

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
September 8, 2021**

**5:00 P.M.**

**Meeting Held Via Zoom Conference**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mr. Hubelbank, Ms. Matteo, Mr. Charles, Ms. Dyer, Mr. Hagenbuch, Ms. Rowe
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Ms. Payne, Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Gil-Rodgers
Staff:	Mr. Buell, Ms. Gorra
OTHERS:	Ms. Zukauskas, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Sudol, Mr. Hileman

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:06 P.M.

**Consideration of Minutes for the August 11, 2021 Meeting**

Motion: To approve the August 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes by Ms. Matteo, seconded by Ms. Gorra. Passed unanimously.

**Update on Submission to State**

Mr. Hubelbank stated that on the Sustainable CT website, he had looked to see what progress the town had made in the approval process and had found that none of the items submitted had yet to be reviewed. He indicated that upon further investigation, he had discovered that no updates on the town's application will be posted until the entire application is fully reviewed which means that the Committee will not receive an update on the application until October at the earliest.

**Discussion of Plan of Conversation and Development with Wayne Hileman**

The Chair introduced Mr. Hileman as the Chair of the Planning Commission and indicated that in 2023 the new Plan of Conservation and Development, P.O.C.D., would be published. He went on to state that Mr. Hileman had asked to attend the meeting so that he could hear the Committee's thoughts on the P.O.C.D. and what issues they felt should be addressed within this document.

Mr. Hileman thanked the Committee for all of their work thus far, and stated that when the Sustainability section of the P.O.C.D. had originally been written, he had not fully understood the focus of this section. He went on to state that for the last couple of months, members of the Planning Commission had begun dialog with various commissions, organizations, and groups within Washington to get a sense of what changes the community desired for the upcoming P.O.C.D.

Mr. Hubelbank stated that in the coming months, he would like for the Commission to review the Sustainability section of the P.O.C.D. as an agenda item, and asked if the Committee had thoughts to share at this meeting.

Ms. Matteo stated that she felt climate change should be given have its own section in the P.O.C.D., and for the document as a whole to implement more language to promote equity. The Committee then held a short conversation regarding equitable actions which could be taken within the town to include more members of the community in town decisions and meetings.

Mr. Hubelbank asked Mr. Hileman how the town could enforce elements of the P.O.C.D. and how this document is approved within the town. Mr. Hileman indicated that he preferred to think of enforcement as implementation, and that he had struggled to implement elements of the P.O.C.D. within the town because the Planning Commission does not have the authority to enforce any of the ideas or goals set forth within the document. Mr. Hileman then explained to the Commission how the P.O.C.D. is drafted, and approved by the town. The Committee then held a discussion regarding enforcement of the P.O.C.D.

Following this discussion, the Committee then discussed their desire to implement more elements from Sustainable CT within the P.O.C.D. Ms. Gorra indicated that she felt the 13 sections on Sustainable CT's website could easily be put into the P.O.C.D. going forward. The Committee then discussed ways that separate commissions could work cohesively towards sustainable goals for the town, and how the P.O.C.D. could be worded with stronger language to more effectively guide commissions.

Mr. Charles stated that as a result of climate change, large regulations may be put in place on the State and Federal levels, and expressed his belief that the town should endeavor to get ahead of the curb on these changes.

Ms. Dyer indicated that the P.O.C.D. should encourage better farming practices within the town. She then expressed her desire to have a right to farm ordinance passed within the town, and debated the necessity of this ordinance with Mr. Hileman. The Committee then held a conversation regarding farming in Washington.

Following this discussion, Ms. Rowe indicated to the Committee her desire to encourage more eco-friendly practices within the town regarding solar power, use of fertilizer, and the town's carbon footprint. Mr. Hileman presented the Committee with a short summary of changes to solar within the state, and the Committee discussed certain ways that solar energy could be implemented within the town.

Ms. Gorra stated that she would like to have health and wellness included within the upcoming P.O.C.D. and a discussion ensued regarding this subject. Mr. Hileman then asked the Committee if they would like a consultant to help with the Sustainability section of the P.O.C.D. and the Committee determined that they did not yet know if this would be needed.

Mr. Hagenbuch stated that he felt the P.O.C.D. is the vehicle for the community to come together in a collaborative manner. He indicated that he wished for the organizations who contribute to this document to have ongoing engagement with one another to work towards goals cohesively even after the completion of the P.O.C.D. Mr. Charles then asked for clarification on Steep Rock's authority when obtaining new land. Mr. Hagenbuch explained to the Committee how the grant process for obtaining land functions, and provided a depiction of the restrictions that that the Steep Rock Association faces when purchasing land.

## **Discussion of Future Goals**

Mr. Hubelbank stated that he felt that the Commission had clearly covered many future goals within their discussion of the P.O.C.D. and that he would like to continue this discussion at a future meeting.

## **Other Business to Come Before the Committee**

Mr. Hubelbank indicated that Ms. Nelson had patiently waited through the duration of the meeting to provide the Committee with a brief description of Low Impact Development. He asked that Mr. Charles introduce Ms. Nelson to the Committee, and to give a brief depiction of the work she had done with Low Impact Development. Following this introduction, Ms. Nelson described her work experience to the Committee, and stated that she felt that the Sustainability Committee had addressed the need for improved equity in Washington appropriately.

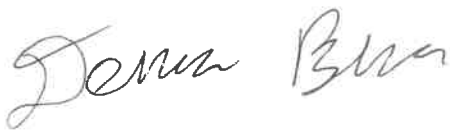
Ms. Nelson stated that the LSID manual used within the town of Morris had been implemented largely because of concern over the health of Bantam Lake. She explained that the regulations set forth by this document encouraged workers to work with the land instead of against it. She stated that every action taken in building projects directly impacts the environment, and the purpose of LSID is to look at how the health of the environment is impacted by building projects and the long-term effects of these projects. Ms. Sudol listed the link to this manual in the chat for the Zoom, and this information is included below. The Committee then held a short conversation about Low Impact Development.

<http://northwesthillscog.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Morris-LSID-Manual-FINAL-1-1.pdf>

## **Adjournment**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:37 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dennis Buell  
Town of Washington  
Sustainability Committee Clerk  
9-13-2021

