

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
May 11, 2022**

**5:00 P.M.**

**Meeting Held Via Zoom Conference**

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00.

**Minutes**

Mr. Hubelbank stated that the first item on the agenda was approval of minutes for the April 13, 2022 meeting. Mr. Hubelbank made a motion to approve the minutes and asked if there was a second for the motion.

Mr. Charles stated that the team from Sasaki had not provided information regarding the HERS rating for the Frederick Gunn School's proposed Center for Innovation and Active Citizenship at a prior Zoning Commission meeting. Mr. Charles went on to state that he had felt that this information should have been provided at the Sustainability Committee's presentation regarding this project. Mr. Charles indicated that he had felt that net zero had not been considered during the design of this building. Mr. Hubelbank stated that the minutes had accurately reflected the team's response to this question and suggested reaching out to Sasaki and Mr. Becker to obtain information on this matter going forward.

Motion: To approve the minutes for the April 13, 2022 meeting by Mr.

Hubelbank, seconded by Mr. Charles. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Charles indicated that he had reviewed a Conservation Commission easement list, and stated that he would like to find out how much of this protected land was classified as 490. Discussion ensued.

**POCD**

This agenda item was discussed simultaneously with the Committee's discussion of "Next Steps"

## Next Steps

Mr. Hubelbank stated that he would like to discuss sustainability within the P.O.C.D. and indicated that he had forwarded a list of sustainable action items which he felt should be reviewed by the Committee to determine future steps.

Mr. Hubelbank informed the Committee that Mr. Hileman, Chair of the Planning Commission, was present and asked for an update on what the Planning Commission was looking for from the Sustainability Committee. Mr. Hileman indicated that he was in attendance to answer questions and gather feedback opposed to asking the Sustainability Committee questions on behalf of the Planning Commission. He stated that in terms of the P.O.C.D., he was looking for “big ideas,” “big asks,” and “guiding principles,” opposed to a list of action items for the Sustainability Committee to work on in the coming years.

Ms. Gorra suggested rating goals within the P.O.C.D. to determine how much work had been accomplished, what work needed to be done, and whether or not these goals should be kept as a part of the P.O.C.D. Following this, Ms. Gorra offered reducing the carbon footprint for the town as an example. Further discussion ensued.

Following a short discussion of big ideas and specific goals within the P.O.C.D., Mr. Hileman provided an example of a specific goal which would be included within the P.O.C.D. He explained that the Natural Resource Inventory Report for the Town of Washington had not been updated since 1999 and indicated that a new update to this document would be requested within the upcoming P.O.C.D. He stated that the Conservation Commission would need hire a consultant which would be budgeted for. Mr. Hileman explained that while an update to the Natural Resource Inventory Report is not an overarching idea to be included within the P.O.C.D., it is a “big get.” Mr. Hubelbank stated that the Sustainability Committee will need to identify goals, and ways to reach those goals as a town.

Mr. Hubelbank suggested developing sustainable ideas and finding action items which would help achieve these larger goals. Mr. Charles stated that schools and organizations in the area had begun impressive sustainable projects and referenced several of these projects for the Committee. Ms. Gorra indicated that the Committee should acknowledge important goals, but focus on items not currently addressed by other organizations and Commissions.

Mr. Hileman stated that he felt that 3 forms of leadership exist which are as follows- leadership by example, leadership by incentive, and leadership by conscience. He went on to explain that if items do not fit within one of these 3 categories, they should not be included.

Mr. Charles indicated that work towards housing and transportation within the town would greatly improve carbon emissions for the town as a whole. The Committee then discussed idling laws and campaigns to reduce vehicle emissions. Following this, the Commission discussed soil-based zoning, land usage, and building practices.

Ms. Dyer indicated that she felt preservation and restoration of natural resources, housing, transportation, and renewable and efficient energy operations were the large categories which the Committee had largely focused on. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Bennett, Superintendent for Region-12, stated that Region-12 was on the verge of conducting a study with an architect to make the school's buildings more energy efficient. She invited members of the Sustainability Committee to participate in discussions regarding this.

The Committee discussed sustainable education, and community outreach to make the town more sustainable as a whole opposed to simply focusing on the improvement of infrastructure belonging to the town, and Region-12. Discussion of large ideas, and obtainable goals ensued.

Mr. Charles asked Mr. Hileman for his thoughts on soil-based Zoning. He indicated that the Health Department and Inland Wetlands Commission work with soil data to approve building projects which limits where houses may be built. Following this, Mr. Charles asked Mr. Hileman for his thoughts on soil-based zoning in relation to the size of buildable lots. Mr. Hileman indicated that Washington had adopted soil-based Zoning regulations as an intentional action to make a statement about how the town felt about proper land use practices. Following this, Mr. Hileman indicated that large homes were being placed on large lots without regard to sustainability which is an issue which should be considered. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Gorra stated that the Zoning Commission would soon consider new regulations regarding the Zoning Enabling Act. A brief discussion regarding this ensued.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Buell

Town of Washington

Sustainability Committee Clerk

5-18-2022

A link to access a recording of this meeting is below.

[https://townofwashingtongcc-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/dbuell\\_washingtonct\\_org/EggAVu17w\\_BEpm\\_RVb59PsUBtpxsoVyu-9V3x1OHXKHG-A?e=PIAAYp](https://townofwashingtongcc-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/dbuell_washingtonct_org/EggAVu17w_BEpm_RVb59PsUBtpxsoVyu-9V3x1OHXKHG-A?e=PIAAYp)