Dave Haldeman**

Just, just really quickly, you may already all be aware of this. But just before our last meeting last week, we realized that we got a notice that Danskammer and Astoria, these old power plants that were going to be converted to natural gas, that the Department of the Environment has suspended the, the ability of them to move forward at this time because that was not in, in conjunction with the new state laws with regard to moving away from fossil fuels. So basically, those two projects have essentially ended at this point, I believe.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Yeah, that is on the agenda under new business. But since you brought it up, let's wrap it up, you know, and say that, I'll be a little specific, it was the denial of their Title V air permits, on the basis that it was inconsistent. There were other issues, but the primary reason was that it was inconsistent with the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, the Climate Act. And it's, I think, a very important precedent. And the reason I included it in the agenda, you know, there are a lot of environmental issues, and unless there's a specific reason that this committee has to deal with, we don't discuss all of them. But in this case, I think the fact that we're not going to be building new fossil fuel-generating facilities, I can't tell whether this would cover pipelines or extension of existing



distribution, vast distribution, infrastructure. But it's clear that this is a precedent for electric generation using fossil fuel in New York, in a way that is as significant as the banning of fracking was in New York, and maybe in some ways, even more so. And what this says is that we really have to gear up putting renewable energy infrastructure in place with storage and efficiency. And I just want to make, I can't emphasize that enough. I know I talk about it. This decision really indicates that New York is serious about moving away from fossil fuel. And so, if we're going to do that, not be building new facilities and wanting to retire, the older, dirty facilities. And especially with Indian Point closed, we really have to very rapidly put that renewable energy infrastructure in place. And yes, it's true that the New York Independent System Operator, New York ISO, has determined that we don't need Danskammer and Astoria. That there is enough energy on the grid. That picture is going to be changing as we gear up electric vehicles, and electric heating and cooling systems, so called beneficial electrification. So, I just want to emphasize that, take a minute or two for any additional comments, but that's why I put it on the agenda. And I appreciate Dave calling that to our attention. Any questions or comments?

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I just, I had a quick question. So, are they going to go away without a fight?

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

That's a good question. But there's a lot of indication that they may not appeal it, and also a lot of evidence that they would likely not win an appeal. I assure they're debating that right now, and I believe they have 30 days. And the alternative would be to file an Article 78, and the lawyers that I've talked to, Victor, I don't know if you have any sense of this, I don't want to put you on the spot at all, but that this decision is pretty unchallengeable in terms of a successful challenge. And irrevocable, so.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

And then, as a follow up question, is there anything that they can do to sort of come on board renewable?

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Yes.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

And like kind of, kind of steer them away and, and guide them to something that's a, you know, more sustainable kind of energy resources.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

So lately, while the proceedings were still ongoing, Scenic Hudson developed an alternative proposal, which was primarily a battery storage facility, because all of the, the infrastructure one would need is already there. You know, the high voltage lines, the distribution lines, the, you know, various other electrical equipment make it a potentially ideal site. And if you'll remember, in the Town of Ulster, the community essentially defeated a peaker plant proposal, but instead, a much, there was a battery storage facility with the peaker plant. Peaker plant went away, and a much larger, valuable battery storage facility is being put into place. It may already, it's been a while, I don't know how far along that construction is. But that is an example right here in Ulster County. What the company, what

Danskammer decides to do, I don't know, but I'm sure GlidePath, who did the battery storage facility in Town of Ulster, is very much aware of this decision, and, you know, that's one of many, but I think, probably, for what I know right now, a very good suggestion. It may not mean as much revenue for the Towns of Marlboro and Newburgh, and also the school district, Marlboro School District. And I think that, you know, that there are good resources, but this would at least be some tax revenue, taxable project, and I think there are quite a few other possibilities to address the fact that this project is, let's say very likely not to move forward. You know, never say never, who knows, but the people that I know in the industry are all pretty convinced that this is a line in the sand, and there's no going back.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Thank you.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And I think the other important aspect is working with the unions to be sure that the workers that we're hoping for these jobs are, you know, part of the alternative, whatever that may be. And I personally am gonna do some outreach to ensure what's called a just transition. So, all right. Back to the agenda.

**Dave Haldeman**

Hold on a second.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Yeah?

**Dave Haldeman**

If I could continue?

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Oh, yeah.

