



Sustainability Commission

Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Groton Center

Attendees: Alison Dolbear Peterson, Andrew Scott, Charlotte Weigel, Bruce Easom, Jim Allen, Ginger Vollmar, Pat Parker-Roach, Phil Francisco, David Southwick

Visitors: Destination Groton Committee

Minutes:

Called to Order – 7:03 PM

- Joint meeting session of 30 minutes with Destination Groton Committee.(DGC)
 - Opening remarks and introduction to formation and current activities of DGC.
 - Major emphasis of discussion on Grant applications and writing of such, which has been DGC focus for the past year.
 - Estimated that Commission/Committee members time spent on efforts for that Commission/Committee is \$36.00/hr and is eligible for inclusion into matching funds grants. Recommended an app for tracking time: TrackItForward.
 - First step must be to establish Sustainability Commission priorities, plan which grants are the best targets for the Commission, and then start applying for specific grants for each. DGC member Margot McWilliams could be a needed resource.

- Update on Pollinator Habitat Garden
 - Need to write an article for the Groton Herald and have picture to accompany for week of August 25 publication.
 - Discussion was held on irrigation system for Pollinator Garden, using town water piped from Groton Center tap. Discussion followed that the Commission should consider alternative sources and methods to irrigate. Jim Allen volunteered to review with the Town Manager if this is possible
 - Can and how do we collect rain water from Groton Center Building roof. Andrew Scott and Bruce Easom will be additional information resources.

- Alison Dolbear Peterson presented an invoice for tree removal from the Pollinator Habitat garden for \$500.00.
 - MOTION TO ACCEPT: Bruce Easom; SECONDED; Andrew Scott; Motion Passed.
- Discussion on update of Pollinator Habitat Corridor, with potential areas within the Town.
 - Draft letter for support of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Bill H.843, reviewed and comments/changes included.
 - Charlotte Weigel advised that any plans for planting such a corridor need to take into account dealing with invasive plants and maintenance.
- Finished Groton GHG Emissions inventory presentation was reviewed and some suggestions were made to simplify messages.
- Planning for Sustainability Commission participation at GrotonFest; Saturday September 30th.
 - A Commission Zoom meeting will be needed on the following week to review and approve the Commissions activities and presentations during the day.
 - Receipt for \$100.00 GrotonFest fee was presented for reimbursement approval.
 - MOTION TO ACCEPT: Bruce Easom; SECONDED; Ginger Vollmar; Motion Passed.
- Draft letter to ZBA regarding “Heritage Landing”.
 - Tabled
- Discussion on GELD activities
 - Time of use pricing will remain optional until the October 2023 billing cycle (beginning September 24th), when town wide implementation for residential service will take effect
 - GELD is still debating the use home-based versus system-level electrical storage batteries at the present time.
- Sustainability Commission Education seminars
 - Next sessions are planned for on September 6th, and October 4th, articles on session to be submitted to Groton Herald and on-line social media.
 - Phil Francisco reported that the Herald (Russ Harris) has said they are interested in coverage of the PFAS seminar (October 4th) both before to make people aware and covering the event itself.
 - For the PFAS session, we may also pursue stories about the event in regional papers that the Destination Groton Committee has established contacts with already.
- Review of Commission Funds
 - Slide presentation of funds allotted and spent to date presented for Commission members information and will be a regular review item in future meetings.

- New Business
 - Tabled

- Minutes
 - The amended minutes for the July 18, 2023 Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

- Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:22pm

Respectfully submitted,

- *James Allen & Phil Francisco*

Approved by Groton Sustainability Commission, September 19, 2023.