



# Sustainability Oversight Committee

Secretary – Evert Garcia

Due to the public gathering restrictions and executive orders in place because of COVID-19, this Sustainability Oversight Committee meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom. Members of the public can participate during the open forum via Zoom. For Zoom meeting information, please reference the Town's Live Streaming webpage at:

<https://www.townofbrighton.org/499/Streaming-Video>

## **Sustainability Oversight Committee April 7, 2021**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance:** Erinn Ryen, Mitch Nellis, Nate Gibbs, Shubhangi Gandhi, Brian Lynch, Robin Wilt, Tom Snyder-Guest, Evert Garcia

**Open Forum:**

**Minutes:** The March 2021 meeting minutes were approved with no revisions.

**Announcements:**

**Old Business**

- **Pollinator Garden Presentation-Tom Snyder**
  - Tom presented the Lac de Ville pond pollinator garden proposal to the committee. The proposal includes four (4) distinct improvement areas/sites as part of the overall pollinator garden installation plan.
  - Scheduling for this project would include an initial planting in the fall of 2021, with a second seeding/planting event in the spring of 2022.
  - The Seneca Park Zoo likes to incorporate these types of projects into their community outreach and programming.
  - The estimated cost for the proposed pollinator garden improvements is \$5,550.00. The quote does not include topsoil/mulch, cardboard for the lasagna installation, and long term maintenance.
  - Tom indicated that the cost can be reduced by picking only certain components of the project.
  - After discussions with the committee, Tom indicated that he will revise the proposal to include taller plantings along the existing fence line, break down the cost for each distinct planting area, and include topsoil and long term maintenance costs in the proposal.
  - Tom mentioned that RIT is working on a financial analysis of maintenance costs for areas which have been planted with pollinator gardens. He will check with RIT to see if the study has been completed and available for sharing.

- **CEC Update**
  - The CEC program, which was started by NYS in 2016 to help municipalities across the state save money and shrink their carbon footprint has been revamped with a new round of funding. Points for previously completed actions have been reset.
  - Evert and Brian are planning on meeting to review the Town's current points standing in the program and determine what options are available for the Town to earn more points.
  - Evert is working on submitting supporting documentation to obtain points for the Town of Brighton's CCA program. Receiving points for the Town's CCA program will get the Town close to the first threshold in the program and make the Town eligible for a \$10,000 grant.
  - The CEC grants have time limits for when a project must commence and funding used up after becoming eligible for a grant. The committee should keep these thresholds in mind when considering CEC projects.
  - The committee would like to include pollinator gardens for consideration as custom projects under the CEC program.
  
- **CAP Grant Kickoff**
  - The Climate Action Plan Grant contract has been signed and now it is time to move the project forward.
  - The DEC has approved a grant work plan which specifies objectives and tasks which will move the project forward. As part of the work plan, quarterly progress reports have to be submitted to the grant coordinator.
  - Staff and volunteer time has to be tracked on the spreadsheets provided by the grant coordinator in order to submit for reimbursement of in-kind services.
  - Ramsey Boehner, Town Planner, will be on the team for this project. Ramsey has worked through a few projects in the Town which were completed with grant funding and is familiar with the administration components.
  - Ramsey and Evert will revise the RFP to be consistent with the work plan and other grant requirements. Subsequent to these revisions, Town staff will distribute to the SOC for final review.
  - Some of the updates that need to be made include:
    - A deliverable by the consultant which indicates that they will generate a revised draft from staff comments and initial public comments. This version of the plan becomes the new Draft Climate Action Plan.
    - The RFP should include some coordination with the Town's IDEA Board.
    - Potential changes to public meetings due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings.
    - A more robust website development section due to COVID-19 restrictions.
  - Jeff Frisch, Planning Technician with the Town will also be providing support for this project. Town staff is requesting to change the meeting night for future CAP meetings in order to maximize participation from all members of staff. Right now, Wednesday night's conflict with other Town meetings occurring at the same time. Evert will provide the committee with a list of potential dates which could serve as the new meeting nights.
  
- **Sustainability Fund**
  - The Town received a contribution from Source Power for every household that signed up for Community Solar. This funding will be used to support one or more projects benefitting the environment in Brighton.
  - The Town Board is looking for feedback from the SOC on what projects to use the funds on. Joule provided a list of projects which other communities have completed with their Sustainability Fund.
  - Erinn summarized a list of potential projects for the Sustainability fund on a spreadsheet and shared it with the committee. Brian inquired about correlating the CEC grant projects with the projects noted on the spreadsheet.
  - Members of the committee will provide their input on priority projects for the sustainability fund by filling out the spreadsheet. Committee members can also feel free to add new project ideas which already don't exist on the project list.

- **Senate Bills 1185/1113**
  - Nate is working on putting together a draft letter of support for Senate Bill S1185 for the committee to review at a subsequent meeting. The recycling bill would be the first in the nation to shift the responsibility for recycling to the producer. Additionally, the bill aims to create a fund for recycling centers.
  - Similarly, the committee briefly discussed putting together a letter of support for Senate Bill S1113 which relates to prohibiting the use of gas-powered leaf and lawn blowers during summer months.
  - Color Brighton Green has already submitted a letter of support for S1113.
  - Prior to drafting a letter of support, the committee will also explore the potential implications of such a bill on Town Highway staff. Evert will discuss this matter with Mike Guyon, Commissioner of Public Works, to get a better understanding of how extensive the Town's Highway staff uses gas-powered leaf and lawn blowers during summer months.

**New Business**

**Adjournment**

**Next Meeting:**

- The next meeting is scheduled for **May 5, 2021**, at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

DRAFT