**Dave Haldeman**

Someone else mentioned, this is just in passing, I don't have absolute data on this, but I read several articles that Bitcoin takes tremendous amounts of energy. And as that continues to develop, in this country, and worldwide, there was, someone mentioned that there was a series of aluminum plants up along the Great Lakes that had their own power generation at one time, and that several of these power plants have been brought back online to supply extra energy specifically for that industry. So that was, that surprised me, but it was, it was interesting. Other things that we just mentioned briefly, in Ellenville, there's going to be a very large warehouse to grow multiple, to grow marijuana. It's on already an existing set of concrete pads where other buildings had been there, so we don't know the environmental impact, but just so you're aware, it's a, it's a very huge warehouse apparently. And there was still some concern about the town of Kingston's Bluestone Project up there, which there seems to be some earth, earthmoving equipment or stuff going on in there without complete go ahead from the town in terms of the project. So, it's just something we're watching, but we have no further information on.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

That I agree with you, I think Bitcoin is the next frontier, you know, as we look at what makes sense in terms of energy, consumption, and reliability.

**Dave Haldeman**

So that's all from me. Thank you.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay, great. Um, at this point, we are up to the resolutions. And the first resolution, No. 515, authorizes the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to enter into an agreement with the New York Energy Research and Development Authority, NYSERDA, for acceptance of Clean Energy Community Leadership Round Action grant, and I'd like to hear a motion for purpose of discussion.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I'll move that for discussion.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Do we have a second?

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Okay.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And at this point, I'd like to ask Nick Hvozda from Department of Environment if he would just summarize this, and see if the committee has any questions.

**Nick Hvozda**

Good evening, everybody. This, this grant was awarded to us as an action grant for completing an action in the, in the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Program. The action that we completed was the execution of a solarized campaign, which we, we met the standards for earlier this year. But the campaign is still ongoing. And it's a \$15,000 grant, and we're planning to use the money for a discreet project around energy efficiency and county buildings, implementing the recommendations of a, actually multiple energy audits that recommend Weatherization Improvements. So the purpose of the resolution is to authorize the acceptance of the grant. And then, the terms and conditions of the contract, which are required for, for submitting an application. I'll stop there for questions.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

I have one question that I found a little confusing when I was reading through. I believe this was the resolution where certain things were highlighted in yellow or gold. And I just wondered what the highlighting was. If that, if you recall, it's, it's not important, but.

**Nick Hvozda**

I don't, I don't recall. Yeah. Not sure if that came, came from us, or somewhere else in the process.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Any other questions? Or comments? Well, hearing none, I want to congratulate the Department of the Environment. Ulster County is really one of the leaders in the Climate Smart Certification and also the Clean Energy Communities High Impact Actions, and it's nice to be rewarded with this incentive. So at this point, I would call the question on, let me just say it correctly, Resolution No. 515, authorizing an agreement with NYSERDA for this clean energy incentive funding. All in favor, please raise your hand or signify by saying aye.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Aye.

**Legislator Mary Wawro**

Aye.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

All, anyone, anyone opposed?

**Fawn Tantillo**

One moment, Madam Chairman, I need to see Legislator Petit for her to. Oh, there we go. I just have to see you when you vote. Thank you.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

All right, okay. No one opposed. Motion passes. And, let's see, we'll move on to the next. And that is Resolution No. 516, establishing capital project number 611, at Development Court, and this is a lighting retrofit. So, let's seek a motion for purposes of discussion.

**Legislator Mary Wawro**

I'll move it.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I'll second it.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Alright, a move by Legislator Petit, I think, and seconded by Legislator.

**Fawn Tantillo**

Legislator Wawro moved it, and Legislator Criswell seconded it.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And seconded by Legislator Criswell. And again, I would like to prevail upon Nick to please summarize this. I did read through it but I think you're more familiar in terms of summarizing it for the committee, if you would.

