

# Town of Acton Green Advisory Board

## 3 Members Including Alternates Needed for a Quorum

### MEETING MINUTES

Place: Memorial Library Meeting Room, 2nd Fl.

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Date: Monday, July 18, 2011

**Present:** Mary Smith, Manisha Tyagi, Dennis Loria, Eric Hudson, John Murray Staff, Lili Early Recording Secretary; Robert Keene Intern, Kate Cosby Green Advisor to the Schools, Jim Snyder-Grant, Vice-Chair Acton 2020 Committee

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**1. Approval of the Minutes from the Meeting held on 06/13/11**

Then Dennis L. asked for a voice vote to approve the minutes of 6/13/2011.

The motion was made by Eric H. and seconded by Mary S. The vote was announced UNANIMOUS.

**2. Mr. Jim Snyder-Grant to give a Presentation regarding The Sustainable Action of the 2020 Committee**

Mr. Snyder-Grant explained to the members the goals and objectives of the Acton 2020 Project. The really big picture is "Green + Sustainable". They are focusing on the following elements:

- Housing and Population
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Historic and Cultural resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Facilities and Services
- Sustainability

The 2020 Committee will begin to evaluate the strategies associated with the emerging visions and goals for the Town's future, compiled from public input, the 2020 Committee, Town staff and a team of consultants. The following are the seven core values and guiding principles:

1. **Preserve the Town Character** - Rural characteristics and open space, historic buildings and landscapes, foster an understanding of what makes Acton unique, including its history and preserve and enhance village centers
2. **Ensure Environmental Sustainability** – Protect the quality and quantity of our ground water, drinking water, waste water and storm water systems, reduce waste and accumulation of toxins in our environment, reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases emissions from residential, commercial, industrial and municipal uses and focus on land use and protection, such as support of biodiversity, soil preservation and local agriculture
3. **Improve Connections** – Side walks and biking paths, public transportation, promote communication amongst town government, citizens, schools & the business community and support and strengthen neighborhoods
4. **Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering and Recreation** – Community facility large enough for a variety of uses and a wide range of programming, maintain and improve existing gathering spaces and create informal gathering spaces, support additional cultural activities and increase recreational opportunities
5. **Preserve and Enhance Town-owned Assets** – Support all ages and households of all income levels, embrace cultural diversity and support citizens with disabilities in participating fully in the life of the community
6. **Preserve and Enhance Town-owned Assets** – Protect Town-owned open spaces, support excellence in schools, maintain municipal properties and facilities

**7. Maintain and Improve Financial Well-being of the Town** – Improve existing commercial areas, promote commercial and economic development reflecting long-term goals for businesses, achieve a balance of services and taxes and support the ability of all residents to remain in Acton for a lifetime

Mr. Snyder-Grant welcomed all ideas and thoughts from the Board members. They can email them to [www.info@acton2020.info](mailto:www.info@acton2020.info). A vast number of ideas were already communicated by the members at the meeting.

**3. Election of New GAB Chairs for FY 2012**

John M. explained that the general policy is to rotate every year, but there can also be continuity. Dennis L. indicated that having co-chairs works well. He continued that Chris S. wants to resign as co-chair due to lack of time, but that he wants to stay on for another year. Mary S. likes the co-chairs idea, since a lot has been accomplished and she was wondering if both co-chairs would want to continue for another year. Eric H. agrees with Mary S. Dennis L. is certain that we need to fill one co-chair position. Eric H. and Mary S. are not interested. Dennis L. talked to Tom Michelman and he doesn't have the time either. Eric H. said that David Keene is interested and would do a great job. John M. suggested moving Tom M. to become an alternate member and making David K. a full member if he would accept the co-chair role, but this has to be approved by the Selectmen. Manisha T. wanted to know how much time one needs to spend as a co-chair. Kate C. replied that it takes a certain amount of commitment. Manisha T. will be up for it if David K. is not interested. The discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

**4. Behavioral Change**

- **Do the members wish to seek permission from the BOS and the School Committee for expansion of the GAB role?**
- **The expanded role would be to review any proposed relighting or other energy efficiency measure and to submit comments back to the BOS and/or School Committee or their respective designee**  
The subject has been discussed and the consensus was that the members need more consideration before issuing an opinion.

