

Sustainability Committee
Minutes of Meeting
December 11, 2013

Present: Lynn Stoddard (chair), Bill Lennon, Paul Shapiro, Vera Ward, Kristen Schwab, Matt Hart, Shawn Santasiere, Susannah Everett, Michael Dietz (guest), Jennifer Kaufman (staff), Linda Painter (staff), Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 by Schwab.

Introductions were made. Stoddard arrived at 5:36 pm.

The September 11, 2013 meeting minutes were accepted on a motion by Ward/ Schwab. The November 13, 2013 minutes were accepted with one correction on a motion by Miller/Shapiro. In the November meeting minutes it was noted that the UConn micro-grid should be complete in April 2014; however, the completion date is more likely to occur in August or September.

Michael Dietz, Program Director for Connecticut Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), presented some of the research being done on storm water management as precipitation patterns change. Notably, the annual average precipitation over the century has gone from 40 to 50 inches, the frequency of 100 year storms has doubled and the intensity of storms are changing in southern New England. Researchers at Cornell have been updating the values of changed precipitation. Keeping track of problem areas and digitizing this information, properly sizing infrastructure using Cornell's updated values and incorporating low impact development (LID) such as bio retention basins, rain gardens, vegetated roofs and permeable pavement are some municipal adaptation strategies. LID has been found to be most beneficial for lower intensity 1 inch storms, which accounts for 80% of precipitation events. Even with more intense storms, the findings of a UConn "Jordon Cove" research project suggests that the peak runoff rate is lower in LID than in conventional development. The draft Plan of Conservation and Development incorporates many of these strategies. Some committee members suggested creating a continuum of what is reasonable for areas of differing densities, providing a guidance document that is easy for a homeowner or developer to follow, integrating storm water management into complete street designs and pushing the design of LID to deal with large storm events. A park that is designed to accept flood water with flood tolerant plants would be one such example.

Walton reported that the Town signed a Clean Energy Communities pledge in June 2013. As part of the pledge, the Town needs to create a municipal action plan. The non-profit organization Clean Water Action is offering one-on-one support to help towns succeed with clean energy projects. It was suggested that the sustainability committee apply for support to help with the municipal action plan. Walton will check with the Town Manager for approval to apply. The committee agreed that the Energy Education Team should be reconvened to assist with the municipal action plan. Walton added that as a Clean Energy Community, the Town was recently awarded \$20,000 in Bright Idea grant money for its energy efficiency accomplishments. The Town will need to identify how grant funds will be used for energy efficiency projects before receiving the money.

Walton gave an update on the intermodal center. Ryan Visci, a UConn senior, has been hired as the transportation coordinator for 19 hours per week. It is hoped that the center will open January 6, 2013, although there is still quite a bit of work to be done prior to the opening. Peter Pan, WRTD and UConn buses will begin making their stops at the intermodal center on January 17, 2014, when UConn classes resume. Peter Pan will continue to make a stop at the Gampel Pavilion. It is anticipated that the DOT commuter bus will be enticed to stop at the intermodal center. Storrs Center Cycle has been providing guidance on matters related to bikes.

Kaufman updated the committee on the Mansfield Tomorrow project and outlined the procedural process for the plan of conservation and development (POCD). It is expected that the first draft of the POCD will be ready for distribution by early January. As stated before, the aim is to create procedural incentives that make it easy for residents, businesses and developers to act in accordance with the goals of the POCD.

Painter updated the committee on the water supply project. The UConn Board of Trustees approved an agreement between the Connecticut Water Company and UConn. The Town Council referred the Definitive Agreement for Water Supply Services between the Town of Mansfield and the Connecticut Water Company to the Conservation Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission/Inland Wetlands Agency, the Four Corners Water and Sewer Advisory Committee and the Sustainability Committee for review. It is hoped that a joint meeting can be arranged on either Jan 7 or 8, 2014. After a presentation by the Connecticut Water Company, each committee will have their own separate meetings. Painter noted some key points of the agreement: 1) The Connecticut Water Company has agreed to meet the Town's needs, 2) A change in use will require local approval, and 3) An advisory group will be comprised of local officials and residents. Painter will send a link to the agreement prior to the joint meeting, and there will be an informational meeting presented by the Connecticut Water Company on Wednesday, December 18, 2013.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton