

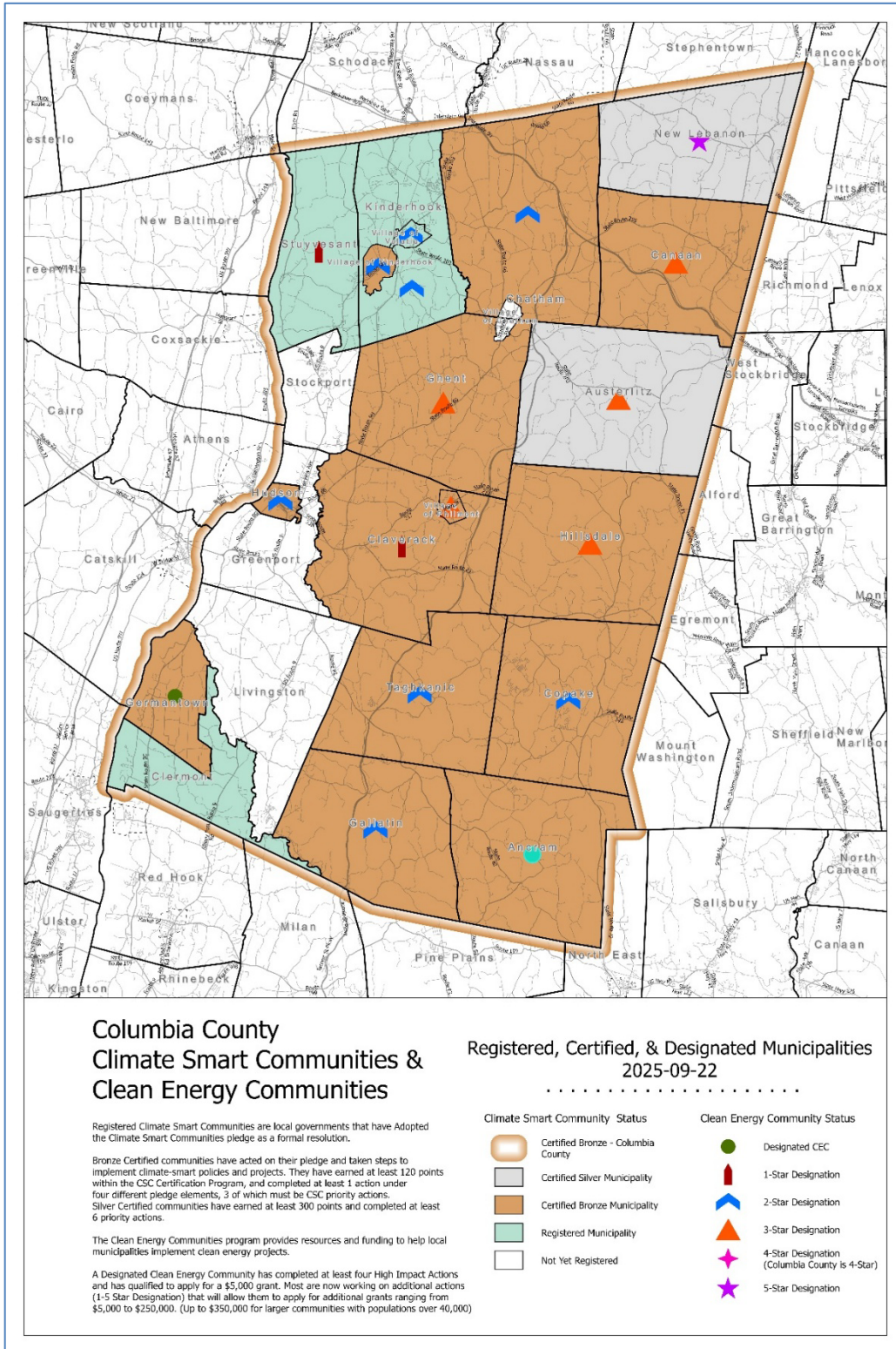


# Columbia County Environmental Management Council

## EMC NEWSLETTER Volume 1, April 2026

The opening decades of the century have witnessed a clear and rising threat to the ecosystems of New York State. In our Columbia County, with its rich and invaluable tapestry of woodlands, streams, flora and fauna, the need for a coordinated network of environmental protections has become poignantly clear. The good news is that, in towns and villages all over the county, dedicated citizens are volunteering their time and efforts into providing those protections in order to mitigate climate disaster.

