



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
Community Notes
Wednesday, January 10, 2018
Town Hall, Dedham, MA

Agenda

Compact of Mayors and Olin Student Project Discussion
Plastic Bag Ban
Goals Review
Old/New Business
Adjourn

Board/Committee members in attendance

John Gorham, Chuck Kabat, Clarissa Robyns, Emily Watson in attendance; Matt Simonson, Leigh Hafrey, Deb Harrison not in attendance
Virginia LeClair, Environmental Coordinator in attendance

Minutes

Committee member John Gorham called the meeting at 7:15pm.

Virginia LeClair asked that the Committee review and approve minutes from last meetings. Committee member Gorham motioned to accept the minutes and all voted to accept.

Compact of Mayors and Olin Student Project Discussion

Virginia LeClair, Deb Harrison and Leigh Hafrey met with Professor Alison Wood at Olin College in Needham to discuss the students' project about traffic and transportation in Dedham. It will be similar to an earlier project about flooding and flood plain mapping. Committee member Emily Watson asked why focus on traffic and transportation for this project and Coordinator LeClair explained that there is tangible data.

Committee member Chuck Kabat asked what other departments in town could benefit from this research and Coordinator LeClair noted that the discussions about Manor Fields and the proposed new apartments on Sprague Street could be helped by this research.

Coordinator LeClair provided the Committee with a January 8, 2018 email from Professor Wood detailing the timeline for the project.

Plastic Bag Ban

Virginia LeClair told the Committee that she had reached out to Framingham, Natick, Newton and Brookline to learn about their plastic bag bans. She provided both a press release and letter to retailers from Framingham as examples of how the ban was communicated in that municipality. She is awaiting replies regarding best practices from all four communities.

The discussion focused on how best to enforce a policy and how to encourage businesses to change. Committee member Kabat noted that 60 communities in Massachusetts have already banned plastic bags so Dedham can learn from their experiences including how to work with large stores and smaller restaurants. The internal goal is to bring the Plastic Bag Ban to a vote for the Fall Town Meeting in November.

Committee member Emily Watson noted that the “did you know” editorials about recycling ran twice in the Dedham Times in an effort to explain what can and cannot be placed in the recycling bins.

Goals Review

Virginia LeClair said that the Plastic Bag Ban was a goal for 2018 but asked if she could send other proposed goals to the committee members for review and input to then discuss at the February meeting.

Old/New Business

Recycling Day

Committee Member Gorham asked if the spring recycling day had been set. The committee is looking at Saturday, April 21st for the day.

Virginia LeClair said the Finance Department is asking all the departments to benchmark their work by comparing themselves to 15 communities. The report is due on January 19th. She noted she is the only Environmental Coordinator of the 15 communities so she is seeking out other municipalities to compare as well as showing how Environmental work is done under different departments.

Committee Member Gorham invited community member Allison Staton to explain the Transparent Dedham project. Staton said the project is meant to support the work of elected and appointment officials, provide a way for community members to understand the work of committees, boards and commissions and to give residents an opportunity to learn first hand about the local government.

Committee member Clarissa Robyns asked for clarity regarding the meeting schedule and the committee set the following meeting dates:

- February 7th
- March 14th
- May 9th
- June 13th

Committee member Chuck Kabat motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm.

Minutes taken by Allison Staton

Keywords: Sustainability, Compact of Mayors and Olin Student Project Discussion, Plastic Bag Ban