A circular logo with text and a picture of a helicopter

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**Sustainability Commission**

**Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: The Groton Center

Attendees: Bruce Easom, Sue Fitterman, Phil Francisco, Ken Horton, Linda Loren, Alison Dolbear Peterson, Pat Parker-Roach, Jim Simko, David Southwick, Ginger Vollmar, Charlotte Weigel

**Minutes:**

Called to Order – 7:00 pm

1. **Final Logistics & Preparations for Fall GrotonFest (Saturday, September 28th) [Phil, all]**

The following items will be in the tent: Sustainability Wheel; table with handouts about the Sustainable Groton Advocate Program; wooden booth for “Heat Pump Coach Is In”; posters for the October 23rd Heat Pump Event and the November 13th Climate Action Forum; handout about launch of Sustainable Groton website; rainwater collection barrel and tickets for drawing; survey from the Climate Action Working Group; and the new banner for the Commission. Ginger suggested that Commission members and Advocate volunteers that are staffing the tent wear nametags and Phil offered to provide them. To promote the event, notices will be posted on the Commission Facebook page, the Groton Facebook page, and in the Groton Herald. Separate motions were made and seconded to:

* authorize the printing of two posters for $130 and flyers for $125
* authorize the payment of a $169 invoice for the rainwater collection barrel
* authorize the printing of tickets at Staples for the rainwater collection barrel drawing

All of the motions passed unanimously.

1. **Planning for the Autumn Tire Recycling Day [Bruce]**

Bruce said the Autumn Tire Recycling Day will be on Saturday October 26th from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Transfer Station. Pat agreed to help. Notices will be placed on the Commission Facebook page and website, the Town website, Groton Channel TV, and in the Groton Herald. The group discussed the idea of handouts at the October 5th Town Meeting and the October 23rd Heat Pump Event. A motion was made and seconded authorizing Bruce to spend $500 for the recycling tire event on October 26th and $300 for advertising in the Groton Herald. The motion passed unanimously.

1. **Pollinator Corridor Project Intern Status [Bruce]**

Bruce learned that the Commissioner of Trust Funds are available until the end of this fiscal year. He will advertise again for the Pollinator Corridor Project internship at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School, The Groton School, and Lawrence Academy.

1. **Update and Upcoming Events from Climate Action Working Group and Climate Action Subcommittee [Charlotte, Ken]**

Charlotte said the goal of the Climate Action Working Group is toassess support for a Climate Action Plan and for putting a Climate Resolution forth in the spring of 2025 to establish a Net Zero goal for the town by 2050. The group will report back to the Select Board about how residents feel about a Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Working Group has created a general presentation and a survey for community outreach and plans to meet with the following groups over the next several months: Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Council on Aging, School Board, Capital Planning, Building Department, Department of Public Works, Groton Police, and Groton Fire Department.

1. **Plans for autumn Education Series events in October (23rd), November (13th), and December (4th) [Phil, Linda, Charlotte]**

Current plans include a Heat Pump Event on Wednesday October 23 at 7:00 pm at The Groton Center; a Climate Action Forum on Wednesday, November 13 at 7:00 pm at The Groton Center; and a presentation by Rebecca Thackaberry on December 4th about reducing plastics from our lives.

1. **Final Review and Authorization to “Go-Live” of Sustainable Groton website [Pat, all]**

Pat walked the group through all pages of the website. He will be the webmaster for the site and will rely on Commission members to provide information about events and activities. The Home page of the website will track people’s progress against the Commission’s goal of having 600 Groton households taking 2500 actions by the end of 2025. The Home page also lists events (specific to a date) and campaigns (actions over a period of time). The group agreed that the new website should be promoted on the Commission’s Facebook page and at the Commission tent at GrotonFest.

The group suggested the following:

* Remove the twitter logo from Home page.
* Add a link on Home page to the Commission Facebook page.
* Add an “Action” about recycling (Ginger will work on this).
* Add a Calendar at some point in time.
* Change the three photos on the Home page on a regular basis.
* Get approval from Groton Electric Light Department (GELD) and the Groton Fire Department and the Building Inspector before posting any copy that mentions them.

A motion was made and seconded to authorize Pat to complete work on the website and launch it at GrotonFest on September 28th. After one question and a group discussion, the motion passed unanimously. The group thanked Pat for his dedication and excellent work on this project.

1. **Brief, preliminary discussion of any potential commission member candidate(s) [all]**

The group discussed who might be a potential candidate for joining the Commission since there is currently one vacancy. David and Pat will reach out to a few individuals who may be interested.

1. **Other Subcommittee/Workgroup Updates, as appropriate**

Sustainable Groton Advocates Program Subcommittee: David is interested in meeting the Advocates in person and will arrange a get-together or coffee hour. David and Pat will create a process to capture information when a new person signs up to be an Advocate.

Pollinator Corridor & Habitat Subcommittee: Sue reported that she and Alison have planted about 70 native plants (including shrubs, perennials, and vines) in the new Pollinator Pathway area. There are 20 more plants that will be added before the end of September.

Grant & Fiscal Development Subcommittee: Bruce said this Subcommittee has been successful in identifying sources of potential grants but is still working on finding out where the demand is and where the monies can be applied. Phil mentioned that at a recent Select Board meeting a resident asked if any grant funds were available to either repair or remove the Squannacook River Dam in West Groton. Phil suggested the Subcommittee look into this and report any findings to the Town Manager.

Energy Coaching Workgroup: Charlotte said this workgroup is busy preparing for the October 23rd Heat Pump Event.

1. **New Business**

Phil told the group about a letter from Lizzy Phan at The Groton School offering the help of students for a few hours to assist in any Commission projects or activities. The group discussed possible projects but did not come to any conclusions.

1. **Review/approve Minutes from the August 20th Commission meetings [Sue, all]**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

1. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm passed unanimously.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 15th at 7:00 pm at The Groton Center**

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Fitterman