In honor of Earth Day 2026, the Columbia County Environmental Management Committee (“EMC”) is teaming up with the Columbia County Climate Smart Communities Task Force (“CCCSTF”) to launch this newsletter to inform the Columbia County community about ongoing events and actions taken by their local municipalities, and to provide a summary of actions that these volunteer groups - including local Conservation Advisory Committees (“CAC”), Climate Smart Task Forces (“CSC”), and the CCCSTF - along with the vital support of local Town Boards, have initiated in the last few years to improve conservation and protect the environment. Many thanks to Don Meltz, County Task Force Coordinator for the CCCSTF for gathering and compiling all of the data submitted by the local CAC’s/CSC’s that supports this newsletter. ***And congratulations to everyone who has worked and continues to work toward the pursuit of conservation and environment-friendly actions throughout the county!***



## Columbia County Climate Smart Communities

Here is an overview of county-wide actions and initiatives and a summary of accomplishments, funding and proposals by each of our individual communities, along with a list of CSC actions each municipality is actively working on or has finished.

## **EMC**

The Columbia County Environmental Management Council (EMC) was created by the County Board of Supervisors in 1974 pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law Article 47 (also known as the Local Environmental Protection Act). As described in NY State law, the role of the EMC (in broad terms) is to advise the Board of Supervisors on environmental matters affecting Columbia County. Our most important and fundamental project was the creation of The Natural Resource Inventory document, which gives the county a very detailed look at the county landscape, including many levels of detail. We have created several reports for the county government on environmental matters of county-wide concern. The majority of our monthly meetings, however, concern peer to peer exchanges between the membership regarding issues associated with our individual communities with members exchanging ideas for new projects, and help in overcoming challenges encountered by our local committees. We also organize presentations by outside experts on issues associated with our environmental work in our communities. These exchanges have proven to be quite valuable for the members in their efforts to protect our natural environment and the health of our communities. For more information please refer to our website at <https://sites.google.com/columbiacountyny.com/emc>.

## **CCCSCTF**

The Columbia County Climate Smart Communities Task Force (“CCCSCTF”) was established by the Board of Supervisors to serve as the central body that promotes and supports climate mitigation, adaptation, and education in the community, and advises the County Government on undertaking plans, programs, and activities that are part of the CSC program. At the end of 2024, Columbia County received a DEC Climate Smart Communities grant to develop a Community and Government Operations Climate Action Plan (CAP) and began preparatory work including a consultant RFP and research on agriculture, forests, and wetlands to assess their climate mitigation potential. Collaborative efforts included a Bard College COMET agriculture greenhouse gas analysis and forest growth and decline assessments using SUNY ESF data, while regional GHG inventory data from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission will support the County’s own inventory and CAP. Although delays in finalizing the DEC contract have slowed progress and Clean Energy Communities (CEC) funding was exhausted in late 2024, the County has continued advancing projects such as EV charging installations, courthouse heat pumps, and an energy audit of 401 State Street. Anticipating renewed CEC funding in 2026, the County has increased coordination with local Climate Smart Communities, and as of December 31, 2025, Columbia County municipalities have received a total of \$3,452,500 in CEC grants.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Task Force will focus primarily on developing the County’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) once the contract is finalized. The CAP will address both government operations and community initiatives, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lessen climate impacts on residents. Plans are underway for Earth Day and Arbor Day events, including ceremonial tree plantings

across municipalities—coordinated with Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District (“CCSWCD”) —and a climate-themed film festival, potentially at the Crandell Theater, with sponsorship support secured. The Task Force is also exploring a county-wide climate meeting in the fall to strengthen collaboration among local Climate Smart Communities groups and gather input for the CAP. Additionally, upcoming changes to the Clean Energy Communities and Climate Smart Communities programs will be reviewed and incorporated into the CAP development process once finalized.

Altogether, 85 (70%) of the 120 Priority Element Actions listed on the NYS Climate Smart Communities website have the interest of, or have been completed by, at least one Columbia County community.

For the complete Progress Report created by the CCCSTF, please see:

<https://sites.google.com/columbiacountyny.com/climatesmart/progress-reports#h.8vfjh02s2xej>.

