

ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
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SOMERS, NY 10589

MICHAEL BLUM
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

September 3, 2014

Chairman Blum called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

The following members were present: Mike Blum, Flo Brodley, Herb Oringel, and Mike Yee.

Mrs. Harsha did phone in to the meeting.

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

Town Councilman Richard Clinchy and resident Don Bleasdale were also present.

Minutes – Mr. Blum made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 13, 2014 meeting as submitted. Mr. Yee seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Senior Year Project – On September 8, Mr. Blum will attend a Somers High School teacher orientation to talk about the proposed Senior Year Project of completing a conservation audit of the High School and seeing that the building becomes an optimum environment. The teachers that are interested in becoming involved will contact Principal Mark Bayer, who in turn will reach out to Mr. Blum.

Complete Streets – Mr. Yee made a presentation to the Town Board at their August 21 meeting on Complete Streets, which was well received. The funding process will be a bit more difficult than originally expected. Either an engineering firm can be hired to scope out the project, but would be excluded from bidding on the project or a Request for Qualifications can be created, sent to about 15 firms and the best qualified selected. There will be a fee connected to this first phase. Funds are available through the Greenway Committee and it is the hope that they will give \$5,000. A request will be

made to the Town to fund the difference. It was suggested by Ms. Brodley that Somers' organizations such as the Chamber be solicited for contributions toward this fee as some of the businesses will ultimately benefit in the long run. Mr. Yee would like to set up a Sub-Committee to begin working on the next steps.

Energize Somers – As the numbers for Somers are not as good as expected, a discussion took place with regard to increasing the awareness and importance for folks to have an energy audit done through the Energize program. The oldest homes that are heated with oil would benefit the most. Somers High School students could help with that research. Another suggestion was to raffle off a Nest thermostat (saves 20 to 30% on ones' energy bill) for those who signed up for an audit. At least one of the current Town Board members has had an audit. It would be nice if they all had one done to set the example for the residents. Hopefully those that have an audit done with complete the Energize process by having the suggested work completed. If this is not feasible, a "Do it Yourself" option like a weatherization program, etc. would be the next best thing.

Algonquin Pipeline Expansion Meeting – The Town Board passed a resolution regarding the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion at their August meeting. There will be another grassroots group SAPE (Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion) meeting tomorrow evening at the Lake Purdy's Clubhouse at 7:00 p.m. On September 15, a FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) meeting on the same subject will take place at the Morabito Community Center in Cortlandt. Spectra is supposed to attend the October Somers Town Board meeting.

Sustainable Westchester – The newly formed Sustainable Westchester was launched this week. Tomorrow, the first event focusing on solarizing the communities will be held 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. On October 28, the NY League of Conservation Voters will be presenting Sustainable Westchester a good buddy award.

New Solar Legislation – New York State Assemblywoman Sandra Galef will be introducing legislation to allow multiple family homes to become part of community solar. The New York State emphasis on solar solutions (residential, municipal and commercial) creates an opportunity to devote a sub-committee of the Somers Energy Environment Committee to solar solutions in Somers.

Somers Sustainability Action Plan – The three projects in progress are: Complete Streets, Energize Somers and Senior Year Project. Mr. Blum will use SurveyMonkey to canvas the Committee in terms of additional projects from the Plan that can be completed and prioritizing them. All agreed that additional members are needed for the Committee, as well as volunteers to work on the project. Perhaps folks will be more apt to commit if they know what the project is and entails. Once those needs are determined, Mr. Blum and Mrs. Schirmer will work on a plan to see this to fruition.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1 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