



ECP Progress & Plans

Experiments in civic engagement, collective sustainability,
and pioneering stories of personal change

Above: The first Community
Congress, St. Philip's Church,
Garrison, NY

We believe that if we're going to meet the challenges posed by the complex social problems we face, the work must begin close to home: by aligning our life models with our values, re-building community connections, and working together to create tangible social change.

The Ecological Citizen's Project works to "grow citizen-led action to produce a more just, healthy, democratic and sustainable way-of-life." We do this by convening community members to learn more about collective problems, developing and supporting campaigns for change, and elevating hopeful stories of progress that help build the social movement.

Your early support helped us begin our work. Looking over the last year, highlights include:

Beacon on Board with Power Proposal Council votes to join renewable energy plan.

By Jeff Simms

Beacon on Jan. 17 became the first Highlands municipality to agree to join a regional Community Choice Aggregation district, while four other local governments consider the proposal.

Following a public hearing, the Beacon Council voted to authorize the creation of a district, which would

for better rates and more environmentally friendly options for residents. The Beacon vote signals that the city is on board with the creation of a CCA. The Cold Spring Board of Trustees is expected to discuss the measure on Jan. 24 and Fishkill and Philipstown have scheduled public hearings for Feb. 6 and 13, respectively. Wappingers Falls is weighing the proposal, as well.

If all five municipalities approve the creation of a CCA — which would be the second in New York State, following a Westchester County pilot program — a second round of votes would be required

Highlands, Central Hudson provide delivery and the CCA would only need sourcing.

A handful of residents attended the meeting to voice their support for the proposal. Cold Spring Town Board member Tom Ito attended the meeting to voice his support for the proposal. Ito said he was "pleased to see every body around here interested in it. You can't see why you're not having time if you're not having

Greater Energy Options Could Be Coming to Western Putnam

By Holly Crocco

A Garrison man is leading the charge to provide residents of western Putnam County with lower energy bills and greater choice as to where their electricity comes from. Jason Angeli, director of the nonprofit Ecological Citizens Project, has been working with Renewable Highlands for about a year and a half to establish "community choice aggregation" in the Central Hudson Utility District.

on renewable energy credits, he explained. According to Angeli, the state has mandated that the in order for a CCA to be formed, the towns, villages and cities involved have to pass local law; it cannot be done at the county level. So far in the Central Hudson Utility District, Cold Spring, Philipstown, Beacon and Fishkill have passed local laws to enable a CCA. That's roughly 25,000 energy accounts.

PUTNAM COUNTY PRESS/TIMES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

electric bill is the energy supplier. The cost of delivery, which is often the largest cost, remains the same.

As part of the deregulation process, utilities cannot make money on the supply of electricity — it has to be provided to property owners at cost, said Angeli, who explained that's why the delivery price is so high — because that's where the companies make their profit. So while the company must become competitive as a supplier, it still has

WE GET A BETTER DEAL WHEN WE BUY IN BULK!

Community Choice Aggregation allows mid-Hudson homes and businesses to join together for greater purchasing power and choice of energy sources.



LOCAL CONTROL

It's working in Westchester for 110,000 CCA electricity customers. That's 40% of the county.

7 in 10 chose the 100% renewable option while saving money!



News coverage of our CCA initiative and element of our general education campaign

Community Choice Aggregation

The ECP worked in partnership with Renewable Highlands to educate community leaders about the economic and environmental benefits of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), which led the City of Beacon, Village of Cold Spring, Town of Fishkill and Town of Philipstown to pass local laws enabling CCA. CCAs allow municipalities to pool electric utility accounts of residents and small businesses to gain bargaining power to negotiate energy supply agreements. As these communities continue to work with the team that implemented New York's first CCA in Westchester, our citizen-led effort has the potential to move 25,000 homes and businesses to a cheaper, more renewable electricity supply.

The ECP worked with Renewable Highlands to educate local elected officials on the potential benefits of a CCA, conducted outreach to local business, environmental, and homeowner organizations, and developed a general education campaign that reached 20,000 homes and small businesses in the Hudson Valley.

Fossil Fuel Divestment

The ECP collaborated with the Put a Price on It campaign to convene student environmental leaders from regional colleges and universities to learn more about carbon pricing and share winning strategies for institutional fossil fuel divestment. Participants in the one day convening on Longhaul Farm included representatives from 350.org-NY, Barnard College, Fordham University, Iona College, Marymount Manhattan College, Middlebury College, SUNY-New Paltz, Vassar College, and William Paterson University.