### **ANCRAM**

Ancram achieved CSC Certified Bronze status in July 2022, marking years of steady progress since signing the CSC Pledge in February 2016, forming its Task Force in 2017, and being designated a Clean Energy Community by the NYSERDA in 2018 (an initiative of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the Clean Energy Communities Program provides funding and technical support to communities that are implementing energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable development projects). The town secured \$90,000 in CEC funding, including \$80,000 to support a community LED light bulb exchange program and energy efficiency upgrades such as installing air-source heat pumps at Town Hall, and an additional \$10,000 for electric landscaping equipment. Ancram’s accomplishments include adopting a streamlined solar permitting process, establishing annual energy benchmarking for municipal buildings, converting Town Hall, the Town Garage, and all streetlights to high-efficiency LED lighting, installing a public EV charging station, promoting Community Solar participation for resident savings, and launching a composting education campaign in partnership with Columbia County. The town and its community have demonstrated a strong, ongoing commitment to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental stewardship. <https://www.ancramny.org/climate-smart-community-task-force>.

### **AUSTERLITZ**

Austerlitz achieved Certified Silver status on September 19, 2025, becoming one of only 24 communities statewide—and *the smallest town in New York*—to earn this distinction after signing the CSC Pledge in 2017, forming its Task Force in 2020, and earning Bronze certification in 2022. Over the years, Austerlitz has secured \$170,000 in CEC funding through NYSERDA, including a \$100,000 3-Star designation grant that funded the Highway Department’s first electric vehicle truck, a Ford F-150 Lightning, and the installation of public EV charging stations. Additional grants have supported solar installation at the Highway Garage, LED streetlight conversion, energy audits, heat pumps, electric landscaping equipment, water-smart landscaping, a native plant demonstration garden, along with training and planning initiatives funded in part by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and ongoing support from the Scout Foundation. In 2025 alone, the Austerlitz Climate Committee launched a Waste Reduction campaign, hosted six Repair Cafés in collaboration with Columbia NE Repair Cafe

completing 186 repairs, developed a greenhouse gas tracking tool, released the community storytelling video “Voices of Austerlitz,” produced a CSC Economic Impact Report, and continued robust public engagement through its website and newsletters. Looking ahead to 2026, the town plans to develop a community-wide Climate Action Plan, expand regional Repair Café programming, host an Earth Day event with neighboring communities, and onboard our new part-time Climate Smart Task Force Coordinator—demonstrating a sustained commitment to local climate leadership and community-driven action. <https://austerlitzclimateaction.org/>

## **CANAAN**

Canaan achieved Certified Bronze status on September 30, 2023, following its 2020 CSC pledge and the formation of its CSC in 2021. It secured \$160,000 in CEC funding, which supported the purchase of a Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV for Code Enforcement, solar and heat pump installations, energy audits, and electric landscaping equipment. In 2025, the town installed 11 heat pumps at Town Hall and a 21kW solar array at the Highway Garage, fully funded through \$110,000 in NYSERDA grants and significantly reducing energy use and emissions, while also upgrading exterior lighting to LED, adding a Level 2 EV charging station at Stoddard Field, and expanding electric equipment for the Highway Department. Canaan implemented a recycling policy in town buildings, hosted a Repair Café in partnership with the Northeast Hudson Valley Repair Café network, and launched a community recycling campaign. Ongoing community engagement—including a Community Gardening Day supporting pollinator gardens and participation in Comprehensive Plan updates focused on sustainability—reflects Canaan’s continued commitment to energy efficiency, environmental stewardship, and climate-smart planning. <https://canaannewyork.org/canaan-climate-smart-committee>



***Canaan Town Supervisor Brenda Adams and Paul Fontaine from Ridgeline Heating and Cooling with Canaan’s heat pumps.***



*Solar array on Canaan's Highway Garage.*

## **CHATHAM**

Chatham achieved Certified Bronze status on April 21, 2023, building on its initial CSC pledge in 2015 and the formation of its Task Force in 2019, and has secured \$110,000 in CEC funding, which supported a hydronic heating system powered by an advanced cordwood boiler with thermal storage at the Town Highway Garage, installation of a solar array at the Highway Garage, development of a Sustainability Fund, and the addition of EV charging infrastructure and an electric vehicle. Chatham has adopted NY's unified solar permit, partnered with Scenic Hudson to create a solar mapping tool, conducted annual municipal energy benchmarking and comprehensive greenhouse gas inventories, upgraded municipal and street lighting to LED, improved HVAC systems, and completed a Streams and Culvert

