

Dedham Sustainability Advisory Committee

Board of Selectmen Chambers

March 5, 2012

Present: Jon Briggs (JB), Steve MacAusland (SM), Carol Hills (CH), Deb Harrison (DH), Virginia LeClair (VL)

Guests: Rita May Cushman and friend

Residential Energy Efficiency Program

JH opened the meeting of March 5, 2012. DH commented that she was intrigued by the presentation that Next Step Living (NSL) gave and thought that they were willing to engage the community. SM has had many audits with Mass Saves and has not been impressed, but he thought Next Step Living was eager to work with the Town and making it a potentially good partnership.

The Committee had several questions that they asked VL to communicate to NSL and report back to them at the next meeting. CH suggested talking with other Towns to see if they are participating in this program and if they have had a positive experience.

Solarize Mass

VL reported on a new grant opportunity open only to Green Communities called Solarize Massachusetts. Only 10 communities will be selected and the grant will provide a marketing toolkit worth \$2,000. The program is geared towards both businesses and residents. The Committee voted to go forward with the grant application, which if successful, would tie in nicely with Next Step Living's efforts to improve residential energy efficiency.

SM said his meter is now running backwards as a result of his solar PV. He expects to reach net zero in a few months.

Earth Hour

VL reported that Earth Hour is coming up on Saturday, March 31st. As part of Earth Hour we are asking residents and businesses to turn off all non-essential lighting or architectural lighting for one hour between 8:30pm-9:30pm. CH suggested asking the Community Theater to put something up on the marquee. The Committee brainstormed where to promote this program and what groups to reach out to. SM suggested having the Selectmen gather for a photo shoot with the earth ball again for Earth Hour.

Earth Day

Earth Day is fast approaching on April 22nd. The group discussed clean up locations and dates. Rita May Cushman reminded the group of the Dedham Civic Pride (DCP) clean up scheduled for the beginning of May, as well as the annual Mother Brook Community Group (MBCG) cleanup. After some discussion the group decided to have a kick-off clean up on Friday, April 20th with Woodard and Curran and a closing cleanup with Oakdale Square Alliance, MBCG and DCP on Saturday, April 28th. VL is to coordinate further with Dan Hart, DCP and CRWA.

Green Fair

JB made a case to the Committee to continue with the Green Fair this year stating that it defines the Committee. The Committee discussed locations and possible dates. The Green Fair is typically held in late May at the Middle School, but last year we combined with the Dedham Community House to host it in the field behind the Community House. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate and the turnout was not great. The Committee discussed holding it in the fall to give us more time to promote and plan. The Endicott Estate was suggested as a possible location.

CH said she would like to try to get the MIT Solar Car to the Green Fair. SM echoed CH sentiments by saying that we needed cool technology. VL would like to see food and music as part of the attraction. JB remembered how popular the historic trolley tours were at the 375 event and brainstormed about a Green Tour.

Members/Community Update

SM attended a week long climate event in Brookline hosted by Climate Change Action Brookline (CCAB). He discussed the program and thought it was very well attended and of high quality. He mentioned reconvening a regional meeting, similar to what we did several years ago with Newton, Needham and Brookline to discuss sustainability issues on a local and regional level.

SM announced that St. Suzanna's will be holding a summer eco-experience that will run like a summer camp for Middle School students interested in science. It will be a 5 day a week camp with a curriculum based on our local watershed.

DH suggested that as part of the camp experience that the students take a day trip to the Farmers Market to learn about local farming and to interview a farmer. DH asked about the cost of the camp and what staff and materials are available.

Adjourn

DH made a motion to adjourn. SM second. All in favor.

The Committee meets the first Monday of every month. The next meeting will be held on Monday April, 2nd.