

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Telephone
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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
335 ROUTE 202
SOMERS, NY 10589

DON BLEASDALE
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES
September 8, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present: Don Bleasdale, Flo Brodley, Jennifer Barker Kuskovski, Mike Scorrano and Rick Warren.

Long Garrett was absent.

Councilman Richard Clinchy, and residents Elisa Bremner, Jill Gardner as well as Annie Gullen were also present.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Warren and seconded by Ms. Brodley to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2026, meeting as submitted. All were in favor.

2027 Budget

A request has been made to increase the amount approved for this year from \$500 to \$1,500 as we were overspent this year for outreach – Celebrate Somers, Repair Café and Earth Week. The request for recycling will remain at \$500.

Burns 1 Community Solar Project

Over the summer, Sustainable Westchester launched another solar campaign, Burns 1 Community Solar Project, giving residents the opportunity to sign up for solar without installing solar panels on their property. The Town sent out an email blast on August 10th.

\$900,000 in Grants Toward Complete Streets – Sidewalks from Heritage 202 Center to Town House

The Town has applied for a combination of \$900,000 in grants to be used toward

complete streets to create sidewalks from the Heritage 202 Center to the Town House.

Somers Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Somers

Mrs. Schirmer registered the Committee to have an outreach table at the Somers Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Somers on September 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Towne Centre at Somers. New give-a-ways have been purchased and handouts will be prepared.

Fall 2026 Repair Café

Ms. Brodley made a decision not to offer a second Repair Café in the fall due to the amount of work and effort that goes into it.

2027 Repair Cafés

The Somers Library Program Room and the Reis Park Pavilion have been reserved for the Spring Repair Café on April 18, 2027. Ms. Brodley has already started securing artisans for this event and is always looking for new ones that bring a different talent to the table. Reservations have also been made for the Fall Repair Café on September 19, 2027. Articles will be submitted to the Heritage Hills Newsletter, and Somers Record to solicit artisans. The Town will also be asked to do an email blast.

2027 Earth Day Week Celebrations

The Committee will host their Earth Day offering on Sunday, April 19, 2027 in the Somers Library Program Room. Ideas are welcomed as to a topic.

Composting Kits

Mrs. Bremner wondered if the Committee was interested in suggesting to the Town that they purchase some Composting Kits from North Castle to be offered to the Somers residents. All loved the idea and thought to have some on hand at Celebrate Somers with information on the Town's food composting program would be beneficial.

Town Buildings Recycling Efforts Plan for Improvement

Mr. Clinchy and Mr. Bleasdale conducted an inventory of recycling efforts in the Town-owned buildings. Some are doing it well while others need improvement and will be assisted. Blue bins for recycling were ordered for some of the buildings. Ten were placed in the library and 4 in Van Tassell. There are still some that have to be distributed. Labels were purchased to be added to the existing cans in Reis Park to alert users as to the appropriate cans to use. A simple reminder to scrap, clean and rinse recyclables to assist in this effort will be sent to all employees.

Committee Newsletter

Ms. Gardner has graciously agreed to create the newsletters moving forward. She will be provided with the content. All ideas are welcomed. The next newsletter will include an article written by Mrs. Barker-Kuskovski, and information about the Partners in Prevention Medication Take Back in October.

Future Events/Workshops

Suggestions include: invite Barton and Loguidice to present a program on raingardens; invite WIN Waste to present a program on recycling, both in conjunction with the Library, as well as programs on composting, battery disposal and shredded paper disposal. Perhaps Cornell Cooperative Extension and Lasdon Park have speakers available as well. It was suggested that plans be made to have a speaker/workshop either in person or via Zoom every quarter.

Recycling

Mrs. Gullen tried to arrange for a recycling facility tour over the summer, but there was not enough interest. She will contact the WIN Waste facility in Stamford, Connecticut which is where all the refuse from Somers goes, to arrange for a tour. The information will be shared with everyone.

Proposed Partial Ban on Gas Powered Leaf Blowers

A memo was sent to the Town Board proposing a partial ban on gas powered leaf blowers. The Committee was invited to attend the Town Board Work Session on June 4th. Mr. Garrett attended to represent the Committee along with Open Space Committee Chair Michael Barnhart who touched on most of the items. Mr. Garrett was able to add some additional information. The Town Board thanked them for coming to the meeting. Some were disappointed that a further commitment wasn't made. As this is an important topic, all agreed that there needs to be another request at some point of the Town Board to deal with this issue and educating the community is important. This will be discussed again to come up with a plan. In the meantime, an email was received from the County that they cannot enact a County-wide ban. Perhaps the suggestion at this point should be proposing changes to the existing code on when landscaping work can be done as now it reads from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week. Mr. Garrett is doing some research about what other Towns are doing. Bedford in particular has a good ruling.

Home Battery Storage

Mr. Warren shared some information he read on home battery storage from solar panels. Mrs. Schirmer has a copy of the new local law for the Town and will share it with everybody.

EV Charger Outlets, Heat Pumps and Solar Panel Building Permits Issued

In July, the Building Department issued no permits for an Electric Car Charger; ten for Heat Pumps and one for Solar Panels. Five heat pump permits were issued in August, two for solar panels and none for Electric Car Chargers.

Somers Food Scrap Program – What Happens with the Scraps, Labeling

Mrs. Schirmer learned that at this point, the food scraps disposed of at the Somers Highway Department are fermenting, but will be available to residents when it is compost. There is a big double posted sign over the bins that reads The Town of Somers Compost Center Robert Scorrano Town Supervisor. There are six bins with stickers on top that say what can be put in them. They are emptied weekly in a big pile

on the Highway Department property and bins are cleaned when emptied. All of these tasks are the responsibility of one of the Highway Department employees.

Climate Smart Communities Grant Award and Action Documentation

Mrs. Schirmer continues to work on updating this documentation.

Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Grant Award

At their July 11, 2024, Town Board meeting, the Town Board passed a resolution to have the Supervisor execute the CSC Grant Application that is part of the 2025-2026 Climate Action Planning Institute of Westchester County (CAPI Westchester). CAPI Westchester is a regional climate action planning leadership program that is designed to lead participants through the development of a Local Government Operations GHG Inventory and Government Operations Climate Action Plan which are key priority actions under the CSC program. The initiative will convene in the spring of 2025, will last for 16 months and is facilitated by the Hudson Valley Regional Council in partnership with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. Each community will complete their own GOGHGI and develop a draft GOCAP using ICLEI developed software and tools designed for this purpose. This process has started with Mr. Bleasdale and Mrs. Schirmer providing the requested information which to date was a copy of the NYSEG and Sueco Oil bills for each building for 2023 and 2024. Liz Sun of the Hudson Valley Regional Council reported that the DEC is reviewing the workplan, and they anticipate that it will be completed in late Spring. Once the workplan is approved, Ms. Sun will be reaching out to the Town with a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the municipality and Westchester County. Once the MOUs are signed, the County will sign the contract with DEC and the program can officially begin. It is the hope to have the MOUs for the Town review this summer and kick off the cohort meetings in the fall. They will resume data collection for the GHG inventory while they work on getting under contract.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13th at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Energy and Environment Committee

cc: Energy and Environment Committee
Town Board
Town Clerk