

Sustainability Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
November 13, 2013

Present: Lynn Stoddard, Vera Ward, Paul Shapiro, Kristen Schwab, Don Hoyle, Dave Wanik (guest), George Rawischer (guest), Joyce Rawischer (guest), Jennifer Kaufman (staff), Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 by Schwab.

The minutes of September 11, 2013 were not approved due to a lack of quorum.

Kaufman reported that August 30 was the last meeting of the Mansfield Tomorrow Advisory Committee. There were 19 public meetings from January to August with over 400 comments received. Painter and Kaufman have been working with the consulting team on a first draft of the plan of conservation and development. Once the draft is completed it will be reviewed by town committees and department heads. There will be a 65 day comment period before its final review by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The goal of the plan is to provide clear direction and offer incentives so that there is fewer need for special permits.

Walton reported that Mansfield did not receive an award as a bike friendly community. The committee discussed approaches to advance bike friendliness. It was suggested that the Planning & Zoning Commission infrastructure subcommittee consider multi-use sidewalks and prioritize areas of need. Could the sustainability committee provide input? The committee will invite the new Public Works Director to a future meeting and advocate for the formation of a bike task force.

The intermodal center is on schedule to open in December. The Town will be hiring a transportation coordinator after all. A UConn graduate student is working on creating mapping of alternative transportation options in Mansfield that can be accessed through google maps. Walton added that a Toyota Tacoma pick-up is now available in the parking garage through the car share program.

There is another round of grants that will fund micro-grid development. Staff will speak to the Director of Facilities Management regarding this grant opportunity. Wanik, from the UConn Office of Environmental Policy, reported that the UConn micro-grid should be complete in April. Miller will be asked to report on it at a future meeting.

A public hearing is scheduled for November 25, 2013 regarding the draft Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which addresses handling of natural disasters. Members were invited to comment on this rough draft and directed to find the portion that applies specifically to Mansfield in the 11-12-13 council packet starting on page 41. Questions about the entire plan should be addressed to the Director of Planning and Zoning.

The Town Council asked the Sustainability Committee to advise them on whether to endorse an expansion of the Bottle Bill, which has been initiated by ConnPIRG. The Committee unanimously supported endorsing an expansion of the bottle bill.

Members agreed to meet the second Wednesdays of the month starting at 5:30 pm for calendar year 2014.

Walton reported on the transition to a new trash hauler using automated collection equipment.

Kaufman reported that the Open Space Committee had a public hearing to purchase the LaGuardia property. Town Council authorized the purchase; the Town is waiting to close on the property. Property features include a hiking trail and hay field. The Open Space Committee will look into putting a conservation easement on the hay field.

There are eight agricultural properties that have been leased over the years to the same farmers. The Agriculture Committee sent out a request for proposals in order to open up opportunities for other farmers. The Committee added a property on Coventry Road to be leased. After reviewing the farm business and stewardship plans, the Committee selected farmers from Mansfield.

The next meeting, scheduled for December 11, may be dedicated to working on the plan of conservation and development. If so, Mike Dietz's presentation on storm water management will be rescheduled.

The Committee stated their appreciation for the good work of Lon Hultgren, Director of Public Works, who is retiring on December 11. He has been a beacon of vision and common sense.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton