



# Sustainability Commission

## Economy • Environment • Society

*Think long-term, act now*

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** October 14, 2008  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Nashua River Watershed Association, River Resource Center  
592 Main Street, Groton, MA

**Attendees:**  
Commissioners: Al Collins, Carl Canner, Leo Laverdure, Mike Roberts  
Liaisons: David Gordon (Historical Society)  
Mark Archambault (NRWA)  
Other: (none)

Commissioners absent: Carl Flowers, Chase Duffy, Chris Christie, Michael McCarthy, Richard Hewitt

**Minutes taken by:** Leo Laverdure

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### GENERAL

- This report is augmented by the Commission's Action Item Status spreadsheet.

### HANDOUTS

The following handouts were distributed:

1. Agenda (Mike)
2. 23-Sep-08 Minutes, 13-Oct-08 Action Item Status, Work Groups List (prepared by Leo, distributed by Mike)
3. Draft Application for Grant (prepared by Chase, distributed by Mike)

### DISCUSSION

#### Agenda Item #1: Early Action Ideas

- There was a brief discussion about the impact of the economic news on Groton.
- Mike informed us that Connie Sartini is beginning a series of articles on the Greening of Groton. It should include ideas on how to save money at the same time.
- Mike proposed that the Commission create a pamphlet with suggestions for homeowners on how to live more sustainably.
- Al suggested that the pamphlet work to instill a notion of respect for the town, for each other, and for the environment. On his recent trip to Italy he was struck by how much respect there was for authority and how much was based on the honor system.
- Leo suggested that even more important than a pamphlet was to assemble the information on the Commission's web site. He mentioned that Groton Local was starting the second year of its Energy Seminar Series related to residential energy reduction. Groton Local is also considering a new series on Sustainability Economics.
- Mark announced that he will attend a Transition Towns workshop in Cambridge on 1/2-Nov. There is a repeat session on 29/30-Nov. The 2-day workshop costs \$219. There is also a book by the same title.

## Groton Sustainability Commission – Meeting Minutes for 23-Sep-08

- Mark also announced that he will be hosting an NRWA workshop called “Smart Development & Sustainability Summit” on 12/13-Nov. Presenters will include:
  - Mark – an update on Peak Oil
  - Chris Ryan – aspects of sustainability
  - Catherine Miller – Pioneer Valley Sustainability Plan & network
  - Neil Argus/Peter Lowitt – the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) standard (See <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=148>)
- Mark stated that the difference between this economic crisis and previous crises is that this time we are running into physical, planetary limits to growth.
- Carl Canner shared his deep concern about the impact of this economic crisis on local businesses and jobs. He is also concerned about the loss of species and the possible impact of viewing our local forests primarily as sources of energy supplies. There are many non-cooperating groups in town. Some of the answers might lie in: living more simply, increasing cooperation, public transportation options for jobs in Littleton and Devens, research on the local economy (including a Sustainability baseline measurement).
- **Action (#2008-1014-1, Carl C, by 28-Oct): Talk to Chris Christie about Energy audits as a possible major Commission action.**
- **Action (#2008-1014-2, Al, by ??): Draft ideas on how we could leverage the idea of increased respect.**
- **Action (#2008-1014-3, Leo, by ??): Send pointer to the Community Solution website.**
- Everyone noted that one of the problems is that we have too much information! How do we zero in on the most relevant and important?
- **Action (#2008-1014-4, Communications WG, by ??): Advertise the Commission’s website.**
- **Action (#2008-1014-5, Leo, by ??): Create an outline on web for local Sustainability actions, with a focus on the economy and energy.**
- **Action (#2008-1014-6, Mike, by ??): Invite Jeff Ritter and Haynes to a discussion on better support of local economy.**
  - Ideas include: an ombudsman, job swaps info, telecommuting help, home-based business help (e.g., SCORE), job fair/bulletin board

## Agenda Item #2: Comprehensive Master Plan Schedule

- **Action (#2008-1014-7, Leo, 15-Oct: Forward Trust fund application format to Chase.**
- **Action (#2008-1014-8, Al, by ??): Draft ideas on how the Planning Board could review proposed projects with respect to their sustainability.**

## FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 28, 2008 at 7:30 p.m.**

- Venue: the **town hall** (**\*NOT\* the NRWA**)
- Focus will be on the **local economy**. (Agenda to be prepared by the Economy work group.)

The following meeting has been moved back to Tuesday, 11-Nov, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. NRWA. (Note, this had been moved to **Thursday, 13-Nov**, as a joint meeting with the Planning Board, but there is a conflict. Mike will work with Michelle to reschedule the joint meeting.)

- **Action (#2008-1014-9, All, ??): Take the Tutorial on the Sustainability Measures web site (<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/Training/index.html>).**

Meetings are usually held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at the NRWA. WG meeting schedules are still TBD.