**5. Progress on the 5-year Plan – Robert Keene**

His task is to review and update the 5-year plan with a 25% efficiency cut.

The following has already been accomplished:

- Analyzed 2010 vs. the baseline for 2009. 80% has been finished for the school section. The street lighting still need to be worked on, but that is a different process
- Compiled collected data for FY10 and compared it with FY09. The Municipal buildings show a 7% reduction. This does not include transportation gasoline
- Put the pivot tables in PM
- Data input is 90% done

The next step is to research lighting and gasoline consumption. John M. suggested contacting Karen Switzer-Neff for gasoline data in different formats. He also suggested looking at the weather conditions.

Dennis L. wants Robert K. to figure out what the EPA is doing with normalization and import the data in PM. Kate C. mentioned that the Green Community has all the data. John M. wanted to know if they do normalization for municipal vehicles. Kate C. would like Robert K. to research weatherization for private vehicles and homes. Kate C. will write a note to Joanne Bissetta at DOER and introduce Robert K. She also wants to know if it is our intention to keep working with Robert. Eric H. finds it great idea. Robert would like to keep working for the GAB Board during the school year and he can do it at the level of work he is doing now; 10-20 hrs/week. Dennis L. wants to use his services through September 30. John M. indicated that September 15 is the final spin for the annual report.

**6. Discussion of Purchasing Excess Residential Solar Energy**

John M. reported that an Acton resident wants to sell his excess energy to the Town. There are 3 issues, SREC priorities, NSTAR and the burden of dealing with small amounts of electricity. He asked how the Board wants to handle this request John M. asked the Board if the project works and the Town would buy the

excess electricity, would it be an incentive for the residents to have solar systems installed. Kate C. responded that it all is according to your household use in order for it to be worthwhile. Eric H. does think that the residents would be very interested. Dennis L. likes the idea if there is an agreement with a standard process and price. He added if the Town can do that from a public bidding law standpoint. John M. checked with counsel and it is possible. Eric H. thinks that solar breeds on larger production, but is it interesting enough to investigate. Dennis L. concluded that we need to learn more about the residential program and then put the plan in place. John M. will investigate it and check if this could be considered as a long-term opportunity. Kate C. suggested calling NexAmp; they are very professional. Robert K. will look into it. John M. asked what happens to the excess energy. Kate C. thinks that it just accumulates for the residents.

**7. Annual Report – 15 min**

John M. mentioned that 85% of the Annual Report is equivalent to the 5-year plan. The report needs to be finished by the end of September.

**Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

- Election of New GAB Chairs for FY12
- Progress on the 5-year Plan and Status of Annual Report – Robert Keene
- Submission from Harvard University to do a project for us – Eric Hudson
- Behavioral Change – September Meeting
- September-October Budget – Action and Ideas
- Research New Technologies for Energy Reduction – ITA
- Review Status of the 2011 GAB Goals – ITA
- Public Relations – ITA

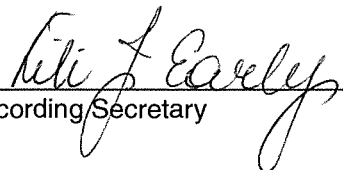
Dennis L. asked for a voice vote to adjourn the meeting. The vote was announced UNANIMOUS. The motion was made by Eric H. and seconded by Manisha T.

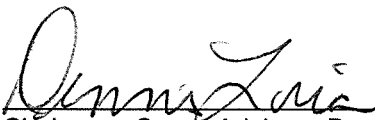
The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

## **Future Meeting Schedule**

**Meetings are to be held in the Conference Room of Memorial Library and will begin at 6:30 PM -unless otherwise noted**

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| a. | Mon Aug 15  | Conference Room Memorial Library, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor |
| b. | Mon Sept 12 | Conference Room Memorial Library, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor |
| c. | Mon Oct 17  | Conference Room Memorial Library, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor |
| d. | Mon Nov 7   | Conference Room Memorial Library, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor |
| e. | Mon Dec 5   | Conference Room Memorial Library, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor |

  
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Recording Secretary

  
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Chairman, Green Advisory Board  
8/15/11  
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Date