

To: The NYS Climate Action Council
From: Paul D. Storfer and Sandra Lieb, [REDACTED] Katonah, NY 10536
Re: Scoping Plan Comments from June 2022

Following are comments for the NYS Scoping Plan to achieve the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals. We are proud of New York's intent to become leaders in the country to address climate change and support clean energy. We support the comments provided by Bedford 2030 and the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater organization, and we would like to add comments regarding Chapter 12 – Buildings based upon our own experience of trying to plan the building of a net zero home in Westchester County, NY.

We have been investigating building a net zero home in Westchester, where we currently reside. We have been dismayed to discover that there are more incentives for sustainable housing in neighboring Connecticut or nearby Massachusetts than there are in New York. To build a net zero house in 2022 in Westchester County, multiple hurdles need to be overcome:

1. It costs nearly twice as much to build a net zero house as it does to build a home to current housing standards. This is due to the cost of building a house with an adequate thermal envelope to support sustainable power.
2. The high cost of building a net zero home is partially due to the lack of local providers of sustainable components such as triple-paned windows, high-quality heat pumps, solar panels, etc. Expertise in building sustainable properties congregates in locations that are more supportive of clean energy goals.
3. An additional challenge is that all net zero homes are, by definition, newly built, and property taxes for new building construction are significantly higher than taxes for existing buildings which are inevitably not as efficient.
4. Property taxes are also based on the cost to build a home, so a sustainable and efficient home, which costs more to build up front than a standard inefficient home, will cost more in taxes every year going forward than an identically sized and configured home that does not meet New York's climate goals.
5. There would be significant challenges with selling a net zero home that has cost more to build and has significantly higher taxes than neighboring homes of similar size and configuration.

We recommend the following for consideration in the scoping plan:

1. Provide tax and other incentives for local vendors of sustainable materials to manufacture, sell, design, and install sustainable materials for net zero homes. This should include companies dedicated to architecting, designing, engineering, and managing projects for sustainable home construction.
2. Provide tax and other incentives for all new home construction to be built sustainably, so it costs the same or less to build a net zero home as it does to build a standard but inefficient home.
3. Provide property tax relief for net zero homes so property taxes are the same as or less than taxes for standard homes of a similar size and configuration.

Thank you for your consideration.