**Nick Hvozda**

The Social Services Building and Development Board is one of the last facilities in the county that has not been changed from fluorescent lighting to LED lighting the need to do so was, was written into our Climate Action Plan in 2019. And this capital project was, was included in the 2020, starting in 2020, into the, the capital plan. So, we've, we've gone through the steps of hiring a, we're starting to hire a design engineer, who will be Fellenze,r Engineering, to take a close look at the facility and give us the best options for, for upgrading both the lighting, the lamps, potentially, the fixtures, and the lighting controls as well to ensure that it's, it's meeting energy code requirements at the state level.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Any discussion? If not, I will call the question on the lighting retrofits, as specified in Resolution No. 516. All in favor, please signify by raising your hand under saying aye.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Aye.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And does anyone oppose? Motion is carried. And is Legislator Petit live? Okay, thank you. Um, in terms of new business, I think we covered Danskammer quite thoroughly. In terms of old business, we still have two resolutions that we have not yet acted on. And have not yet been assigned a number. But if you'll recall, there was a resolution to establish a policy requiring that a climate impact assessment be performed prior to the commencement of the development of, of development projects funded by the American Rescue Plan Act. I have spent a little bit of time trying to find a model tool to do that evaluation that would be relatively simple to use. I have not done an exhaustive search. But I am more inclined at this point to just ask if each project could simply state whether the proposers of the project believe that it would, in the net, have a positive impact on reducing life climate emissions or, you know, generating clean renewable energy. In other words, the New York State Climate Act goals. Would it be positive, favorable that is, to supporting those goals? Would it be contradictory or negative or essentially exacerbating the climate crisis? Or would it have no net effect, positive or negative? But, you know, I'm not ready to modify the resolution, but I am still hoping that there is a way. So I just want to remind folks that that's kind of on the back burner right now. And for the other resolution, I see that Legislator Walter, who sponsored the resolution, establishing a policy prohibiting the installation of systems that utilize combustion of fossil fuels to all newly constructed county-owned buildings. And I wonder if Legislator Walter would like to speak to that.

**Legislator Walter**

Thanks. Um, yeah. So, you know, when this was written, as well as the one, the previous one, afterwards, Evelyn Wright had held a meeting with a few of us to talk about these. And the, what I got from it was Evelyn shared the, some of the existing expectations for any kind of new build or, or updates of, of heating and cooling systems that we have in the county. So, we actually have a pretty good set of standards that exist right now. So, if we, I think it'd be really for this group to look at that existing list that covers these items to identify if you felt that there should be, you know, whether we need to up the game a little bit, but I was really happy to see that that list did exist. I was also happy to see that there is an Environmental Consideration Checklist, which I'm not sure if you all have had, you

know, have put that into practice yet. But it allows you to make a pretty thorough assessment of every capital project that we're doing with ARP, or otherwise. And if you haven't seen those two documents, or it's been a long time, let me know, and I'll be happy to send them over to you. The main impetus that came that started this was this idea that, you know, a boiler we buy now is going to be a 15, 20 year, it's still going to be with us, you know, there are a lot of items that are going to be with us for 10, 20 years, and New York State has some, you know, has some pretty tight deadlines on when we have to become carbon neutral, where in 20, by 2040, we're supposed to be 80% carbon neutral. That said, I would really love if this group also had a conversation about whether the New York State goal point posts are what we want in Ulster County. So, do we want 80% carbon neutrality in, by 2040, or do we want to shoot for 2030 here? And so or? So, I think that this, you know, I think that's an important conversation for this committee to especially start having is where, what are our goalposts? Do we want to match the state? Or do we want to improve it? Because that would also allow us to really lay down that foundation of what you're, any kind of purchase that would go against those goalposts would be measured up against it. So, we need to kind of have the goalposts more at the front end, so that we know what those are. And then it'll be easier to really assess any kind of expenditures for something that would have a 5, 10, 15-year lifespan against those goalposts. So that's where I am. Again, I'm really happy to see that we have good standards, whether, and I assume, you know, with Evelyn Wright, and Amanda LaValle, they'll really being put into place, and I really hope that both this committee and capital projects, you know, start utilizing this environmental assessment form, because it's pretty, it's great, and it's very comprehensive. And it really, when I look at it, it touches on all of the important issues. And what's nice is it has links, so you can link right to the county policy or law that connects to each of these elements.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Would the committee, um, like to invite Deputy Wright or, you know, members of the environment team to do an overview? I definitely think we should all have, you know, sort of at the top of our mailbox, the two documents that Legislator Walter just referenced. But, do we want to give time to go over them? Or what's, what's the pleasure of the Committee?

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I really like that idea. And if possible, it'd be very interesting to see that document laid next to New York State's goals just to see where we're at, because I'm really hearing what Legislator Walter is saying, but, but it would be interesting to see sort of, you know what, what this document is, what the goals of the state are, and where we could kind of find agreement, and then where there's something, where there are things that are not in alignment.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Anybody else? So, I wonder, maybe Nick would be so kind as to pass that on and, and you know, Fawn, it'll be in our minutes. But perhaps at the December meeting, if we don't have a lot else on the agenda, we could have that be a focused discussion.