Management Plan. The town has also hosted and co-sponsored multiple Repair Café events, expanded its public outreach through a dedicated Climate Smart website, and partnered with Greenagers to build and distribute compost bins across the region, demonstrating Chatham's sustained commitment to clean energy, climate resilience, and community engagement. <https://www.chathamclimatesmart.com>



*Solar array at Chatham Highway Garage*



*Chatham CSC's Solarize Chatham Booth and Clean Heat Booth*

## **CLAVERACK**

Claverack achieved Certified Bronze status on April 17, 2025, marking five years of dedicated volunteer collaboration with the Town Board. Since taking the CSC Pledge in 2020 and forming its CSC in 2021, Claverack has secured \$35,000 in CEC funding, which supported greenhouse gas mitigation outreach, LED lighting conversion, community solar and waste reduction education, and energy efficiency upgrades to the Town Garage. A grant-funded energy audit identified envelope improvements now moving forward with a \$25,000 CEC award and a \$15,000 town contribution, delivering projected annual savings of \$5,000, while the town also begins exploring solar installation at the garage. In 2025, volunteers expanded their bimonthly newsletter into a Tri-Town publication serving neighboring communities, co-sponsored education events and a Repair Café with the Claverack Free Library, and launched SCAPE (Stewarding Claverack and Philmont's Environment) with support from Partners for Climate Action to gather community input and pursue future funding. Looking ahead to 2026, Climate Smart volunteers will help advance a Natural Resources Inventory in partnership with Philmont, contribute to the town's Comprehensive Plan update, and continue advocating for renewable energy, green building policies, ecological resilience, and thoughtful growth—demonstrating Claverack's ongoing commitment to practical, community-driven climate action.

<https://www.climatesmartclaverack.com>

## **CLERMONT:**

Clermont, which signed the Climate Smart Communities pledge and formed its CSC in June 2021, has made significant progress in advancing local sustainability efforts. As of September 2025, Clermont completed a comprehensive Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory and recommendations report that analyzed municipal energy use across buildings, fleet vehicles, and streetlights, converting that data into emissions totals and presenting strategies to the Town Board for reducing costs and greenhouse gases. Key recommendations include pursuing building energy audits through programs offered by NYSERDA, optimizing Town Hall's existing heat pump system, coordinating with National Grid to convert streetlights to high-efficiency LEDs, exploring solar installations on town buildings, transitioning municipal vehicles and lawn equipment toward electric options, and adopting lower-impact land management practices. Climate Smart members have also played an active role in shaping Clermont's Comprehensive Plan, successfully advocating for cluster development to preserve open space and habitat, expanded EV charging infrastructure, a municipal sustainability plan, waste reduction strategies, and environmentally responsible purchasing guidelines—laying a strong foundation for climate-smart decision-making in the decade ahead.

## **COPAKE**

Copake achieved Certified Bronze status on April 24, 2024 and to date has received a total of \$80,000 in CEC grant money. Since 2022, Copake's CAC/CSC has worked on numerous projects to combat climate change and foster an inclusive community education program about the environment and conservation. From conducting a Greenhouse Gas Inventory for town facilities to be used as a benchmark for efforts to rein in carbon emissions, to installing EV charging stations in the Copake hamlet, to making energy upgrades to the Town Hall and Highway Garage, to planting 13 trees next to Town Hall and native plants along the sidewalk from the hamlet parking lot to the Copake Grange,

Copake is actively engaged in climate smart and conservation work that helps the environment. And Copake is excited that so many residents and the Town Board enthusiastically support this work.



***Copake’s Highway Department planting native trees next to Town Hall  
(9 Red Oak, 2 Shadbush, 2 Redbud)***



***Native plantings along sidewalk from Town parking lot (with EV chargers) to the Copake Grange with ex officio CAC/CSC member Gus Boyle-Mende providing oversight!***

For more information about Copake's CAC and CSC and a complete list of actions to date, <https://townofcopakeny.gov/conservation-advisory-committee/> and <https://townofcopakeny.gov/climate-smart-task-force>

