



## Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 28, 2022

5:00 p.m.

*This meeting is being held at the Dunaway Center and via Zoom*

### **1.0 Welcome & Call to Order 5:00 PM**

1.1 Members Present: Priscilla Botsford, *Chair*; Margie Katz, *Vice-Chair*; David Nosnik, *Member*; Jane Greene, *Secretary*, Paul Breen, *Member*  
Pam Sawyer was excused

### **2.0 Review of Meeting Minutes** from March 24, 2022

Minutes were approved 4-0

### **3.0 Ongoing Business**

#### **3.1 Website/Energy Efficiency**

David encouraged all members to send him energy efficiency related information to post on the website.

Margie brought up *The Beaches Conference* happening in June. She has gone to these conferences in the past. Excellent papers/speakers. She will email information when she gets it.

**Rebecca Fox** called in: *York Library had a four-part series on Sustainability and I think they probably recorded them and had them loaded. I only listened to the one – which was on Native American sustainability issues – a lot around water. That might be something that you could put on as well, David.*

Priscilla raised the issue of how electric vehicles batteries work in cold climates versus warm climates. Do they charge down faster in a cold climate? She wondered if there was an article that clarified this issue.

Priscilla asked if there were any other initiatives that the Energy Sub-Committee would like to promote.

**Margie:** *Some of these things we've already discussed. It's a matter of putting together a program for the Town itself to take some action, and promoting it. We can sit here and talk all we want and put information on the website, but it's a matter of disseminating the information, putting it on the Town website. The Town has a much more extensive way to contact the population. When they send the tax bills out, they could add a page on energy conservation for people to look at. I brought up months ago that the Town should consider an ordinance requiring new construction to not use fossil fuels. Other communities are doing that. Again new construction. We're not asking people to retrofit their houses. The Town needs to take action and disseminate the information. They have a much more effective way of reaching the population than our small committee.*

**Priscilla:** *Would you like to put something together for the Town that we could look at – at our next meeting?*

**Margie:** *Well, it's what we just discussed...And I know Paul brought it up at one of our meetings – the gas leaf blowers. Again, that would have to be a Town Ordinance. It's very easy to make a suggestion, or write one up – you know, we'll allow them two or three months a year – pick the months and the rest of the time, they have to use electric leaf blowers.*

**Priscilla:** *Do you want to put that together so that next month we can look at it and we can vote whether or not we want to present that to the Select Board. To me, that's the best way to do it – give them something, to put something together. Do you want to do that?*

**Margie:** *Well, I can do it – but why don't we come to some agreement as to what is reasonable? You know, in California I think they just totally banned it – but starting in five years or four years or something like that. Not immediately. But there are other towns all around that have limited it for a few years. And some have been getting more restrictive...maybe three months a year you can use the gas leaf blowers and they are banned the rest of the year. Electric leaf blowers any time. If we agree, we can write that up and present it to the Select Board.*

**Priscilla:** *Okay, so if you write that up and next month we can make a motion to –*

**Margie:** *Why don't we motion it right now? And I can write it up and we can present it to the Town.*

**Priscilla:** *How does anyone else feel?*

**David:** *Do you have any idea what the other towns are doing – in terms of specifics? When are they banned? How long?*

**Margie:** *I think York does. I forget. I had checked into that some months ago.*

**Priscilla:** *David has a good point. If we can do a little bit of research, Margie and figure out what the other towns are doing – then we can have a better argument for our town. Kittery would be a*

*good one to look at. They have an energy committee. What I'd like to do is maybe put a hierarchy together – which things would have the most impact.*

**David:** *I would like to hear the other side. Who would be against it? And why? I can see who would be against it –*

**Margie:** *The landscapers -*

**David:** *Yes, but we should hear them. What is going to be the economic impact on them. I'm not making any judgments.*

**Margie:** *Yes, the problem is with issues like that – most of the landscapers will say, "No, no. We can't do it." And it's the same with some car manufacturers... You have to do what's best for the environment, and not worry if there will be a small impact on some of the landscapers. That's true everywhere.*