Presentations were given by the Barnard divestment team, who had recently won their effort to have Barnard College divest, Lizzy Khan, NE Organizer of the Put a Price on It Campaign, and neighbor Bevis Longstreth, former SEC Commissioner and divestment advocate. Following the convening, Vassar College Divest strengthened their argument using evidence presented at the convening and Vassar College's Committee on Investment Responsibility recommended divestment to the Board of Trustees after a five year campaign.



Regional student environmental leaders convene at Longhaul Farm to discuss winning strategies for institutional Fossil Fuel Divestment.

April, 2017

“Global warming is here, man-made, and no joke. That’s why it’s more important than ever that the United States take the lead in the fight against climate change to protect our planet and create good paying clean energy jobs. It’s encouraging to see folks working to develop thoughtful, bipartisan solutions to do just that. I look forward to working alongside them.”

A statement from Rep. Sean Maloney’s following a meeting with ECP/Gelber.

May, 2017

Carbon Dividends

Following a convening that identified carbon pricing as the top priority for national action, the ECP worked with neighbor David Gelber (Creator, *Years of Living Dangerously*) to educate community leaders about the case for Carbon Dividends, a proposed bipartisan path to climate action that would put a price on carbon and return the revenues directly to American families as a dividend. Our efforts included numerous educational briefings with Rep. Sean Maloney (D, NY-18) and Rep. Dan Donovan (R, NY-11). In July, 2017, Rep. Maloney publicly announced at a Town Hall that he is exploring bipartisan partnerships to draft carbon pricing legislation.

To read the ECP’s *Case for Carbon Dividends* white paper, please visit ecologicalcitizens.org/carbondividends.

Plans 2018

We learned a great deal from our first year of work with young people and community members who are looking for new ways to become part of the solution. We’ve learned the wisdom of the idea that you must “think globally and act locally.” While international and national decisions are important, for most of us they are beyond our control. We don’t have the luxury of waiting. We must focus our work where change is possible right now: within ourselves and within our communities. This belief guides our plans for our next year of work:

Community Congress

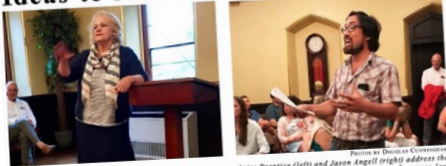
With participation in voting low and political cynicism high, it is clear that we need to imagine new ways of being a citizen in the twenty-first century. We won’t be able to meet our challenges without a huge expansion of civic energy. We’re launching the Community Congress initiative, an experiment in 21st Century democracy that provides opportunities for community members to share ideas about how to strengthen their community, identify

The graphic features the Philipstown Community Congress logo at the top, with the tagline "Shared priorities for community action". Below this is a large black box with the text "WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR PHILIPSTOWN?". Underneath, it provides instructions: "To read the full proposals put forward by Philipstown residents, please visit a ballot location or go online to: ecologicalcitizens.org/pccproposals". The bottom section shows five ballot cards for different neighborhoods: Nelsonville, North Highlands, Garrison, Continental Village, and Cold Spring. Each card has a list of items with green checkmarks. At the bottom, it says "VOTE for your top priorities by October 31, 2017" and "All Philipstown residents age 13 years and older are eligible to vote." The background is a stylized landscape with mountains and a blue sky.

Our experiment in 21st Century democracy launches in Philipstown with a ballot mailed to nearly 6,000 homes.

July, 2017

'Community Congress' Surfaces Ideas to Make Philipstown Better



By DONALD CUNNINGHAM
question-and-answer session followed.
Attendees covered the gamut of life in Philipstown, including Town and Village Board members, clergy, parishioners and school members.
In quick bites, speakers outlined their ideas. Anita Prentice, former Garrison School Board member, said she would like to see the presence of rocks underneath the surface in most areas. Philipstown Councilwoman Nancy Montgomery said that many of the ideas, especially those involving infrastructure, would require the work



News coverage of the second of three Community Congress forums, where Philipstown residents proposed 40 ideas to preserve and promote a stronger community.

August, 2017

common priorities through a community-wide vote, and presents findings to community leaders to spark community action. The Philipstown Community Congress pilot will complete the voting process in November, 2017 and we have begun to explore partnerships with key leaders to establish the Peekskill Community Congress in Spring, 2018.

