



Sustainable Hudson Valley Highlights

2016

Solarize Hudson Valley moved through its second year of our 3-year NYSERDA-funded contract. This people-powered education and group purchasing program is all about making it easier and more affordable to go solar, for households and businesses alike. At

year-end, we were encouraged to have more than 340 contracts signed for over 2.75 mW of solar power. Even more encouraging was the involvement of over 1,600 volunteer hours in producing over 110 events in the partner communities of Saugerties, Red Hook, Tivoli, Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, Nyack and Wappinger's Falls. We wrote *The Solarize Hudson Valley Playbook* as a tool for training and to replicate this successful model.

Building on the consumer empowerment approach, we launched Drive Electric Hudson Valley came to life -- and again with support from NYSERDA. This is a pilot program to see whether consumer education and group discounts could help consumers make the transition to electric vehicles (cars, light trucks for business, bikes). Seth Leitman (aka Green Living Guy) and bilingual auto engineer Hugo Jule formed our dream

"Solarize takes the mud out of the water by making your consumer choices clear and working with installers the community can trust."

— Workshop participant, 2016

team producing workshops, tabling at events, and talking with over 1500 commuters at Metro North stations thanks to the support of the MTA. Thanks to the

buzz from this program, we started building partnerships with automakers and won an initial discount from Ford for program participants. The pilot led us to design a new program for 2017 - an EV Enthusiasts Club model for learning and group discounts.

Regional Sustainability:

Two years after the publication of the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan - a \$1M investment in carbon reduction and economic strategy by the Cuomo Administration - we have been



helping to lead a coalition formed to monitor and implement the plan. At the end of May, we secured an opportunity to

energize the effort with a two-day retreat at the Omega Institute attended by more than 60 people. Out of it came action items in the Plan's major areas of energy, water, land use and transportation, materials management, food and agriculture, and economic development. Work to translate ideas into implementation continues. One of the strategies for clean energy scale-up is to create Community Energy Districts. SHV is supporting this effort and adding layers of opportunity by developing a Guide to Eco-Districts for Small Cities, Towns and Villages with seed funding from Sustainable Westchester. We expect to pilot this framework in two to three communities in 2017.

Executive Director Melissa Everett, Ph.D. was keynote speaker at the Cuomo Administration's October conference on sustainable development and regional governance. She focused on the Hudson Valley's unique advantage, its mission-driven institutions.

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