



Sustainability Commission

Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Groton Center

Attendees: Charlotte Weigel, Linda Loren, Alison Dolbear Peterson, Bruce Easom, Veronica O'Donnell, Ken Horton, Ginger Vollmar

Absent: Sue Fitterman, David Southwick, Jim Simko, Pat Parker-Roach

Minutes:

Called to order at 7:08 pm

1. **Climate Action Subcommittee update:** The Climate Resolution was passed by majority vote at Spring Town Meeting on April 28, 2025.

a) The next step will be to ask for technical assistance from the State (deadline of 6/30/25) for help with a decarbonization plan. We will have to update our emissions inventory as part of this process. We voted to request this technical assistance.

b) The next step after that is to have the Town adopt the specialized stretch code. There are 3 levels of stretch code and we are currently at Level 2. Level 3, the specialized stretch code, only applies to new construction. We voted to move forward with this initiative, knowing that it will require lots of reaching out to groups in town and lots of education about what the requirements are for the specialized stretch code. This adoption of the Level 3 stretch code will require a majority vote at a future Town Meeting.

2. **Energy Coaching Subcommittee update:** Ken reported that he had two new clients in the past month.

3. **Grant Subcommittee update:** Charlotte reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed and the Energy Manager position has been posted and advertising has started. We also were awarded a Municipal Energy Technical Assistance Grant of \$15K for retro-commissioning of the High School energy systems to get them to maximum efficiency.

4. **Pollinator Habitat Subcommittee update:** Sue purchased the botanical labels for the plants at the Pollinator Garden and submitted an invoice for \$313.40. We voted to approve the reimbursement of this expense. Alison requested \$186.60 to purchase more plants to replace some that died due to the drought last fall. We voted to approve this expense.

5. **Outreach Subcommittee update:** We have a Heat Pump seminar coming up on 5/22/25 at the Groton Center. RiverFest will be held on 6/8/2025 from 11:00 – 4:00 and Alison will contact the organizers to reserve a booth space for us (Alison, Pat, Bruce and Ginger are planning to help staff the booth). There is tentative word from GELD that there will be a ribbon cutting at the Florence Roche School for the new BESS system (Battery Energy Storage System) on 6/18/2025. There is also a possibility that Jon Patterson from GELD will present at a seminar that same evening about GELD, their BESS systems and the MyMeter software that is available for GELD customers to use to monitor their electric usage.

6. **Review FY2026 budget:** Bruce reviewed where we stand with the budget. We still have money left for FY2025 (in the amount of \$3K) except for the Pollinator Budget (which has been depleted by the vote taken this evening to allow Alison to buy more plants). For FY2026, we have \$5740.

7. **Tire Recycling update:** At the Tire Recycling event on 5/3/2025, Bruce reported collecting 42 tires. However, someone actually took 22 of them to reuse. Therefore, the cost to recycle the remaining 20 tires is very low and Tom Delaney said he would take care of it. Bruce thinks that we should probably hold just two tire recycling events in FY2026.

8. **Review meeting minutes from the April 15th, 2025, Commission meeting:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes from the 4/15/25 meeting as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

9. **New Business:** Barbara Griffin from Prescott Community Center reached out to both Charlotte and Bruce about working with us on some joint programming having to do with environmental issues. Commission members were not sure about this as Prescott usually charges for classes and we, as a commission, do not. Charlotte will be meeting with Barbara Griffin on 6/4/2025 to discuss this idea in greater detail. Someone also raised the idea of having a “Climate Summit” where the different climate groups in town meet together to discuss what we are each doing and future plans. We will revisit this idea at a future meeting.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 8:55 pm passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the Groton Center

Respectfully submitted,
Ginger Vollmar

Approved by Groton Sustainability Commission, September 3, 2025.

