



## GREEN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 - 6:00 pm

\*HYBRID MEETING\*

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

**GAB Members Virtual:** Erik Larson, Peter Berry

**Guests Present:** David Martin

**Town Staff Present:** Andrea Becerra

**Town Staff Virtual:** Lauren West

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**

- None

#### **Sustainability Updates**

##### Climate Resilience Updates (MVP & HMP)

- Hazard Mitigation Planning outreach process is complete. The Town will have a final updated Hazard Mitigation Plan published in the next month or so, pending FEMA approval.
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan survey was sent to GAB members. Goal of 400 responses. Would be great for the GAB to share the survey flyer. We will send a mailer to all homes with survey information. Input from public will help determine \$50,000 seed project.
  - Mary mentions recent natural disaster impacts in the south. She mentions she was listening to someone from Harvard on TV speaking on preparing for these disasters. Emphasizes the need to make folks aware that these events do happen.

##### Greening the Red House Updates

- Landscaping is ongoing. Have hired a vendor and many volunteers have donated time planting native plants. May receive more funds from MAPC because we exceeded original budget. We will be applying for CPC funds, Andrea suggests drafting a letter of support from GAB to include with the application. GAB supports this suggestion.

- The project will be ongoing for several years including additional plantings and maintenance. Many physical items will be installed in the spring and summer of 2025.
- Cameren mentions New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill in Boylston as a resource for art and planting inspiration. Also working with the high school in Acton on art is a good idea.
- Peter asks which CPC budget the project falls under. Andrea confirms it will be under recreation as a pocket park. She adds that there will be vegetables planted in the raised garden beds.

#### Nature-Based Solutions

- Lauren mentions site visits related to Red House project focused on managing stormwater and providing shade. Both visits discussed using community input and bringing resources to places folks already frequent. Could be a good idea to investigate places Acton's residents already visit during hot months and find gaps of tree cover to focus on planting.

#### Pumpkin Smash Event

- Acton will be hosting a pumpkin smash following Halloween to compost old pumpkins. Could be an outreach opportunity for Town departments. Will likely be hosted at the Transfer Station with support from Black Earth Compost. Lauren asks for feedback on timing.
- Mary agrees that Wednesday afternoon would be good for capturing early release. Cameren suggests hosting outside of school hours, however recognizes this would be tough to manage for staff.
- Cameren suggests advertising that the Transfer Station will be accepting pumpkins to compost. Also emphasizing the “why” and describing the benefits of composting. Lauren will work on signage.

#### Sustainability Policy

- Jim Snyder-Grant sent a message on the latest Sustainability Policy draft. The draft was well received by the Select Board and he would like a note or email from the GAB before formally approving it. Andrea will forward the latest draft to GAB members.
- Cameren makes a motion that the GAB writes a note of recommendation supporting the new policy. Eric seconds the motion. All members vote in favor, motion approved.

#### Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Ban

- The Select Board hosted a listening session for input on the drafted ban in a recent September meeting. David summarizes the feedback received: there is a desire from the public to act on this but challenges for residents and businesses are noted, some believe increases in cost are okay, landscapers range from very in support to very against. Notes on when to begin the ban and who should enforce it were discussed.
- David will share the latest draft and asks for any additional GAB input.

- Cameren asks if Town staff using this equipment has any opinions on it. Andrea notes the Town equipment would be enforced with the ban and the Town is starting to transition to electric equipment already.

**Approve Minutes: July & August 2024**

- Cameren makes a motion to approve July minutes. Eric seconds the motion. The board votes unanimously in favor, the motion passes.

Eric makes a motion to close the meeting at 7:10. Cameren seconds the motion. By a unanimous roll call vote; meeting adjourned.