

Sustainability Commission Minutes October 20th, 2015

Commissioners present: Michael Roberts, Leo Laverdure, Alison Dolbear Peterson, Bruce Easom, and Carl Flowers. With a quorum present, the meeting convened at 7:10 pm.

Minutes – Michael

The July minutes were amended and accepted. Michael will assemble all of the minutes from past meetings.

Groton Climate Change Adaptability Report – Leo

Since Groton is close to the metropolitan Boston area, Leo will use the Metropolitan Boston Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Report and apply changes relevant to Groton. His report will cover specific Groton vulnerabilities and focus on what individual town departments need to know. He will release the report by the end of January.

Pollinator Preservation Project Report - Alison

Alison met with Chris Pryor of the New England Forestry Foundation at the Groton Place meadow site for a discussion of the monarch butterfly habitat project. Permission was received to plow and seed a milkweed meadow there. Bennett Black will plow the area and Alison will seed the meadow. The Groton Greenway Committee provided \$100 for the milkweed seed. A motion was made and approved for the Sustainability Commission to pay the \$300 fee for plowing the meadow to Bennett Black.

Happiness/Wellbeing Initiative Report – Michael

Responses to the Happiness/Wellbeing survey have slowed so Michael is considering closing the survey and having the responses analyzed. Michael will consult with the COA to see if there is overlap between a recent COA study and this study.

Agricultural Initiative Progress – Carl Flowers/Bruce Easom

Carl will have a meeting to investigate lowering real estate taxes on small farms in the Groton area. He thinks bio-char should be looked at by farmers so he will attend an Agriculture Commission meeting and get on the agenda to talk about bio-char. He will get information from the Historical Commission Report about what local farmers are growing and then talk to them to see if there is interest in bio-char.

Bruce would like to help farmers navigate the permitting process. He will find out whether there is a conflict of interest with his work on the Conservation Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.