

Town of Scarborough Sustainability Committee

March 27, 2024 | 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. | Scarborough Town Hall and via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendance – in person

Committee: Anton Bodor, Patrice Kastenzholz, Deb McDonough, Rick Meinking
Staff: Jami Fitch, Sustainability Manager; Emerson Goodrich, Sustainability Fellow
Guests: David Kunhardt, resident and member of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL)

Attendance – Zoom

Committee: Ron Allen
Town Council: April Sither
Staff: Autumn Speer, Planning Director

To re-play the Sustainability Committee's 3/27/24 meeting, please use the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V19jnd_iE

Call to Order

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 am.
2. The Committee voted to approve the minutes from the 2/28/24 meeting. Patrice motioned to approve the minutes, Anton seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Public Comment

1. David Kunhardt called attention to the quarterly Maine Climate Council meeting. There was an extension of the growing season in Maine, which is both good and bad for a variety of ecological and health reasons. David noted it's a national and international phenomenon, with examples like the Meteorological Association publishing warming statistics and data. He also expressed his desire to support a local solar farm.

Committee Comment

1. Patrice mentioned a Portland Press editorial about fire danger, and calls attention to FireWise Communities and their plant and plating guidelines that may increase fire safety. Wildfires in parts of Eastern Canada were a wakeup call to Maine communities given the similar climate.
ACTION: JAMI will circulate the editorial to the Committee.

Old Business

1. C-PACE
 - Jami shared that the C-PACE ordinance went through the Ordinance Committee in March and will go through its first reading in Council in April. The ordinance will be scheduled for public comment and second reading, which could happen at the same meeting. The Council should vote on the ordinance sometime in May.

Engineering & Technical Services

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New Business

2. Sustainable Scarborough Day

- Event date: Sunday, October 6, 2024
- Jami asked what the committee sees themselves focusing on for this event. She also shared that food trucks, live music, and giveaways have been secured for the event.
- Deb suggested that the planning committee reach out to the school department to help advertise the event.
- Patrice will represent the Sustainability Committee on the planning committee.
- Suggested topics to highlight:
 - Cooking demonstrations using induction burners
 - Transitioning a home to fossil free/beneficial electrification
 - Working with interior designers to improve the look of heat pumps
 - Battery backup options
 - Tax credits
 - Weatherization
 - Window upgrades
 - Tiny house to showcase some of the recommended efficiency measures
- Anton inquires about the previous year's survey asking the public what most pressing issues are as a way to anchor the focus of the committee for the event. Transportation, solar on Town buildings, and dealing with food waste were some of the top mentions.
- The Committee discussed how the real estate market doesn't reflect the value of heat pumps. Many new residential units are still being built with fossil fuel heating systems. Construction/building codes are seeing changes as well which are important to note as well.
- Rick asked about another Town Council proclamation. April suggested this year the proclamation designate the first Sunday in October as Sustainable Scarborough Day instead of a specific date so the proclamation does not need to be done each year.

3. Tri-Gen

- Jami shared that Tri-Gen needs significant maintenance and repairs, so the Town is exploring options to meet Town Hall's energy needs.
- Deb and Rick explain Tri-Gen is a concept of using a single unit to electrify, heat, and cool Town Hall. It was one of the Energy Committee's first projects. The system has required regular and extensive maintenance since it went online in 2015. A grant from Efficiency Maine covered a large portion of the cost.
- The municipal solar array that the Committee is exploring would offset the energy that is generated by Tri-Gen. Decommissioning Tri-Gen would also require consideration of the building's heating and cooling.
- Ron asked what powers the building when Tri-Gen is offline. Jami explained that Town Hall pulls from the grid as well as a generator for back-up. Deb mentions there are boilers to provide heating. The building will continue to run without Tri-Gen functioning.
- Anton underscored the importance of explaining the economic soundness of decommissioning Tri-Gen, such as weighing maintenance costs. Rick also noted that this is an opportunity look at the increase use of electricity and decrease use of natural gas. It would start to bring stability to energy costs to the Town. Jami notes the new source of energy will be certified renewable/green energy.
- April asks if there is any money allocated in the CMP for decommissioning and Jami says there is not.
- **ACTION: JAMI will gather information on the costs of Tri-Gen maintenance and operation.**

Updates

1. Town Council Update
 - April shared that the Council did a FEMA floodplain map workshop and there was a large turnout with many people actively participating. April suggests the FEMA floodplain maps could be included in Sustainable Scarborough Day.
2. Planning Board
 - Rick shared that Higgins Beach Market is going to be completely rebuilt with timber structure.
 - A smoothie bar was approved near Dunston Tap and Table.
3. Conservation Commission
 - Jami shared that the Conservation Commission is still working on Environmental Standards, which are going to the ordinance committee in April. Community engagement and outreach will be done as well.
 - Staff just had a kickoff meeting with the consultant for the Open Space Plan, Viewshed. The first Ad Hoc meeting is scheduled for May 7th and a Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for July. The Plan is expected to wrap up in 10 months, which is expected to line up with a Town Council presentation in January 2025.
4. Transportation Committee
 - Jami notes there is a new traffic calming policy in place. There is a process to request a review by the Town to consider various methods to slow traffic.
 - The Committee is still working on Town-wide transportation study, with a draft forthcoming.
5. Solar Array
 - Jami plans to submit the Energy Block Grant proposal in April, and all that needs to happen - given that it's guaranteed funding - is for the proposal to be approved.
 - The parcel in mind is a former dumping site, has three phase power, and is zoned industrial already.

Next Meeting: April 24th, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.

Future Projects List:

- Community solar / municipal solar array
- Municipal building energy audits
- Residential energy efficiency grants
- Electric school buses
- Recycling information for homeowners when houses change hands
- Composting
- Tree preservation ordinance