## **GALLATIN**

Gallatin achieved Climate Smart Certified Bronze status on September 19, 2025, after forming its Task Force in February 2025 and building on its 2022 CSC pledge, marking rapid progress in local climate action. To date, Gallatin has secured \$122,500 in CEC funding, which supports projects, including solar installations at the Highway Garage and a planned ground-mounted solar array at Town Hall. The town created a Green Fund to finance future sustainability initiatives, and has a grant approved for a heat

pump installation. The CSC completed the NYSERDA Regional Clean Heating, Cooling, and Energy Efficiency Campaign, Electric Vehicle outreach campaign, and Gallatin Community Solar campaigns. Together, these initiatives reflect Gallatin's strong commitment to expanding renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and supporting community-wide carbon reduction. Residents of Gallatin are also committed to responsible stewardship of our environment and natural resources. The Gallatin CSC members also serve on the CAC. Together, they have been working on a town Natural Resource Inventory and Conservation Plan. They have been working to assist the Town as it embarks on a project to update the town's zoning and delineating and designating various conservation overlay zones. <https://gallatincac.org/about-gallatin-climate-smart>



***Gallatin CSC members Tara Silberberg, Carol Smillie and Leah Cadwallader with ex officio CAC/CSC member Jack Cadwallader!***

## **GERMANTOWN**

Germantown achieved Certified Bronze status on March 23, 2022, following its CSC pledge and the formation of its Task Force on December 8, 2020, and has secured \$45,000 in CEC funding. The town published its first GHG Inventory and conducted a Fleet Inventory to track municipal emissions, while also installing a EV charging station and outfitting Palatine Park Pavilion with a rooftop solar array. Germantown replaced all streetlights with high-efficiency LEDs, adopted the NYS Unified Solar Permit to streamline solar installations, and established a revolving Green Fund to finance sustainability initiatives. Additional accomplishments include promoting food waste reduction and composting through a Household Waste Survey and a compost grant for the local school district, distributing home energy saving kits at community events, conducting a local water survey, and participating in invasive plant removal on Earth Day. All of these actions demonstrate a strong and ongoing commitment to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and community-based climate action.

**<https://www.sustainablegermantownny.org>**

## **GHENT**

Ghent achieved Certified Bronze status, initially certified on April 21, 2023, and recertified on September 19, 2025, following its CSC pledge in May 2016 and the formation of its Task Force in January 2022. With \$172,500 in CEC funding, Ghent has made significant strides in municipal energy and infrastructure improvements, including upgrading interior lighting at Town Hall, the Highway Department Garage, and West Ghent Recreation Center, replacing Town Hall windows to secure the building envelope, and installing a Level 3 EV charging station that supports local economic activity. Additional projects include converting Town Hall lighting to dark-sky-friendly fixtures, partnering with the NYS Soil & Water Conservation District, Arthur's Point Farm, and New Leaf to plant native trees and landscaping, and hosting Earth Day tree plantings and park clean-ups. The CSC has also prioritized community education and engagement through events such as film screenings with expert panels, workshops on Phenology Trails, and discussions on climate change impacts in Columbia County and New York State, reflecting Ghent's ongoing commitment to clean energy, sustainability, and climate-smart community leadership. **<https://townofghent.org/boardscommittees/climate-smart-community-task-force>**

## **HILLSDALE**

Hillsdale achieved Bronze Certification in April 2023 and recertification in September 2024, after taking the CSC pledge in 2016 and forming its CSC in 2021. The town secured \$195,000 in CEC grants to advance major sustainability and resilience projects, including purchasing and converting 59 NYSEG streetlights to LEDs, installing solar PV systems on town property and the town garage, launching community solar and clean-heating campaigns, distributing LED light bulbs, deploying a two-port DC fast EV charger, acquiring electric landscaping equipment, and supporting tree planting initiatives. Hillsdale also completed climate resilience planning with Cornell Cooperative Extension, strengthened emergency preparedness, adopted protective land-use and floodplain regulations, planted riparian buffers along the Roeliff Jansen Kill through DEC's Trees for Tribes program, advanced complete streets planning in the Hamlet of Hillsdale, and partnered with state agencies and Trout Unlimited to assess

and improve road-stream crossings—demonstrating sustained progress toward environmental sustainability and climate resilience. <https://hillsdaleny.com/resilient-hillsdale>

### **HUDSON**

Hudson was certified Bronze Status in June 2021, after taking the CSC pledge in April 2019 and forming its CSC in April 2020. It secured \$142,500 in CEC grants to support a wide range of clean energy and sustainability initiatives, including installation of a 6.84 kW solar PV system at the City Youth Center with public education signage, distribution of thousands of LED lightbulbs to residents, deployment of electric vehicle charging stations, and clean heating and EV outreach campaigns. Additional accomplishments include adoption of New York State’s Unified Solar Permit, completion of a Natural Resource and Open Space Inventory, development of a citywide tree inventory and management plan through an Urban Forestry Grant, watershed and water quality studies at Oakdale Lake, ongoing Complete Streets improvements, and building lighting upgrades that generate significant annual energy and cost savings. <https://www.hudsonny.gov/>