ECP Podcast: *Next Stop Now*

Too often, people think of social change as something that only occurs when decisions are made in far-off halls of power. But history shows that change is often the result of pioneers who decide to live their personal lives by their deepest values, even if it goes against the status quo of their time. As others follow these new paths, transformative change becomes possible. To catalyze change, we need to hear and be inspired by the courage and actions of today's pioneers.

We're currently developing the *Next Stop Now* podcast series, which aims to lift up personal stories of "people that change their life in order to change the world" for launch in Spring, 2018. We're working in partnership with Isabel Angell, Associate Producer of NPR's nationally syndicated *The Takeaway*.

While we haven't launched the series publicly, you can take a sneak-listen at ecologicalcitizens.org/nextstopnow.

Sustainable Communities

As the consequences of climate change increasingly affect our lives, how do we mobilize collective action to turn the ship in our communities right now? We believe the answer will include creating a focused effort to reduce GhG emissions across multiple personal and community activities, measuring tangible progress, and ensuring environmental action also supports the local economy. We're currently exploring partnering with other organizations to support a Philipstown-wide sustainability initiative, which would begin with conducting a community-wide baseline of GhG emissions, developing an action plan, and measuring emission reductions over time. Maybe we can become a national model of what it looks like when a whole community becomes a sustainability pioneer together.




What would it take to reduce the footprint of an entire community?

We are thankful for the community support of our work in all forms; those that tell their stories of change, participate in community convenings, step forward to lead change campaigns, and provide the financial support to make all of these initiatives possible.

As a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, we have been lucky to receive donations from like-minded community members and institutional support from the Malcolm Gordon Charitable Fund administered by the Open Society Institute and the Endeavor Foundation. Thank you.

But as we look to the coming year's work, the reality is that we will need more of this support to increase our impact. Your support will help us fund the Peekskill Community Congress, launch the podcast series, and explore what it will take to create a sustainable community. We thank you for your support in the past. If you are able, we hope you will continue to support the work of our future.

To becoming ecological citizens,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JCA', written in a cursive style.

Jason K. Angell
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JL Apicello', written in a cursive style.

Jocelyn L. Apicello
Program Director

ECP Board of Directors

Matt Brown. Matt is Co-Founder of Global Zero (2006-present), the leading international movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons that includes 300 world leaders and half a million citizens worldwide. Many political leaders have endorsed Global Zero, with President Obama declaring, “Global Zero will always have a partner in me and my administration.” He is the former Secretary of State of Rhode Island (2002-2006) and Executive Director of City Year Rhode Island, a national service program. He received his Bachelor’s degree from Columbia University and his Juris Doctor from Yale Law School. Matt is Board President and Secretary of the Ecological Citizen's Project.

Dahni-El Giles. Dahni-El currently works at Hampton Creek, the plant-based food startup in San Francisco, CA. He’s a 1995 Oliver Scholar, a 2004 Coro Fellow, and a 2016 Bleeker Fellow. A self-described attorney and strategist passionate about sustainability and impact, he co-founded DonorsChoose.org in 2000, serves as Board Director, Treasurer, and audit committee member at ScriptEd.org. He also served as Senior Commercial Counsel at Kraft Foods. He earned an A.B. from Harvard in 1999 and a J.D. from Georgetown in 2004. Dahni-El is Board Vice President of the Ecological Citizen's Project.

Jocelyn Apicello. Jocelyn is co-founder and co-operator of Longhaul Farm, a human-powered, ecologically-sustainable micro-farm which incorporates natural growing methods, bio-dynamic techniques, principles of ecological stewardship and community engagement. She is also currently an adjunct professor of public health in William Paterson University’s Department of Public Health and in Bard College’s Prison Initiative Program. Jocelyn earned her DrPH from Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health in 2013. Jocelyn is co-founder and Board Treasurer of the Ecological Citizen's Project.

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The Ecological Citizen's Project is a non-profit organization that accepts tax-exempt 501(c)3 donations via our fiscal sponsor, [Hudson Valley Seed](http://HudsonValleySeed.org).

To make a donation, please address check to “Hudson Valley Seed”, include “Ecological Citizen’s Project” in the memo, and mail to Ecological Citizen’s Project, PO Box 24, Garrison, NY 10524.