

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 9, 2022**

5:00 P.M.

Meeting Held Via Zoom Conference

| | |
|------------------|--|
| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Mr. Hubelbank, Mr. Charles, Ms. Dyer, Ms. Gorra, Ms. Gil-Rodgers, Mr. Hagenbuch, Ms. Matteo, Ms. Payne |
| MEMBERS ABSENT: | Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Rowe, Mr. Hagenbuch |
| Staff: | Mr. Buell, Ms. Gorra |
| OTHERS: | Ms. Weydig, Mr. Genovese, Ms. Bennett |

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:01 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Approval of minutes from February 8, 2022

Motion: To approve the minutes for the February 8, 2022 meeting by Ms. Gil-Rodgers, seconded by Ms. Dyer. Passed unanimously.

Update of updating the POCD

Mr. Hubelbank stated that he had reached out to Sustainable Ct to find out if they had experts who may be able to help with the upcoming P.O.C.D. but discovered that they did not have anyone who may be able to assist with the sustainability chapter of this document. Mr. Hubelbank then indicated that Mr. Hileman, Chair of the Planning Committee, had agreed to look into hiring a consultant who would be able to help with writing this section of the P.O.C.D.

Update on Resiliency workshop

Mr. Hubelbank stated that a number of community members had attended the resiliency workshop and that the report which had been drafted for this workshop would soon be completed. Following this, Mr. Hubelbank explained that the document's key points would be as follows.

- Multiuse Senior and Community Center
- Storm Properness Procedures
- Adaptive and resilient Zoning and Planning procedures.

Mr. Hubelbank stated that there was also concern over the need for young volunteers for many of the volunteer organizations within the town.

Discussion regarding this workshop ensued.

Discussion of next steps

- **Please review the email from Jay Hubelbank**

Mr. Hubelbank indicated that he had sent the Committee a list of items which he felt should be considered within the discussion of future steps for the Committee. This list is as follows.

1. Community information: use of the website, newsletter, and offering programs/speakers to inform residents about all aspects of sustainability and what they can do to support the town's efforts and what they can do themselves.
2. Identify what net zero and carbon neutral means and what it means to the town to strive to achieve them.
3. Solar arrays/Micro grid: How can the town take advantage of state laws that allow municipalities to build grids.
4. Farms and town support for farmers. What can the Sustainability Committee do to help our local farmers?
5. Low impact sustainable housing. What does this mean and how can we move Washington to adopt regulations that allow for it.
6. Involving our local schools in sustainability
7. Coordinating with other likeminded groups in town.

Following Mr. Hubbelbank's explanation of these items, Ms. Gorra indicated that the Housing Commission wished to host a speaker on net-zero affordable housing which they felt multiple Commissions should attend. Following this, Ms. Gorra indicated that she would like for the Sustainability Committee to write something for the town newsletter. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Weydig asked if the experts who would be requested to provide informational speeches would providing general education for the community, or if the information they provided would be used to guide regulation. After some discussion, Mr. Hubelbank asked how leaders could work together with the Zoning Commission to address affordable housing, and to examine how the new Affordable Housing State Statute would impact the current Zoning regulations.

Ms. Bennett suggested incorporating public speakers into the school curriculum for Region 12 and indicated that students could record these speakers as a part of their classwork. Discussion ensued. Mr. Hubelbank indicated that he wished to focus on projects which would be realistic for the Committee to accomplish. He referenced affordable housing and waste management as examples of achievable goals for the Committee. Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Hubelbank requested that Ms. Gorra explain the new Zoning regulations which had been created by the State. Ms. Gorra described this State Statute as the Zoning Enabling Act. She went on to explain that the Housing Commission's sole goal is affordable housing, and that

despite the Sustainability Committee's support of this endeavor, the Housing Commission should be the primary driver for this town goal.

Ms. Matteo expressed her belief that different options for enforcement should be explored within the town. Discussion ensued. The Committee then discussed farming within Washington and ways to better support the farming community.

Mr. Genovese the Co-President and Treasurer of the Washington Environmental Council, (W.E.C.) indicated that he had met with an organization called the Housatonic Resource Recovery Association, (H.R.R.A). who had indicated that Washington is currently a member of M.I.R. which will soon close down its waste management plant in Hartford. Mr. Genovese stated that according to H.R.R.A. 30% of solid waste produced by Washington is organic and could potentially be composted. He then explained that he will meet again with H.R.R.A. to discuss options for Washington going forward and to learn more about how the town would benefit by joining H.R.R.A. in the future.

Other Business to come before the Committee

Ms. Gorra stated she would like to discuss Earth Day. She indicated that the annual roadside cleanup was planned for Earth Day and that she was still working on collaborations for the town's Earth Day event. Ms. Gorra stated she would like to organize something for this event. Mr. Hubelbank stated that it is W.E.C.'s 50th anniversary and asked Mr. Genovese if anything was planned for this anniversary. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Hubelbank asked if the Committee wanted to attempt silver certification status through Sustainable Ct. and a short discussion followed. Ms. Gorra asked if they had requested a budget line for Sustainability, Mr. Hubelbank stated that this had been requested.

Mr. Buell informed the Committee that no formal motion had been passed to accept a revised meeting schedule. A motion was put forth and passed.

Motion: To change the meeting time for the April 13th and November 9th
Sustainability Committee meeting to 4:00 pm opposed to 5:00 pm by
Mr. Hubelbank seconded by Ms. Dyer. Passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:24 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Buell

Dennis Buell
Sustainability Committee Clerk
3-16-2022