

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 2022-5PM
Dunaway Center using Zoom facilities

1.0 Welcome & Call to Order -5:00PM

Members present- Marjorie Katz, David Nosnik and Paul Breen

Priscilla Botsford was absent.

A quorum was noted.

2.0 MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee meeting of September 22, 2022, were approved.

3.0 INVITED SPEAKER

The Chair invited a representative from Maine Community Solar, Tim Thornton, to speak to the Committee on their solar programs.

Maine Community Solar offers two programs, one for residential customers and a second for businesses. These programs offer solar power to those would like to use solar power and do not want to have solar panels on the roof or do not have access to the roofs of the individual homes.

These programs use solar panels configured in arrays to produce electricity.

The residential program offers an initial 15% discount to those while the business program offers a 10 to 15% discount. Mr. Thornton stated that this discount could reduce over time as more people sign up.

A customer may withdraw from this program at any time at no cost.

A small charge is added each month by the affiliated power company to cover administrative costs.

4.0 WATER QUALITY REPORT

The Chair distributed copies of 2 molecular sources identification tests conducted by John Bucci from UNH over the past few months. The results are designed to show whether a DNA marker detected fecal waste from human, dog or avian.

Test #1 -8.18.22-09.20.22

Test #1 was comprised of 30 samples conducted at different locations over a period of 5 days during which DNA tests were conducted to identify if the specific sample detected human, dog and avian or fecal waste.

Human waste was identified in 3 samples.

Dog waste identified in 6 samples.

Avian waste identified in 10 samples.

Test #2-9.20.22

Test #2 was comprised of 2 samples which was conducted on 9.20.22 at the Littlefield property near the Ogunquit River and at the Riverside Beach. No human fecal waste was found at either location.

The Chair reported that Mr. Bucci will deliver a complete report on his water quality testing activities to the Town Manager in November.

Mr. Bucci stated that the lack of more stringent erosion standards in constructing new residences which abuts the river sets the stage for the loss of soil into the river and poorer water quality.

5.0 Sustainability Newsletter

David described a proposal to create a Sustainability newsletter which would be sent monthly to residents and businesses in town.

The newsletter would distribute to the public, articles, events and meetings related to sustainability activities and technology.

A distribution list of emails is being compiled and a draft newsletter will be sent to the Committee members in the next few weeks for review and discussion.

6.0 Acoustic Noise Levels Produced by Leaf Blowers.

The Committee noted that the efforts to limit acoustical noise from leaf blowers is focused on those leaf blowers used by professional landscaping companies and that operation of leaf blowers owned by residents will be grandfathered.

The Committee discussed a few approaches to deal with the acoustical noise produced by leaf blowers used by professional landscape companies.

The Committee agreed that the acceptable acoustical noise level of leaf blowers in Ogunquit will be 65DbA or less.

Elimination of all gas leaf blowers was considered and modified to allow each leaf blower to operate that meet a 65DbA limit or less acoustical noise standard.

The Committee discussed the definition of an acceptable level of turbulence caused by a high-speed leaf blower.

The Committee could not quantify the negative implications of turbulence thus this approach was removed from further consideration.

Discussion continued that the proposed ordinance address tasks to be conducted including leaf blowing, tree cutting, tree trimming, the designation of allowable days and times of operation.

These details will be developed at the next meeting of the Committee.

7. 0 Beach Erosion Issues

The Chair noted that an erosion problem has developed over time in the southern area of the dunes adjacent to the bridge. The area in question is off Norseman Lane, an unofficial road name, and has been involved in issues for many years. Significant amounts of gravel are scattered throughout the parcel.

The Code Enforcement officer will be contacted, a determination made as to the ownership of part of the parcel, and appropriate corrective actions identified.

8.0 The Southern Maine Planning Development Commission Resilience Studies.

The Chair attended a meeting of the Advisory Board which supports SMPDC in determining the sites suitable conducting future resiliency studies.

An initial 50 coastal sites were defined by the representative groups. This list was reduced to 15 with Ogunquit Beach and Perkins Cove remaining on this list.

This group will meet later to further define the candidate sites for resiliency studies.

The migration of saltwater marshes in Ogunquit resulting from change of water levels due to increased sea rise and elevated storm surge was not included on this list.

9.0 Adjournment

One public comment was noted during this meeting.

This comment addressed the grandfathering of personal leaf blowers owned by residents and will be incorporated in the ordinance for the acoustical noise standard for leaf blowers.

This meeting adjourned at 6:30PM.

The next meeting of the Sustainability Committee will be held on December 1, 2022, at 5PM.