**Fawn Tantillo**

And if you send me both of those documents, though I'm sure I have the most up-to-date one, I will be happy to share it with the committee.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Great, in preparation. And there is a really good summary, which I can provide, on the, on the state's goals under CLCPA. I do want to say that, I think everybody knows, that I'd like to get the infrastructure we need in place as soon as possible, and avoid any additional dependence on fossil fuels. But in terms of accelerating the goals, I, I could send around something that I, I don't mean to be discouraging, but the enormity of what it's going to take to meet the goals of CLCPA, in terms of land use issues. And, you know, we'll talk in a moment about the solar mapping. But I think they're very, very ambitious goals. However, there are many different ways, both the emissions reduction and the renewable energy generation goals can be met. So, I think this is a very important starting point. And I appreciate Legislator Criswell suggesting that it not just be looking at the checklists and what we're currently doing, but compare that with the state's climate goals. And, and see if there may be a particular area where we could exceed and, and those goals now, because they're a state law, are technology-forcing, um, and we saw that with Danskammer. That'll be the next step. Um, Eve, did you want to add anything on that?

**Legislator Walter**

Yes. So, and maybe this is to Nick. The fact that this checklist, I have the updated October 7th. Like, what needs to happen to make this sort of codify, you're not, well, codified or specific, included into this committee and capital projects as, as practice? So, what, what do you need from the Legislature so that in the very short term, we actually all start using this checklist?

**Nick Hvozda**

Right. The way it's, it's designed currently is that it's a Standard Operating Procedure for the county, of which the Department of the Environment has not had any historically, but this is the first one. So one of the two documents is, is the SOP text that identifies what the rules are for, for using it, mainly guide, guidelines for using it. And the second part is the checklist itself, which is referenced in the SOP. The, so that has been adopted by the Executive. And the next step for us is to put together some training to, to give to those people around the county who, who are designing capital projects, starting the planning for them, putting them into the capital plan, etc. To make sure everybody's aware of it, and uses it in accordance with the SOP.

**Legislator Walter**

Great, so can I just, maybe I'll put in different words. I think it would be excellent, personally, if this committee and, and Capital Projects, and Ways and Means, actually had this checklist as well so that they could make determinations about projects that come through. And so, I guess that was really what I was asking, is how can we make it a part of what the Legislature has? Because I mean, unless you're saying that every project that will be submitted will come with the checklist marked off already. It's more of getting this information communicated to the Legislature, which of those things were checked yes, which were checked no.

**Nick Hvozda**

Mm-hmm. The SOP doesn't mandate providing it with, with the, with the project documents, but it could be upon request, I suppose.

**Legislator Walter**

Perhaps we could.

**Nick Hvozda**

As projectst come through.

**Legislator Walter**

So Manna, maybe consideration of a resolution that requires that that checklist is included in the projects, or unless this committee decides it wants to run its own checklist off of these projects, and that you evaluate each project, making this list yourself. But I think all of the time and energy that was put into it, it would be a shame if the Legislature didn't use it, and, and have that information when judging, because oftentimes, we're judging these capital projects and we're just saying, 'Well, what about, and how does it,' but this checklist actually allows you to have the, a very clear list of 'yes, it does this, no, it doesn't do that.'

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

And if I might add, Chairwoman Greene, maybe this actually speaks to the previous potential resolution that we were talking about. You know, connecting this checklist to all the funding that we're, all the proposed ARP building projects.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Well, that's, I think, a great suggestion. And if she can attend, I think, you know, this can all be part of the conversation next month. And let's make note of these ideas so that it can. I think what we're finding is more and more, we're having these collaborative conversations, what works, what doesn't, and I want to commend the Executive branch for including Legislators on the review of the ARP proposal. You know, creating those, and I think credit is also due to the Chairman and the leaders. But those, those committees are very effective, and it means that somebody from the Legislature is part of the design of the proposal and, and can speak to it directly. And many of the questions and suggestions are coming up in these working groups, the subcommittees, before they come back here, so, I want to commend that process. Anything else? I do want to do a quick update on the solar mapping because I think it's, it's so important. I think about it a lot and I've been on several calls today. I just want to be sure I'm not repeating myself. Did I, did I speak about it to this group earlier on this call?

