

Meeting Minutes

Date: March 9th, 2010

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Nashua River Watershed Association

Attendees:

Commissioners: Leo Laverdure, Chris Christie, Steve Webber, Richard Hewitt, Chase Duffy

Liaisons: Mark Archambault

Commissioners absent: Carl Canner, Carl Flowers, Mike Roberts

Minutes taken by: Stephanie Strickland

Agenda:

1. **Update on Sustainability Café Plans**
2. **Update on Sustainability Element of Town Master Plan**
3. **Open Meeting Law**
4. **Blind Spot Video**

Agenda Item #1: Update on Sustainability Café Plans

Discussion

- (Leo passes out invitation to sustainability café)
- Leo: We realized we wouldn't be able to reach our original deadlines and we have now decided to have one open meeting. Organizations can decide to host their own such as the NRWA, Groton Garden Club, and the town have decided to do.
- Steve: Local taxes have been a large concern recently. Many people are concerned that they can't afford to live in Groton anymore. I think local taxes should be mentioned in this list.
- Chris: I think that might fall under economy.
- Steve: I wish it did, but it doesn't.
- Chase: I think it's too political to include.
- Leo: We could put something in about the cost of living.
- Steve: I don't know how to put it, but it should be mentioned.
- Chase: But once you get into a discussion on that topic, it will be hard to get out of.
- Leo: I'm inserting cost of living in between local economy and community services.
- Richard: In number three, I would change must to want to.
- Steve: I actually like must better.
- Chris: In number three, I would like to ask why they like Groton or what would you like to see in Groton.
- Steve: What do you think the character in Groton is?
- Leo: It's possible we could split this into two questions?

- Chase: We're not trying to be entirely inclusive; we're just trying to get people interested. I would have three questions and have the fourth summarize them.
- Leo: Well the fourth question does that but asks how as well. The first three questions are goals and the last one is means to the goal.
- Steve: Everyone I talked to said they like the character in Groton. I would like to know what the character Groton is.
- Richard: People like how Groton is small enough that you know people in town, it has a good school system, and it's close to the metropolitan Boston area.
- Chase: I think number four is wordy. We should take something out.
- Leo: Would anyone be against me taking out: and adapt to?
- Chase: I would be very pleased.
- Leo: The Library has been reserved for Tuesday the 13th.
- Steve: But how many people would fit? The Groton Country Club would fit a lot more and has been recently spruced up. It holds 200 people.
- Chase: I do think that's an excellent idea.
- Leo: Do you know how to get a hold of the manager?
- Steve: I just call the country club number.
- Leo: The other thought we had was the barn, if that would be available.
- Steve: Its available most weekdays, but I would push for the country club.
- Leo: Okay we'll try for a weeknight and for the country club. Anything else?
- Steve: No, I think it's a good invitation.
- Leo: Joni is going to draw things discussed on paper.
- Steve: Well the country club has plenty of wall space. Do we need technology?
- Leo: I don't think so. We're possibly going to use 3 by 5 cards or have people email their answers to these questions. The general idea has been to keep this simple.
- Chase: There will only be one café?
- Leo: Only one public one. Other organizations will have private ones.
- Steve: If this is very successful we will have more of them. We could put this notice on the town website as well.

Agenda Item #2: Update on Sustainability Element of Town Master Plan

Discussion

- Leo: Liaisons or commissioners assigned to each of the seven elements.
Michelle sent a reminder that the planning board will appoint the advisory groups on Thursday March 11 and will meet with the community opportunities group on March 18th at 7:30.
- Richard: I thought we already decided that.
- Steve: We did for the sustainability group but the planning group and other groups haven't decided theirs.
- Leo: We should have someone from our commission go to the meeting on the 18th or at least make sure Michelle has the list. We are directly responsible for the natural resources and energy which Mark and I have met about.

- Richard: Mike wanted me to talk about the open space meeting. We have a list of seven goals about open space. We should plan on discussing what the public has been discussing such as: controlling invasive's and maintaining a healthy forest.
- Steve: How big was the meeting?
- Richard: Between 20 and 25
- Leo: If we schedule this before time and have Richard plan out these issues, that sounds good. Maybe we'll have to do this for the rest of the elements as well.

Agenda Item #3: Open Meeting Law

Discussion

- Leo: Specifically, we had a discussion about the sustainability definition that was against the Open Meeting Law.
- Chase: What the commission did wrong was have a discussion with a quorum outside the meeting. The meeting has to be advertised.
- Leo: You can email an article to the group but you can't comment on it.
- Chase: Email should be used to make meeting times and places. You need to advertise it 48 hours in advance.
- Leo: You can include agendas, scheduling information, reports, or documents in email but members may not express their opinions.
- Steve: I think it's important to see opinions in order to be ready to discuss the topic when you get to the meeting. It's ridiculous to have to read opinions when you get to the meeting and then discuss. Your only suppose to discuss the information on the agenda. People are supposed to be able to see what's going on to be discussed and decide if they want to come.
- Chase: It's not about those people.
- Steve: Well it is why they are open meetings. What I heard is the law in July is going to be amended within the next year based on the new technology.

Agenda Item #4: Blind Spot Video

Discussion:

- Leo: Mark has purchased a DVD called blind spot about peak oil.
- Mark: Would this be worth having a showing to the sustainability committee or Groton Local?
- Steve: How long is it?
- Mark: 88 minutes and the people in the film are well known.
- Chase: I was reading something saying we reach 9 billion people by 2050.
- Leo: The population is actually expected to reach between 8 and 12 billion people by 2050. I strongly support viewing this move. Do you agree?
- Chase: Yes
- Steve: Yes
- Leo: Any other business?
- Unanimous no