**Priscilla:** *I guess I'd probably like to know - with the leaf blowers – how much is that polluting versus the diesel trucks that idle on our street. Is that producing more or less pollution?*

**Margie:** *That's impossible to figure out because it varies.*

**Paul:** *The issue here is noise. It's not pollution. The blowers should be certified to whatever the EPA noise standard is. The whole reason that we should get rid of gas blowers is that they too noisy. There are gas blowers that meet the quieter standards. So it's not appropriate to say that we shouldn't have gas blowers at all. We were working on a noise spec a couple of months ago – last year – if a service has a machine that will accommodate the noise level, so be it. Turns out if they don't have it, they'll have to spend their money getting it done. I agree that we should find out what the other towns are doing, so we don't embarrass ourselves. Let's focus on the real problem, which is noise. People really don't care if it is a gas or electric machine as long as it's quiet. And there are machines that are quiet.*

**David:** *If they are quiet, are they less effective? Do you know the tradeoff?*

**Paul:** *There is a tradeoff. If you get a battery powered leaf blower, it's only good for about 45 minutes to an hour. So it affects productivity.*

**Margie:** *But remember there are plenty of towns all over – not just in Maine - that have put restrictions in.*

**Jane:** *We need the data. We need to see the costs and the benefits before we write this up - right? Isn't that where we are?*

**Paul:** *What are the other coastal towns doing? That's the question that the Select Board will ask. So, we should find out.*

**Priscilla:** *I think as far as our carbon footprint, these large trucks are making most of the pollution. If we don't want to touch it, we don't have to. But where is most of the carbon pollution coming from? It's the older oil and gas heating systems and the large trucks. I believe that's where it's coming from. Margie, I'll put you in charge of that – and if you want to start with the leaf blowers, as something you can wrap your mind around, that's fine...Wells is converting to electric school buses. They drive through Ogunquit and all over Wells, four times a day...about an hour loop. So that's four hours of bus exhaust idling and going through the town per day. If what we're trying to do is to reduce carbon, then that would be something really interesting to look at. And I think there's a whole bunch of funding...could have more of an impact.*

Jane brought up the 2003-04 Comp Plan, and how there was virtually nothing in that plan regarding energy efficiency, carbon footprint, etc. She said that Margie's idea about new construction using alternative sources of energy rather than fossil fuels would be something that the committee could put forth. This would be a good opportunity to put alternative energy implementation strategies into the new plan.

Priscilla added that there will be a Comprehensive Plan workshop where we can submit our ideas to the committee.

### **3.2 WQ Plan - Implementation updates**

Priscilla gave an update. The Plan was finalized, submitted to the Select Board and David has posted it on the website. Acorn Engineering is working with the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer on implementation of the 319 Grant. Hopefully, that will help with the water quality. They are going to put another catch basin in at the Main Beach parking lot, and ensure that the other ones are functioning properly. They are also working on vegetative buffering on two different sites. Priscilla will reach out to Wells, and other towns. Town wants a seminar on permitting. They want to get more and more up to speed on the stormwater ordinances as far as state regulations. Stormwater needs to be recognized as a utility. That would give us a better way to ensure that stormwater is managed properly on construction sites.

Margie shared that John Bucci and Matt Buttrick have talked. Matt committed to pay for two types of testing: one is the DNA of the streams and tributaries going to the Ogunquit River. The other for the summer, starting the end of June, would be PPR testing of water samples from Riverside Beach. Getting almost real data – maybe in an hour – to know the quality of the water with respect to human DNA. And then being able to post it in real time. The UNH testing instrument is still under development. They want to promote it. The testing will run \$20,000 to \$25,000 for the instrument itself – plus all the materials. There is \$ 48,000 in the budget for Sustainability. \$30,000 for Conservation Commission. Also American Rescue Plan money. Environmental issues are one of the ways that the money can be spent. The testing can go ahead after the election.