**Fawn Tantillo**

No.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay. You know, I don't know if you've had that experience where you say something enough times, you can't remember who you said it to? Excuse me. I think we have about 15 municipalities, including a municipality from almost every county in the Mid-Hudson region, plus Columbia County, and in Ulster County, that includes Wawarsing, Marbletown, Rosendale, City of Kingston. I believe Hurley and Gardiner, but don't quote me. I don't have the list pulled up. But basically, what these communities are doing is using a really excellent tool that Scenic Hudson developed to look at the land within their



municipal boundaries to see what areas would be ideal or at least good for solar or for the, sorry, for the development of solar and other renewables. And also storage, as we talked about earlier, which areas need to be protected, or avoided, and which areas would be useful if the grid were reconfigured, so that there was the ability to interconnect. And we've had two sessions, very deep engagement, excellent questions. And Scenic Hudson is really being very helpful in providing guidance, and I think that what will come out of this first round will be several actual maps that can serve as models for other communities. We do plan to do this four times a year. And my goal is that a, speaking of goals, that every municipality in the seven-county, Mid-Hudson region undertake this exercise. In most cases, it will be a recommendation, it could actually be included in a comprehensive plan, it could affect, there might be recommendations to modify zoning. There are many possibilities, but basically, it's the municipality taking responsibility for that. How can they contribute to generating 70% of New York's electricity by renewables by 2030, as one specific goal, and we're also going to be looking at the loads. So, it wouldn't be 70% of all of New York, it would be 70% of the load that their municipality, their share of that, of the total of 100%. So, I want to congratulate the first cohort for going through this process, and I will report off at future meetings on the progress because it will send such a loud signal to the developers. Here's where this municipality has opportunity. You know, how many municipalities in Ulster County have landfills that have not yet... And by the way, I believe that Town of New Paltz is going to be moving forward with solar. They've come to an agreement of how to do it so that the neighbors and the people most impacted. Go ahead, please, Legislator Criswell.

#### **Legislator Peter Criswell**

Yeah, I, I'd love to see this also be a holistic conversation with Resource Recovery Agency, forwarding the idea that eventually landfills, once they're capped, become solar fields. You know, I know that that's something that I've read about. I mean, I am in no way an expert. But I definitely read that that is something that's a possibility, and so I'd love to see these two conversations merge a bit.

#### **Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Yes, absolutely. And the tool includes, you know, where the landfills are, where the grid is, for example, in the Town of, Town of Kingston, there was a proposal for the Jockey Hill landfill, and it was an excellent proposal and an excellent site. But the interconnection cost was too high, and that project, you know, did not move forward. I think it still could, but there are issues around interconnection. The cost has to be borne fairly and equitably between the utility, the developer, and the state. The state wants us to meet such stringent goals and I, I think they're appropriately very aggressive. This, I think the state is gonna have to share in the cost. So, one of the stakeholders we hope to meet with, and in this case, the "we," is the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Coalition, which meets out of the Hudson Valley Regional Council, and has been since 2010. There's an energy working group, which is made up of people who have some level of interest and expertise from all seven counties. And, you know, we're trying to define, for this region, what works and what doesn't, and, and share that information with the NYSEERDA, the various state agencies, and the Climate Action Council. By the end of this year, we will have a draft, so that's very soon, we will have a draft plan for implementing the Climate Act for comment. And then there'll be, I forget, whether it's like six months of public comment, and then, there will be a revision, and then that will become essentially the regulations that are the companion to that law that haven't been developed yet, but are being developed. There's been a yearlong process already. So how we get from here to there is critical. But the handwriting is on the wall, and the, you

know, the proof of that is what just happened with Danskammer. We have to roll up our sleeves and get out our shovels and put that infrastructure in place. Okay, any other? Yes, please. Dave, go ahead.

**Dave Haldeman**

Yeah, I just wanted to mention that, we're talking about obstacles to solar in the Town of Shawangunk a couple years ago. We had the Environmental Council, the planning board, and the town board had approved a solar project. The solar project wanted to be classified as a pilot project, so that they could get the tax incentives, and the town board said no, and the solar firm never put the project into place. So it's just another obstacle that sometimes will arise in the process. I just want to mention that.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

And we're trying to keep a list of those and, and share that with the Climate Action Council. Sorry about this. There's something about me getting on Zoom meetings. I don't cough in between. Maybe I don't talk in between. But is there any other business before we adjourn tonight's meeting? Right. In that case, I would like to.

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

I make a motion we adjourn.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Do we have a second?

**Legislator Laura Petit**

I'll second.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay. All in favor of, please, let's see, we need Legislator Wawro to come off, to come on to video for a moment.

**Fawn Tantillo**

Actually, you have enough people to adjourn. And you don't need a quorum to adjourn.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Okay, that's right. All right. All in favor

**Legislator Peter Criswell**

Aye.

**Legislator Laura Petit**

Aye.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Anyone opposed? Motion carries.

**Legislator Criswell**

Good night.

**Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene**

Thank you.