

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 11th, 2010

Location: Nashua River Watershed Association

Attendees:

Commissioners: Mike Roberts, Leo Laverdure, Chase Duffy, Carl Flowers, Carl Canner

Commissioners absent: Chris Christie, Steve Webber, Richard Hewitt

Minutes taken by: Stephanie Strickland

Agenda:

1. **Report on Sustainability Café- Leo, steering committee**
2. **Future Café's/Events- Michael, Leo**
3. **Discussion of Master Planning Participation**
4. **Discussion of Data Analysis, Synthesis, and Final Product**
5. **Adjourn**

Agenda Item #1: Report on Sustainability Café- Leo, steering committee

Discussion

- Mike: Leo you're on. Some of the members weren't at the café so I would like you to give a summary.
- Chase: You can look at Tucker's letter for that.
- Leo: I will forward that letter. There was a version of the graphic image put into an easel page next to the big one for people to include additional information.
- Leo: Aaliyah intends to write up her notes, as well as Pat Parker Roach. There have also been individual inputs from The Garden Club and the Ridge. They haven't been wrapped up yet.
- Mike: I'm meeting with Mark Haddad and members of the staff Friday.
- Leo: Next Thursday I'm going to the Rotary Club. They meet at the Country Club. Chase has been urging me to do the Lions Club as well.
- Chase: I think people were very taken by the questions and the meeting.
- Mike: The question now is how we craft these into action items. We as a commission need to sit down and figure out how to analyze these once we get them into notes.
- Carl F: We should put down a number next to each topic when it's mentioned so we know how important it is. I think affordable housing is a common topic because young people can't afford to live here and elders are beginning to be unable to afford it. One thing happening is people straight out of college are unable to move out of home because they're in debt from their student loans. In Groton, 70% of taxes are going to schools.
- Chase: It used to be lower but our system was less than mediocre. Now there's a union and teachers are being paid more. They're still not being paid as much as jobs with the same qualifications.

- Carl C: When I first came here hardly anyone went to college and some didn't even graduate from high school.
- Leo: All we're trying to say is Groton has a good school system for the money put in. I did research in the area and found that the more money put in, the better the results you get from the school.
- Chase: We regionalized when the state was paying big bucks for us to do so and now they're cutting back.
- Mike: Anything else for agenda items one or two? Leo combined them.
- Leo: I propose that we have an agenda addressing agricultural issues and bring in people from the state and umass.
- Carl C: I think we should do the same for transportation.
- Leo: Again I think we should bring in experts. This is different from the sustainability café's because we're including expertise.
- Leo: We still have this question of how to prioritize the information we have from the café. We can take our sense of what's more important or we can open it to the public by creating a survey. We can put the questions in.
- Chase: But then a bunch of people who haven't thought about it are answering. Something like this is best done by a commission.
- Carl C: I don't think it can harm anything. We could get good input and it's democratic.
- Carl F: I think we should prioritize. Something like housing should go in as well.
- Mike: I'd like to say we should do both.
- Chase: I think we should spend the time working on another café.
- Mike: We need to find out what's most important.
- Leo: We should be tabling topics at least six months in advance.

Action Item

- **Action Item: Mike to draft a thank-you letter for Joni and Pat Parker Roach.**

Motion

- **Motion: Leo: I make a motion that we have a meeting dedicated to agriculture/preserving land.**
- **Carl F seconds motion**
- **All in favor: unanimous**

Motion

- **Motion: Carl C: I make a motion that we have a meeting to discuss the topic of transportation issues including traffic congestion, public transportation, parking problems, and alternatives in town.**
- **Carl F seconds motion**
- **All in favor: unanimous**

Agenda Item #3: Discussion of Master Planning Participation

Discussion

- Mike: Tell us how the planning sub committees for the master plan are going.
- Chase: The community services is going well. John is on top of all his stuff. We have a list of all the buildings in Groton and we're checking through all of those.

I think I can get good material from this group. There's a lot of talk on education and the elections.

- Carl C: Land use. We discussed the concept of villages in Groton and tried to decide where in Groton was considered a village.
- Leo: Sustainability element. Scott Wilson is our chair and he's on top of things. We've probably met four times and we meet once a week. We covered a lot of things including water and energy. They are very interested in the sustainability café results, which was the first item discussed yesterday. We are restructuring the questions because we didn't think the other ones went far enough.
- Carl F: Affordable housing/cultural resources. We're looking at houses over 75 years old and looking at their cultural significance.
- Mike: I'm also on affordable housing/cultural resources. Local significance is independent of age which is important. Need inventory on locally significant events. We're hiring professionals to do inventory.

Action

- **Action Item: Carl F: I will contact the various departments to get started: agriculture, umass, and the farm beau.**