

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

NOVEMBER 30, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Members present: Bill Lyons, Margaux Peabody, Jess Blasko, Effie Malley, Kate Cook, Josh Denton, Aubrey Gewehr, Bert Cohen, Herb Lloyd, Kate Homet, Steve Detrolio, Kristin Shaw (Health Dept.), Peter Britz, Katie Belle (Eco Club), Rena ??? (Eco Club), Logan W.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 26th, 2023

Motion passed unanimously.

III. Welcome Eco-Club Members

- Eco-Club is meeting with restaurants and speaking about by default not providing utensils and other items with take-out orders.
- Jess will connect Eco Club members with someone in Portsmouth that is working on a pilot program to adopt reusable containers by restaurants.
- Kristin from the Health Department is interested in working with the Eco Club on both of these efforts they are working on.

III. Community Engagement Committee Update

- BrightAction app now has 79 households registered, Effie will provide details to Eco Club members to see if they can assist increase awareness of this.
- On November 17th the fourth Community Climate Conversation occurred, Jess Dolan facilitated this and the topic of this one was "Health" and climate and a few professors from UNH attended and spoke. About 27 attended this event.

IV. Solar Overlay District

- City Council motion for City Manager to report back preferred method to move forward.
- City Council included ordinance language from 3-4 NH cities is assist City staff.
- New district would cover private property in City
- Overlay could cover residential and also commercial property.
- Peter commented that "Principal Use" would need to be called specially, also to be clearer what is available as secondary use
- Peter commented that the SolarSmart program might be able to provide some guidance also

VI. EV Charging Update

- Planning Board will be having a working session to take up this topic
- Peter said that he should have an update at the next Sustainability Committee meeting
- Discussed during the meeting was "What is the current model for EV chargers on City property"?
 - Josh is not sure and more research on this needs to occur.
- Herb brought up point that we should understand the model we are using for current EV chargers on City property and what model does the City wants to follow in the future. Are tax payers paying for EV charging infrastructure on City property, does the City generate revenue from the 3rd parties through existing contracts?
- Herb commented that we should get in front of EV Charging on City property and what model will be followed and what types of contracts will we engage in with 3rd parties. Also, what are the best practices in our region related to this. With so many new EV's being registered in Portsmouth we need to figure out municipal charging now before the need rapidly increases.
- The High School is working on a 2024 project to re-pave the parking lot and we do not know if solar canopy or EV charging is being included as requirements.
- There are no level 3 EV chargers in Portsmouth
- NH DOT has IRA Federal funds to add EV charging stations in corridors (93, 95, 101), more to come and we will continue to watch.

VII. Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee (PEAC) Membership

- This committee is moving from Blue Ribbon to become a full and permanent committee.
- There is a desire to attend each others meetings and share details of what projects each is working on
- Kate is a member of this committee currently and Herb is applying to be a member of the PEAC
- Herb brought up concern that PEAC and this committee define responsibility swim lanes to ensure there is no duplication of effort.
- PEAC will be determining what projects they will work in 2024

VIII. Small Gas Engines

- Steve presented this topic and need to look at opportunities to reduce the purchase and usage of small gas engine devices like lawn mowers, blowers, weed trimmers
- They pollute the air and there is a lot of gas spilled while fueling them
- There was a lot of discussion about community sharing of gas-powered tools to reduce the volume of tools being purchased and also moving residents to move towards electric and away from gas powered

- Discussed was that for Portsmouth it would be better to use carrot with residents and not stick which would mean ordinances forcing residents towards electric.
- Portsmouth DPW could lead the way starting to move towards electric and also support Climate Action Plan.
- Action:
 - Steve, Chas Sullivan and Herb will meet and come back to next meeting with some possible next steps for the committee to review and decide on
- There was a lot of talk about "Sharing Economy"

IX: Committee Reporting to City Council Monthly

- Josh commented that this would be positive but let's wait till the CAP is launched
- Kate Cook commented that it would be great for this committee to put together a 2023 report showcasing what the committee accomplished.

X: Climate Action Plan

- Kate H. will provide draft to committee members to review and discuss at next meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Jess Blasko made a motion to adjourn at 8:10PM, which was seconded by Effie. Motion passed.

Facilitating: Margaux Peabody

Minutes recorded by: Herb Lloyd

NEXT MEETING: December 21, 2023 6:30-8:00PM

Facilitator:

Minutes: Josh Denton