



Town of Brighton

MONROE COUNTY, NEW YORK

SUSTAINABILITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, SOC

2300 ELMWOOD AVE. * ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14618 * PHONE (585) 784-5250 * FAX (585) 784-5368

Sustainability Oversight Committee December 2, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Ron Wexler, Rochelle Bell, Chris Werner, Erinn Ryan, Eric Williams, Paul Tankel, Margy Peet, Mike Guyon, Evert Garcia, Andrew Robinson

Minutes:

The approval of the November 4, 2015 meeting minutes was deferred until next month's meeting.

Open Forum:

Announcements:

Old Business

- Financing Climate Smart Initiatives
 - Staff Guest Speaker- Andrew Robinson
 - A recurring topic for the SOC has been trying to determine how to fund Climate Smart Initiatives under the current budget constraints. Andrew Robinson, the Town's Budget Officer, was invited by the SOC to expound on this topic and provide the SOC with an understanding of any financing alternatives that may available to implements some of these projects.
 - Andrew provided a brief overview of the New York State property tax cap. Andrew explained that the tax cap, which was signed into law in 2011, establishes a limit on the annual growth of property taxes levied by local governments and school district to two percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. Exceeding the tax cap requires a 60% majority vote by the Town Board. If available, a budget carry over amount is allowed from the previous fiscal year. The Town's 2014 budget was close to the tax cap and therefore, no carry over amount is available for 2015. The NYS tax cap for 2015 is set to 0.7%.
 - In looking for creative ways to meet the tax cap threshold, the Town has reduced some of the reserve fund balance and implemented bonding for large cost projects and items.
 - Rochelle indicated that Green Bonds may provide a financing mechanism to help fund some of the Climate Smart Initiatives. Green Bonds were created to fund projects that have positive environmental and/or climate benefits. Andrew indicated that the Town's credit is



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highly rated and obtaining regular bonds are not an issue. It is important to note that the annual repayment amount of a bond does count against the NYS tax cap.

- Andrew indicated that one way to successfully implement a project using traditional bonds would be to propose a project in which the annual savings realized to the Town because of the project's implementation would be greater than or equal to the annual debt service associated with the project.
- Green House Gas Inventory
 - Updates- Government Operations and Community Wide GHG
 - Erinn provided an update on the current status of both the Town Operations and Community Level Greenhouse Gas Inventories as Cassidy and Greg are tied up with end of semester projects.
 - Cassidy has completed the vehicle inventory portion of the Town Operations GHG. Cassidy has also created an informational survey for Town Employees to fill out with regards to their commuting habits to work. Town Staff will need to obtain various approvals before distributing the survey to employees. Additionally, Cassidy is working with Mike DeClerck from Waste Management in obtaining data for quantities of waste generated within Town Borders. Finally, Cassidy is working on creating a matrix that compares the pros and cons of various Climate Action Plans.
 - Cassidy's goal is to have the Climate Action Plan comparison matrix completed by the beginning of January and the Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Town Operations completed by the end of January.
 - Greg is in the midst of collecting data for the Community Level greenhouse gas inventory. Greg is in contact with various local agencies including the Genesee Transportation Council, Brighton School District and the Brighton Fire Department to obtain this data.
 - Street Lighting Wrap Up
 - The 2015 street lighting study which considered the feasibility of retro-fitting LED fixtures onto existing incandescent fixtures within certain Lighting Districts will be compiled into a comprehensive report. The report will include Schuyler's initial analysis, Town Staff's financial analysis, and Tom Lowe's 2011 report as an appendix. Evert indicated that the report should be completed by February 2016.



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- Climate Smart Communities
 - National or Regional Campaign:
 - As part of the required steps for becoming a certified climate smart community, the Town must join the efforts of a National or Regional Campaign. The SOC discussed the various national or regional campaigns that are available for the Town to join.
 - After discussion, the SOC decided that the Town should not join a regional campaign that requires expenditure of Town funds until a clear benefit resulting from joining a campaign can be identified. Additionally, there are other items that must be completed prior to becoming a certified CSC community. The SOC will continue to explore other regional campaigns that can satisfy the Climate Smart Communities requirement while providing a benefit to the Town.
- Comprehensive Plan Update (Priorities to Consider)
 - The next Public Informational meeting for the Comprehensive Plan Update will be held in mid-January.
 - Ron met with the Comprehensive Plan Update Consultants prior to this month's SOC meeting. Ron indicated that the consultants have asked the SOC to identify the most important Sustainability related issues that the SOC would like to see addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.
 - The SOC indicated that they would like to see the comprehensive plan update focus on Land-Use Tools. For example, mixed used zoning and higher density should be explored in areas that warrant it.
 - The Climate Smart Communities pledge items of focus for the comprehensive plan update should include the following:
 - *Item 6.7-Adopt land-use policies that support or incentivize farmer's markets, community gardens and urban and rural agriculture.*
 - *Item 6.8-Adopt green parking standards.*
 - *Item 6.9-Adopt a complete streets policy.*
 - *Item 6.10-Implement strategies that support bicycling and walking.*
 - Mike will send out a link of the Comprehensive Plan Update website, Envision Brighton, to the members of the SOC.
- SOC and Town Board Meeting



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- The SOC is anticipating a February 2016 date for a meeting with the Town Board. Each focus subgroup will provide Ron with one PowerPoint slide for the meeting that will be compiled into a unified presentation
- Development Updates
 - Updates for development projects throughout the Town were briefly discussed.

New Business

- Educational Program
 - The Town would like to know if the SOC is interested in developing an educational program for the community that would be presented on the Town's cable channel. The SOC indicated that they are interested and would like to know more details on what type of product the Town is requesting. More information regarding this matter will be available at subsequent meetings.
- 2016 SOC Schedule
 - Changing the meeting start time to 6:30 PM for SOC meetings in 2016 was briefly discussed.
 - Mike will distribute the Draft 2016 Meeting Schedule to the SOC for feedback on the proposed meeting dates and time.

Adjournment

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be January 6, 2016 at 7:00 PM.