

# ***Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes***

March 15, 2022

## **I. Call to order**

Alison Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

Attendees were as follows:

Alison Dolbear Peterson (Chairperson)

Bruce Eason

David Southwick

Deborah Wakrat Schwartz

Ginger Vollmar

Jim Allen

Jim Simko

Katrina Posner (Clerk)

Phil Francisco (Vice Chair)

## **II. Open issues**

- a) Minutes from the February 15, 2022 meeting were approved with suggested changes.
- b) There was a discussion concerning the Groton Herald Article on the New England Grid Operators process to meet the clean energy transition. It was decided that when the sustainability commission's classes are held concerning solar power it will not take sides on this issue, but will provide information to the public and let them decide for themselves.
- c) Ginger attended the NC4 (North Central Climate Change Coalition) meeting which was held on 2/16/2022 and summarized the discussion. More information can be found on the [northcentralclimatechange.org](http://northcentralclimatechange.org) website. Phil will attend the meeting on 3/16/2022 and report back to us at our next meeting.
- d) Reviewed the Introductory Note from the commission to the public that is being worked on by Ginger. There were a number of suggestions made and she will take them under consideration.
- e) Alison reported on the Pollinator Habitat. Some pavers which will be used by the boy scouts to make some space for people to sit and enjoy the garden. Also, talked to the Girl Scout leaders and they offered to help with the final planting on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Jim Allen volunteered that he has a list of climate resilient trees. Alison asked that he forward the list to her and she will send the list to the Friends of the Trees in Groton.
- f) Phil reported on the Alternative Mosquito Management Plan. The good news is that retail stores in Massachusetts will no longer be able to sell Neonic Pesticides in 2022. Unfortunately, there may not be enough time to put all the documentation together for the

State Waiver from spraying as it is due May 28<sup>th</sup>. Phil talked to Becky Pine about the need to have agreement from the Highway Dept., the Health Dept and the Select Board. There also, needs to be an open period for public comment before the Select Board vote to make the request. The good news is that they will only spray if we're in a danger zone for the West Nile Virus.

- g) Bruce is looking into Education for removing mosquito breeding. Old tires are great collectors of standing water which helps the mosquito's breed. There is a need for a space which is covered in order to keep old tires from collecting water. Only place to recycle is in Littleton, MA which requires a minimum of 100 tires and \$500 to drop old tires off. Jim Allen made a motion that the town and the transfer station build a collection place. The motion was seconded. Discussion was had on this motion. A roll call vote was taken on Jim's motion (4 yes and 5 no). The motion was not carried. Bruce is willing to look further into the problem and see if there is any funding or grants available for this purpose.
- h) Alison reported that there is no movement on the Green Futures Act right now. Phil noted that currently we do not have a state rep. Ginger stated that she wrote to our state senators with no response yet.
- i) Ginger reported that she reached out to the Groton-Dunstable school system about their food waste. She was referred to Whitsons (food service). The contact at Whitsons was supportive for disposal of the food waste, but indicated that the School Board would have to make that decision. No response from the School Board yet.

### **III. New Issues**

- a) Alison stated that the Groton River Fest is to be held on June 12<sup>th</sup> (Sunday) from 9AM to 4PM. The commission has been asked to participate. The town provides a table and the commission has a banner. Alison will provide a sign-up sheet for those members who would like to volunteer to man the table.
- b) Ginger noted that there would be another opportunity for participation in town events at the Groton Fest in the fall.

**The next meeting will be held on April 19, 2022 at 7:00 PM.**

Minutes submitted by: Katrina Posner, Clerk

Minutes approved by: