

ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

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MICHAEL BLUM
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

August 13, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

The following members were present: Mike Blum, Frank Maricic, Herb Oringel, Mike Yee.

The following members were not present: Flo Brodley, Jane Harsha, Stacie Vourakis, Rick Warren and Chris Zaberto.

Town resident Don Bleasdale was also present.

Mr. Blum was congratulated as new Chair for the Committee and Mr. Oringel as the Somers Sustainability Coordinator. Mr. Bleasdale is being interviewed by the Town Board at their August 21 meeting for a permanent position on the Committee.

Minutes – Mr. Yee made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 4, 2014 meeting as submitted. Mr. Maricic seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Complete Streets – A presentation will be made by Mr. Yee to the Town Board at their August 21 meeting. All Committee members are encouraged to attend as well. A flyer was distributed to the Library, Town Hall and Heritage Hills. It was also posted on the Town website and sent to The Somers Record.

Algonquin Pipeline Expansion Meeting – Through the efforts of Ms. Brodley, a meeting was held last night at the Library regarding the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion. Co-founder of the grassroots group SAPE (Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion) was also there. There was a very good turnout. In addition to Ms. Brodley, Mr. Blum, Mr. Yee and Mr. Zaberto were also present. A resolution created regarding this project, which will also be discussed at the August 14 Town Board meeting was shared as well.

Energize Somers – Unfortunately the recent data provided was not as good as expected. Although there has been a lot of time and effort dedicated to this project, more still needs to be done. Perhaps a survey (combination of on-line and paper) can be done to determine why people are resisting to this opportunity and/or combined with a showcase of success cases. If the Energize route is too expensive is there a low price version that can be suggested.

Additional Members – All agreed that additional members are needed for the Committee. Mr. Blum and Mrs. Schirmer will work on a plan to see this to fruition.

Sustainable Westchester – This newly formed organization will manage 33 municipalities, 17 from NWEAC and 16 from SWEAC. New York State finally approved the name and they are in the process of securing an Executive Director, creating bylaws, a conflict of interest policy and other documents. The first event will focus on solarizing the communities and will be held on September 4 in the auditorium at the PACE Law School. Communities will be selected, and hopefully Somers will be one of them now that they are using the NYS Unified Solar Permit and have set a flat fee of \$150 per permit issued, for both commercial and residential. As the number of participants who solarize in a community increases, the cost of solar panels and the installation of them decreases.

Mr. Oringel will be reviewing the Orange County Water Conservation Strategy on August 15 and there will be a Climate Change conference at PACE sponsored by the FCWC on September 12.

Senior Projects as Part of the SSAP – Mr. Blum and Mr. Maricic met with Somers High School Principal Mark Bayer this morning to talk about Senior Projects that can be undertaken as part of the Somers Sustainability Action Plan. Mr. Bayer is anxious to be involved in this process and will be talking to his teachers about it at the back to school meeting at the end of August. The SEEC has to specifically scope the projects and will provide management, as well as mentorship.

A discussion also took place about further solarizing the schools in the District.

Low Carbon Diet – A couple of years ago the Committee purchased Low Carbon Diet workbooks in an effort to get a community contest going to no avail. Mrs. Schirmer will review the materials to see if a contest among 6th graders might work.

Somers Sustainability Action Plan – All Committee members were asked to review the Plan, which was sent to them via email and to come prepared to speak about prioritizing the projects at the September meeting. Full attendance of all Committee members at that meeting will be very important.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 3 at 6:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Energy Environment Committee

cc: Energy Environment Committee
Town Board
Town Clerk