### 3.3 Native Plant Fair

Priscilla and Jane filled in details about the event on May 21<sup>st</sup> @ Beach Plum Farm 10:00 – 2:00PM

### 4.0 New Business

#### 4.1 Discuss Workshop for Comprehensive Plan Review

The 2003-04 Comprehensive Plan – which is being revised – was sent to members to read. We will have a workshop with the Comp Plan Committee on what ideas the Sustainability Committee could submit for the new plan. Right now, it's information gathering. Priscilla asked if anyone had read the 2003-04 Comp Plan. Paul raised his hand.

*Paul: What struck me was in the 2004 Plan there was no insight into energy conservation, alternative sources of energy.*

*Jane: All it says here – regarding alternative energy – is “Encouraging development – “ this is in strategies – “Encouraging development to incorporate alternative energy use.” That’s it. Maybe we can work together with the Conservation Commission on some of the natural resources stuff, but the energy stuff needs to be in here. Because it isn’t.*

*Priscilla: So there’s municipal energy use. Municipal buildings: Energy standards for these buildings. There’s a new campus plan underway. What could we promote or recommend for the Dunaway Project?*

Priscilla asked if any members would be willing to look into this. Jane volunteered.

*Priscilla: As far as going through the Comp Plan itself, there seems to be a lot of implementation recommendations. I’m not sure how many of these recommendations got started. Much of this is for the Planning Board. “Requiring development activities to address the quality of stormwater runoff.” “ Developing standards for the protection of vernal pools.”*

*Jane: Chapter 8 has all these recommendations which we have put into the Water Quality Plan that we just did.*

*Priscilla: So this, “ Requiring development activities to meet BMPs for stormwater management.” This was tasked to the Planning Board in 2004. And basically, does there need to be an audit of what got done and what didn’t get done? Or what’s no longer relevant?*

*Jane: And some of it we know it’s not there – like “Undertaking a Quality of Stormwater Management Program” That was “in progress” with the Conservation Commission, but I’m not sure what that is. What would that be?*

*Priscilla: There should be a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee. I could take a stab at this. Did anyone look at it and have any comments?*

**Margie:** *No.*

**Priscilla:** *Okay.*

**Jane:** *This might be out in left field, I feel like it would be nice for us to be talking to the Conservation Commission about some of this stuff. Now that they are reconstituted. It would be really nice to work together on this stuff. Better to have more people advocating. What do people feel about that?*

**Margie:** *That's a good idea. Why don't we have a joint meeting with them sometime?*

**Jane:** *I would love that.*

**Priscilla:** *Do you think it should be a joint workshop with the Comp Plan Committee?*

**Margie:** *Just a joint meeting, period. Not necessarily with the Comp Plan Committee. Just to discuss what we're doing. Our common goals. So we don't have too much overlap. Historically, the Conservation Commission got heavily involved in water issues. So, what have they been doing? I haven't been to a meeting, so I don't know what they've been discussing.*

**Jane:** *They are just getting started.*

**Paul:** *The group that's doing the Comprehensive Plan has asked that all the committees in town interact with them and that's the mechanism to give our input to that committee. Fine if we want to have a joint meeting – but we should do that first.*

**Priscilla:** *I like the idea of working together. I don't worry about overlap, because there are about 700 topics in here that no one has done since 2004.*

**David:** *Do you know how much weight they put on the 2004 plan? What Paul said is that they are open to every committee to give them their input. First, we should decide what our input should be. And I don't think we need to meet with anyone else. I agree with Paul. What are our priorities that should be included in the Comprehensive Plan and then make an appointment with them and say, "This is what we want in there." It just might be that two or three committees have overlap – but that's for them to sort out. We prioritize and do it.*

**Jane:** *That's true. And a lot of the things that have the Conservation Commission name on it, that is now in the Water Quality Plan.*

