



Sustainability Commission
Economy • Environment • Society
Think long-term, act now

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 18, 2008
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Groton Town Hall
Attendees:
Commissioners: Carl Canner, Carl Flowers, Chase Duffy, Chris Christie, Leo Laverdure, Mike Roberts, Richard Hewitt
Liaisons: Anna Elliot (Board of Selectmen), David Gordon (Historical Society), Mark Archambault, Terri Ragot (Housing Partnership)
Other: None.

Commissioners absent: Al Collins, Michael McCarthy

Minutes taken by: Leo Laverdure

GENERAL

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

HANDOUTS

The following handouts were distributed:

1. Agenda (Mike)
2. Open Action Items List (Leo)
3. T-Shirt/Logo Contest Draft (Richard)
4. Sustainability Measures/Key Terms – Community & Community Capital (Mike)
5. Community/Society Work Group Meeting Minutes for 14-Nov-08 (Mark)

DISCUSSION

Agenda Item #1: Updating Action Item List

- See updated action item list.

Agenda Item #2: T-Shirt Logo contest

The group reviewed Richard's draft and suggested a few edits. [Richard forwarded the updated draft to the SC distribution list after the meeting for additional comments.] The Commission agreed to add the Parker school & Nashoba Tech to the schools receiving the invitation for the contest. We also agreed that we will need to personally contact the heads of the Art departments of each of the schools to engage them in promoting the contest.

Agenda Item #3: Town of Groton Economic Development Committee report

Anna described the newly formed committee, calling it a "partner for local businesses." Key goals include: attracting businesses to town, enabling residents to meet needs without having to travel, and reducing dollar "leakage" (which reduces the local economic benefit of commerce). Everyone agreed that any increase in the local economy should be accomplished without detracting from

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the town's character. Also, the goal is to make these improvements without duplicating efforts being undertaken by other organizations; accordingly, other organizations working to improve the local business climate are encouraged to participate in the work of the committee.

The Economic Development Committee will meet twice a month (2nd & 4th Mondays), 5-6pm at the Town Hall. The next meetings are: 24-Nov, 8-Dec, and 22-Dec.

Agenda Item #4: Community/Society Working Group report

This work group met last week for the first time. The discussion centered on the nature of community and ideas for community education. This led to the idea of holding a workshop of community leaders (many groups) addressing the questions: What is a community? What do we want it to be for Groton? The work group also stressed making sure that it's clear that the Commission is about sustaining *people*.

The discussion moved to ideas for sustainability measures, including: access to resources, mutual assistance, neighborhoods. How do we think about neighborhoods? How cohesive are they now, and what is desired for the future? What resources are available for self help?

Terri talked about diversity, noting that there is not a lot of diversity in Groton. In Boston, where there is much more diversity, there is also much more discrimination. We discussed some anecdotes of discrimination here in Groton, too. Terri recommended a PBS film on race that goes into the practice of "red-lining." [Terri, can you please provide a more complete reference? Thanks, Leo]

Other discussion points:

- Lost Lake housing prices and tax assessments have increased due to newer, upscale homes and families eager to take advantage of Groton's many advantages, including its schools. How do the long-time residents sustain selves?
- How do people get around if the cost of automobile transportation becomes prohibitive?
- Respect for community. We're awaiting something from AI on this point.
- History

Vote (6 for, 0 against, 1 abstain): Mike Roberts is authorized to be planning a community workshop along the lines outlined above, with a target date of February.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 25, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA).**

Tuesday, December 9, 2008. Featured agenda item will be discussion with a member of the group that wrote the Northampton sustainability plan.

Tuesday, December 16 [note 3rd Tuesday, not 4th]. Agenda will be a presentation and discussion with Maureen Hart of SustainableMeasures.com. This will be a joint meeting with the Planning Board.

Reminder:

- **Action (#2008-1014-9, All, by 16-Dec: Take the Tutorial on the Sustainability Measures web site (<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/Training/index.html>).**

We still need to schedule a discussion on wind energy.

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

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