### **KINDERHOOK TOWN**

The Town of Kinderhook took the CSC pledge in October 2015 and formed its CSC in January 2020, securing a total of \$80,000 in CEC funding, which has been applied to the installation of a solar array at the Highway Garage. Key accomplishments include municipal energy benchmarking, completion of government and community GHG inventories, adoption of a town Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP) and Hazard Mitigation Plan, culvert and dam assessments, creation of an emergency preparedness plan and flood guide, and the successful implementation of community solar, heating and cooling campaigns. The Town is also working with Pollinate HV to install two pollinator gardens in the spring.

<https://www.kinderhook-ny.gov/news-notice/282-how-to-join-the-kinderhook-climate-smart-initiative-3.html>

### **KINDERHOOK VILLAGE**

The Village of Kinderhook achieved Bronze Certification in April 2023 after taking the CSC Pledge in May 2016 and forming its CSC in June 2016. Since 2018, the CSC has secured \$85,000 in CEC funding, which was applied to solar installations on the firehouse and DPW facilities, LED streetlight and interior lighting upgrades, electric replacements for gas-powered DPW equipment, bike racks, and community-wide solar and clean heating campaigns. The CSC leads outreach and partnerships—such as a holiday light recycling program with the Kinderhook Memorial Library, a planned community composting initiative for spring 2026, and collaborations with neighboring municipalities and local organizations—to promote environmental education and action.

[https://www.villageofkinderhook.org/government/climate\\_smart\\_community\\_task\\_force/index.php](https://www.villageofkinderhook.org/government/climate_smart_community_task_force/index.php)

### **NEW LEBANON**

New Lebanon achieved Bronze certification in 2021 and Silver in 2024 — *the first municipality in Columbia County to earn both*—after becoming a NYS Climate Smart Community in 2020. It secured

\$560,000 in CEC grants to support solar arrays, battery storage, heat pumps, LED lighting, EV charging, and green purchasing policies across Town Hall, the Garage, and the Community Center. Major projects include large-scale solar and air-source heat pump installations, resulting in measured reductions of 24% in energy use, 39% in energy costs, and 51% in emissions, with projected annual savings of about \$7,700. The Town has also launched extensive community initiatives such as plastic and battery recycling programs, food scrap composting, repair cafés, a free bike and tune-up program, a high-traffic Free Store diverting waste from landfills, Earth Day cleanups, electronics recycling, and updates to hazard mitigation and comprehensive planning efforts, with upcoming plans focused on flood preparedness outreach and development of a Community Climate Action Plan.

<https://townofnewlebanon.com/sustainable>



***New Lebanon bicycle program takes in donated bikes, rehabs them and then offers them to residents. 60 bikes were given away in 2025 and 240 pounds of steel and aluminum alloy were recycled from bikes that were unsalvageable.***



***In addition to installing solar panels and heat pumps in its Community Center with a NYSERDA grant, New Lebanon was able to install these 8 batteries (total capacity of 40 kWh) that will allow the building to be used as a heating and cooling center when power goes out.***

## **PHILMONT**

Philmont achieved Certified Bronze status on September 10, 2024 after becoming a NYS Climate Smart Community in 2018 and forming its CSC in 2021. It secured \$160,000 in CEC funding, which supported LED upgrades at municipal facilities, 100% LED streetlight conversion, EV charging stations at the Philmont Public Library, adoption of the NYS Energy Stretch Code, a FlexTech and decarbonization study, a geothermal system at Village Hall, community solar and clean heating campaigns, and lighting improvements at the sewage treatment plant that cut energy use and emissions by 80%. Additional milestones include completing an energy study of Village Hall and Community Center in 2023 and becoming a designated green purchasing community in 2024, reflecting Philmont's sustained commitment to energy efficiency, emissions reduction, and clean energy leadership.