**David:** *Maybe we just say, "Here. Implement the Water Quality Plan. That's our idea for the Comprehensive Plan." Which it is. Otherwise, why did we spend so much time doing it? And in terms of energy. Decide. What do we want? Come up with a list of priorities and say, "Here. This is what we want. Get it done."*

**Priscilla:** *Would you mind reviewing the implementation chapter? Chapter 8 and just –*

**David:** *Is this from 2004?*

**Jane:** *Yes.*

**David:** *Is it still relevant? That's my question. Is the Comprehensive Plan Committee relying on the 2004 Plan? Why should they?*

**Margie:** *There was a Comprehensive Plan written a few years ago that was rejected by the voters. There were issues that had to do with development I think.*

**David:** *Going back to 2004 seems to me a little of, "What for?"*

**Jane:** *I agree with you – except this one thing. When I was reading this, I kept thinking to myself, "If we had done these things 20 years ago, we wouldn't have some of these stormwater issues." That's why I think that it's important. Sometimes these strategies written twenty years ago are exactly the same as we put into the Water Quality Plan, because they haven't been done.*

**David:** *Are you saying that what we are recommending now won't work? Because it didn't work back in 2004?*

**Jane:** *No, no. I'm saying that they never did it. They never did it, and some of these strategies are exactly what we included in our plan. So when I read this just last week, I was thinking to myself, "This is twenty years ago." I don't know what it's going to take to move things forward. And what they kept saying in here about the vision for Ogunquit – which was beautiful – was all about the water and the beach and the natural resources being the MOST important thing. And everything else in the town – if that's not there – you know, that's the jewel of the town. It probably sounds naïve of me, but when I read that I thought, that should be in the new Plan as well. What if everything we did in the town was through the lens of keeping the town's natural resources clean?*

**Priscilla:** *Should we pick through this thing and find out what is relevant? Because there is a lot in here that is good and actionable today. And that could inform the Comprehensive Plan Committee about what our wishlist is.*

**David:** *I would guess that the reason that the 2004 Plan and 20113 Plan stalled is because the minute you talk about raising taxes. That's when everybody says, "Well, are we sure that it is manmade? Are we sure? Let's study it. Let's form a committee. Let's wait and pass it on." You want to read 2004? I would rather read why 2004 was never implemented. That's more meaningful...I would like to talk to someone and say, "How can we get these ideas implemented? How can we get started?"*

**Priscilla:** *That's a great question, and I think no one has asked that question. You've crystallized the issue perfectly. What is most important? Do we spend our money on electric vehicles or stormwater infrastructure? That's an interesting question. And I think – why weren't the 2004 recommendations implemented? Because no one thought that it was that important. Was it more important to promote some other thing – because we spent money on something. Did we spend the money on something that was more important at the time? How do we figure that one out, David?*

**David:** *We start asking. Who was part of the development of the plan? Are they still around? And start calling. What happened? Why wasn't it implemented? Find out who was involved. I'm sure that there are five people out there that know the answer. We just have to find them.*

Members discussed the recent Comprehensive Plan that got voted down, and wondered why. Priscilla thought that it didn't have a robust enough natural resources component. Jane added that a strong natural resources component drove the 2004 Plan. Rebecca Fox called in and provided two reasons why the recent plan was voted down. First, the Conservation Commission was not consulted during the process. They were called on at the very end for two meetings. During the first, the Commission was not allowed to speak. At the second meeting, they were allowed to talk, but it was at the very end of the process. Second, they left the land use section last, and they gave it to Lee Jay Feldman at Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission. According to Rebecca, it wasn't done well. It was last minute. He redesigned a lot of the zones in town and called them "areas" - resulting in confusion for homeowners.

