



GREEN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

TUESDAY, July 16, 2024 - 6:00 pm

HYBRID MEETING

GAB Members Present: Eric Hudson, Cameren Cousins, Mary Smith

GAB Members Virtual: Partha Krishnan, Erik Larson

Town Staff Present: Lauren West, Andrea Becerra

Guests Virtual: Jim Snyder-Grant

Mary calls the meeting to order at 6:00pm and reads the hybrid meeting statement. Attendees are advised that the meeting is being recorded.

Business

Resident Concerns

- None.

GAB Updates

- Mary asks Erik Larson if the DPW meetings have started. He says they have not begun yet but will soon.

Sustainability Updates

Nature-Based Solutions

- Lauren provides an update on the nature-based solutions analysis. She will update the i-tree analysis. She also asked the Town's GIS department for maps from the OSRP.
- Andrea shares that they are looking at shade cover, specifically in parks. The Sustainability Office will check with the DPW and Conservation to learn about work done on tree canopy analysis. Sustainability interns could help analyze current shading.
- Cameren asks when our next Greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory will be produced. Lauren shares that the Sustainability Office will be doing a GHG inventory for 2023 this year. The Office planned to complete an inventory each year, however they recognize it is a time consuming and labor-intensive process.
- Jim Snyder-Grant shares that it would be great to do the inventory every year and suggests it could be completed by others outside of the Sustainability Office.
- Mary suggests the change in emissions reduction between this year and next year could indicate if an annual or biannual report is necessary. Eric notes it is important to track emissions each year to stay in line with net zero target for the Town.

- Cameren emphasizes having a staff member complete the inventory will help the Town notice progress and changes in emissions. She asks about the data we have on who has electrified their homes and overall residential changes in consumption. Andrea and Lauren respond while much of the data is summarized from the State, they will be sending a survey with the census on which fuel types residents use.
- Cameren requests a comparison packet of the carbon sequestration tools available. She notes it would be useful to have some quantitative data to support nature-based solutions.

Red House

- The Sustainability Office sent an RFQ for landscaping at Red House funded by grant from MAPC. Responses are due on the 23rd of July. Lots of landscapers came for a walk through of the space.
- The meadow is a large focus of project. Lots of pollinators, native plants, and water-wise gardening will be implemented. The Town will need volunteers to help plant.
- The Town's Tree Warden walked through the property and identified trees of concern that are decaying, reducing biodiversity, or pose a hazard which should be removed. Each tree removed will be replaced.
- Cameren wonders how to get schools involved, the Town had a group of seniors volunteer for community service day and plans to engage more in the future.
- Mary mentioned the Garden Club has information on native plants.
- Cameren asks about maintenance plan. The Town will be relying on volunteer work. Ian from Conservation will lead a series of volunteer days according to a maintenance plan to be developed.
- Jim mentions some of the Land Stewardship Committee members are able to help with tree removal and pruning.

HMP

- Still in the process of updating the plan, the Sustainability Office will share draft plan when it is ready for public comment.

Climate Leaders

- Still developing the Decarbonization Roadmap as part of the application, everything else is ready. Now a rolling deadline so the Town can apply at any time. Working with the schools to get things approved and signed. Acton is in a good position compared to other communities to apply early.

Sustainability Policy

- Cameren shares that folks in the Sustainability Working Group are working on updating the Select Board Sustainability Policy. They are reorganizing current writing into whereas and therefore statements.

Gas Powered Leaf Blower Ban

- Eric wanted to talk about this since he was not at Town meeting. Jim said the formal vote was to refer back to the Select Board. The Select board hasn't figured out what that means yet, but there will be public hearings to review amendments, feedback from staff,

feedback from Town Counsel, and feedback from other Towns. At this point they are not scheduling a full Town Meeting for this topic. There might be a land purchase Town Meeting in which case they could add this in.

- Mary said it would be good to have open forums. She talked to many residents and heard negative opinions about the proposed bylaw.
- How can the GAB help with this process? Jim says the GAB can reach out to the chair expressing interest and ask that the topic moves on. The GAB may send shared opinions or individual thoughts to the Select Board.
- Cameren makes a motion that Eric contacts Fran, the Select Board Chair, to help expedite public hearings regarding the gas-powered leaf blower bylaw. Eric seconds the motion. All vote in favor. Motion passes.

Energy Magic Show

- The Sustainability Office is hosting an event on Tuesday from 4:30 to 6:30pm at the Acton Memorial Library with pizza, a magician, popsicles and Mass Save resources. It will be focused on renters, those living in multifamily buildings, and income eligible rebates and benefits.

Approve Minutes

- Partha makes a motion to approve the April and May minutes. Cameren seconds the motion. All vote in favor, the motion passes.

Cameren makes a motion to close the meeting at 6:53. Eric seconds the motion. By a unanimous roll call vote; meeting adjourned.