Sustainability Team Special Meeting
June 7, 2022
Minutes

Virtual Meeting

In attendance:

Committee Members: Theresa Govert, Kayle Lopez, Greg Coleman, Edwina Trentham, Amalia Shaltiel joined by David Oakes, George Willauer III
Others: Ranae Reese (Equity Coach), Liam Rimas (COG)

Call to Order

Amalia Shaltiel called the meeting to order at 7:05

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Edwina Trentham, seconded by Theresa Govert and carried by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes

Theresa Govert motioned to approve the minutes of the special meeting of May 02, 2022.
Kayle Lopez seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of Attendees:

Equity Coach Report

Ms. Reese noted the following statistics:

There are 169 towns; Half of all the people live in 26 town.
The other half live in the other 143 towns.
Half of all Black Connecticut residents live in 7 towns.
Half of Latino Connecticut residents live in 6 towns.
Half of Asian Connecticut residents live in 19 towns.
Half of white non-Hispanic residents live in 36 towns.

In summary she stated that some racial and ethnic groups have felt constrained in movement. The imbalance there suggests that not everybody has had the same amount of choice in where they live. We didn't do that, but it is the constraints with which we live with today. Ms. Reese engaged the attendees in an exercise regarding who has a say in the Town's decision making and how to engage those that do not.

COG

Liam Rimas was introduced. Liam is a student intern working with 17 towns within the River COG. Mr. Oakes suggested that Mr. Rimas be provided with the Plan of Conservation and Development as well as the Affordable Housing Document. Mrs. Shaltiel stated that she would forward the documents requested.

Team Member Reports

Mr. Willauer reported on the Affordable Housing meeting. Brief discussion ensued regarding the point system, and how to increase the percentages, which in turn increases the points.
In addition, discussion was held regarding spreading the words regarding recycling, learning more about energy use in town owned buildings. The third class in equity training was completed by Mr. Oakes, One other elected official and a management level employees still need to take this training. Mr. Ventres was reported to be a good resource for the history and local attractions, the upcoming Music on the River was also discussed in terms of its relationship to Parks and Rec.

Ms. Lopez advised that a lot of work has been done in the past couple of weeks getting the town's composting program up and running. She noted that she is excited to see how it progresses in a couple of months, and then in a couple of years. She is working with the Middle School environmental club and will promote composting to the kids. Blue Earth has been great to work with. Mrs. Shaltiel inquired how this activity could translate into an equity action. Ms. Reese will connect with Ms. Lopez to explore this further

Ms. Trentham noted that East Haddam News is looking for a new editor. David Holahan is acting editor for now. It is hoped to have poetry writings about the earth and its destruction, it was also suggested that poetry readings could occur outside the grange. She also stated that she was hopeful that through Together we Rise a book discussion regarding Children Under Fire – an American Crisis about the many children whose lives have been destroyed from gun violence, will occur.

Ms. Shaltiel discussed problems encountered in what to include in a narrative when uploading an action to the sustainablect.org site.

Mr. Oakes suggested when doing an overview to see exactly what they are looking for and then provide this for them according to their guidelines. Some of the reviewers are tougher than the others.

Community Garden

Discussion regarding the Mount Parnassus Garden was held. Plots were reported to lease for $50.00. Concern was raised that $50 is a lot of money for some. A sliding sale was suggested, as was the donation of a couple of plots to those that may qualify based on need. It was noted that there are 28 plots in use.

Ms. Shaltiel advised that she spoke with Lauren Pszczolkowski from the Economic Community Development Committee. EDC is printing a booklet of town businesses for distribution. She is also doing

a map of farm stands. She noted that she spoke with Ms. Reese about doing an equity program with local farm stand owners, finding what they need and what we the community needs to facilitate buying from them. Ms. Shaltiel plans to attend an Economic Development Committee meeting to see how we can collaborate, as they are promoting a thriving community. She also noted that she witnessed England also promoted ways to meet the climate crisis and reduce your footprint.

New Business

Mrs. Shaltiel summarized three potential equity projects:

- Composting
- Affordable Housing Project
- Farm Stands

It was noted that one equity projects is necessary for bronze qualifications , and that three are needed to attain Silver status.

Mr. Oakes concurred with pursuing all three projects. It was suggested that they be identified in the Newspaper to promote them. He also suggested addressing a homeless prevention sub action that is required this year. It was suggested to reach out to someone in youth and community services and someone from our Coordinated Access Network contact. Some of it is just gathering data and some is more complex. Ms. Shaltiel stated that she will reach out to Toni who runs the Youth and Family Services which is not a town entity but is connected to the town to ask about homelessness situation. The personal products project was also discussed. It was noted that supplying basic needs allows people to pay for essentials.

It was also suggested that the Sustainability Team work with the Planning and Zoning Commission and Mr. Ventres regarding ways to work together.

Public Comment

Nothing noted.

The next meeting will be July 5, 2022

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Trentham, seconded by Mr. Oakes and carried unanimously at 8:47 p.m.