**Priscilla:** *More interesting question is David's – why wasn't the 2004 Plan implemented? Some things were implemented, but not all of it. And the recommendations involving stormwater and runoff were not – which is our area. Some stuff was at least started. But there was no vigilance to it. The Town Manager is promoting the Natural Resources Coordinator. And perhaps our recommendation should be that the Natural Resources Coordinator take this plan, and from day one – don't wait for a new Comprehensive Plan – use the Water Quality Plan, and look at this plan as well. There's a lot that can be done*

**Priscilla:** *Does anyone want to take a deeper look at this? Or contact the original writers of this and find anything out – any insights that they could bring to our meeting?*

**David:** *That would be very, very interesting. But our primary goal should be to advise the committee. We are not responsible for the Plan. We could also make sure that they make it happen. But from us, the Sustainability Committee, we've been asked to give our opinion as to our priorities. There's a limit to that. Just like every other committee, we give our priorities and then watch carefully to see what they do with it, and what they do with everything else – as residents, as citizens. It's not our role as the Sustainability Committee to make sure that the Comprehensive Plan is finished and implemented. That's what they are supposed to do. Any help they want, that's fine. But right now, we have to limit it to say, "Here. We have two issues: water quality and energy conservation. These are our priorities that we think should be*

*implemented, here's how much money it's going to cost. Here. Please let us know when it will be implemented. Let us know if you need any other help.*

**Priscilla:** *Are you saying, David, that all we need to do is give them the WQ plan that we already did?*

**David:** *That's one of them. We haven't done it for energy.*

**Priscilla:** *That sounds good. Who wants to do the energy part?*

NO RESPONSE.

**Priscilla:** *We have the Water Quality Plan - so as far as the energy part, does anyone want to put anything together as far as recommendations?*

NO RESPONSE

**Margie:** *I thought that we discussed that earlier. Are you talking about the Comprehensive Plan? Or have we left that?*

**Priscilla:** *I'm just trying to finish it out and find out if there's anything assignable or actionable.*

**Jane:** *What we need is an energy component recommendations for the Plan –*

**Priscilla:** *Or not – if you don't think we need one. But if you do...*

**Jane:** *I am going to do recommendations for the municipal buildings, but if someone else could pick up something else, that would be nice. And I don't know when it needs to be done. That's the other thing.*

**Priscilla:** *It could be a Zoom meeting. Relatively informal. It's a little in flux at the moment. They are looking for a facilitator. They are looking for a Chair. They are looking for new members. Any help that we can give them would be most appreciated.*

Priscilla shared that she was on the Comprehensive Plan Committee. Her subcommittee is Land Use. There is also a Natural Resources subcommittee that overlaps with Sustainability. The overlap is in the land use ordinances and how it relates to stormwater.

**David:** *Margie, would you be willing to come up with a comprehensive list – an idea storm – of what should be included in terms of energy priorities. Send it to all of us. Everyone can put in their input. Nd we can review it at the next meeting. And in the next meeting, we can go through that list and decide what our priorities will be. We can type it and send it to them.*

**Priscilla:** *I like it.*

**David:** *Just ideas. Just thoughts. A lot has to do with what we've been doing with alternative sources of energy and using Maine energy. You know that stuff. Just put it down. Come up with a list of 49 priorities and circulate it. People can add comments. And we'll be ready to discuss it next month. The Comprehensive Plan Committee, as well as the Select Board would expect energy coming out of Sustainability. That was the reason that they created the Sustainability Committee.*

**Jane:** *Margie, do you agree to do that?*

**Margie:** *Yes, the list is somewhat limited, and some of it is what we've already discussed.*

**Jane:** *You know it well though. You are the one on the committee that knows it best. So that would be really helpful. And send it to all of us. It doesn't have to be one person doing it.*

**David:** *We're all going to have our own ideas incorporated.*

#### **5.0 Public Comment**

**No public Comment**

**6.0 Next meeting** May 26<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00Pm

**7.0 Adjournment**

**Zoom Link:**

[https://ogunquitpd-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_1BrRRzWMSgehOc9o4gKk\\_w](https://ogunquitpd-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1BrRRzWMSgehOc9o4gKk_w)