**<https://philmont.org/climate-smart>**

## STUYVESANT

Stuyvesant pledged to become a Climate Smart Community on December 9, 2021, formed its CSC on March 10, 2022, and applied for Bronze Certification on December 17, 2025, anticipating approval in April 2026. It has received \$15,000 in CEC funding—\$5,000 for energy improvements and \$10,000 toward heat pumps at the highway garage—plus \$37,371 from the DEC Hudson River Estuary Program for a Natural and Cultural Resources Inventory now in progress. Ongoing initiatives include municipal benchmarking and GHG inventories, plastic film recycling, public education programs and film screenings, tabling at community events, documenting high-impact clean energy actions, purchasing electric landscaping equipment, completing an energy study of the town garage, installing heat pumps, hosting repair cafés to reduce waste, evaluating climate resilience policies, and helping incorporate sustainability and climate considerations into the town’s newly adopted comprehensive plan.  
<https://stuyvesantny.us/boards-committees/climate-smart-community-committee>



***Stuyvesant Highway Department staff and Climate Smart Community Task Force display new electric landscaping equipment purchased with NYSERDA grant. Left to right: Joe Scrum, Evan Cook, Troy Kay, Ricky Smith, Anthony Link, Kathryn Schneider, Jim Werkowski, Lee Jamison, Maria Ausherman, Hannah Shepard, Carol Leber, William Schneider (photo credit: Steven Taylor)***

## **TAGHKANIC**

Taghkanic was certified Bronze Status in April 2023 after adopting the CSC pledge in 2020 and forming a Task Force in 2022. The town has received \$75,000 in CEC funding, which was applied towards solar installations, heat pumps, clean heating initiatives, landscaping equipment, and municipal upgrades. The town received additional funding of \$2,371 from National Grid-NYSEG Lighting Upgrade Grant used to upgrade lighting at Town Hall and the Highway Department Garage to all LED (2023-03 and \$136,435 CSC culvert grant to restore aquatic habitat in a joint project with Trout Unlimited. Since 2021, the CSC has advanced municipal emissions reductions, supported residential adoption of solar and heat pumps, and led extensive community education through its well-attended “Taghkanic Talks” and 2025 “Year of the Forest” programs in collaboration with regional partners. Hands-on activities—including tree plantings, native gardens, forest tours, and ecological restoration projects—have engaged strong public participation, reflecting growing community commitment to climate action and sustainable land stewardship. [https://taghkanic.gov/climate action](https://taghkanic.gov/climate_action)

# Town Hall is pumped up!



## Winter

Heat pumps pull in heat from the outside air (even cold air has a little!) to warm the air inside.



## Summer

Heat pumps remove the heat from the inside air, sending it outside.

**The Town of Taghkanic's new heat pumps:  
Efficient, economical, and low impact**

*Self-Explanatory Photo from Taghkanic!*



***BEFORE: Taghkanic CSC members and volunteers planting native plants...***



***AFTER: Taghkanic CSC member Tim Kennelty poses with fully-grown native plants!***

## **VALATIE**

Valatie is preparing its application for Bronze Certification, after taking its CSC Pledge in November 2015, re-pledging in February 2022, and creating its CSC in April 2022. The village received \$70,000 in CEC funding, which supported installation of bike racks on Main Street and air-source heat pumps in the Village Firehouse and Wastewater Treatment Plant, lighting upgrades in the Community Theatre, Senior Center and Firehouse. In 2025, the Village hosted an Energy Fair, organized multiple volunteer events to remove invasive species and plant over 200 native plants at River Street Park, consulted with Columbia County Soil and Water and DEC PRISM on forest health at Pachaquack Preserve, and adopted the 2024 Columbia County Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Other efforts include municipal lighting upgrades, GHG inventory reporting, resiliency and climate adaptation planning (adopted in 2024), unified solar permitting, composting and heat pump education workshops, clean energy studies, and continued community engagement through events such as the Climate Carnival—demonstrating sustained commitment to energy efficiency, emissions reduction, ecological restoration, and climate resilience. <https://www.valatievillage.com/copy-of-announcements> and <https://www.facebook.com/valatie.climatesmart>



*River St. Park May 2024 plantings and river clean up coordinated with Riverkeeper's Sweep.*



*River St. Park June 2024 - one of the piles of invasives removed from the park.*



*Valatie Energy Fair Feb 2025*

**Disclaimer**

*The Columbia County Environmental Management Council is an advisory committee to the Columbia County Board of Supervisors pursuant to NYS Environmental Conservation Law §47-0107. Opinions presented herein are not necessarily the opinions or adopted policies of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors unless otherwise indicated.*