

## **~MAKING BETHEL A MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY~**

### ***What is the Bethel Green Committee?***

The Bethel Green Committee is a group of volunteers and Town Board members, appointed by the Town Supervisor, who investigate opportunities and provide suggestions to the Town Board aimed at conserving energy, moving to renewable energy sources, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and otherwise making Bethel a more environmentally sustainable community.

### ***What are some of the Committee's Accomplishments to Date?***

- Encouraged the Town to participate in the "Climate Smart Community" program launched by NYS' Department of Environmental Conservation. By implementing Climate Smart Community "Action Items" outlined by the DEC, the Town earns points towards Certification status. *We're over half the way there with 68 out of 120 points!* Certification demonstrates that Bethel has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy costs (saving taxpayer money in the process), and makes the Town eligible for significant State funding to take on even more projects.
- Completed a Local Government Operations GHG inventory which is an accounting, analysis and baseline report of the GHG emissions resulting from the day-to-day operations of the Town government's operations. The inventory will be used as a baseline for developing climate mitigation strategies and as a benchmark for tracking the Town's progress for GHG reductions.
- Worked for over five months to craft, and successfully enact, a widely praised solar installation law for the Town encouraging roof and ground mounted solar installations, balanced with appropriate set-backs, height, de-accessioning requirements and other protections for the Town and adjoining landowners.
- Secured NYSERDA funding to help undertake energy audits of Town Hall, Highway Barn and Wastewater Treatment Plant which suggested energy conservation measures for those facilities.
- Participated in the Mid-Hudson Valley Street Lighting Consortium, evaluating the purchase of the Town's street lights along with the aggregate purchase and conversion to LED street lighting, potentially saving the Town significant money.
- Secured a Federal EPA screening study—at no cost!-evaluating the Town's capped landfill as a potential site for a ground solar installation. We learned that this is a favorable site to support solar PV generation and economic viable reuse of this otherwise unusable Town property.
- Working on installing electric vehicle recharging stations in Kauneonga Lake!

### ***How Can You Participate?***

If you'd like to join the Committee, please reach out to Supervisor Sturm. If you want to follow our initiatives, check out "Climate Smart Community" under the "LINKS" section of the Town's website. We will post our progress, especially as we expand our work from government sustainability measures to community sustainability measures. And if you support our efforts, please let the Town Supervisor and Board know!