

Sharon Energy and Environment Commission
Meeting Minutes
for
Friday, December 18, 2020 8:00AM

Present: Lyn Mattoon, Jan Dudek, Oscar Martinez, Doug Rick, Roger Liddell, Michael Nadeau, Katy Kinsolving

1. Minutes of the November 20, 2020 meeting were approved.
2. Lyn welcomed new SEEC member Michael Nadeau to the Commission.
3. Commission members reviewed the state of the application to the CT Green Bank Solar Municipal Assistance Program and planned for next steps. The Green Bank may make a visit the proposed sites in person. SEEC members discussed the challenges at one of the proposed sites, at the local elementary school. There was a query as to whether the Town garage uses sufficient electricity to warrant a 50K site. Current garage is heated with oil, but if switched to mini-split air source it may use sufficient electricity.
4. There was a discussion of the propriety of the Commission signing letters sent around by various CT environmental organizations, the latest being a Climate Emergency Executive Order and a letter calling for a ban on New Federal Fossil Fuel Leasing and Permitting on Public Lands and Waters. In each case, SEEC was asked was to sign as an organization. There was a discussion about whether or not as signatories SEEC would representing the town. If so, probably cannot sign on. Lyn to check in with Brent about this.
5. Lyn reported on webinar on food scrap recycling in New Canaan. Food scraps represent 20% of waste stream and are very heavy. MIRR to be decommissioned, so the waste stream goes out of state. Recycling food scraps is something that TRAC (Transfer Station Resident Advisory Commission) is looking into for a future project. Various local farms and their composting systems were discussed.
6. Roger Liddell proposed that SEEC provide regular public service announcements on environmental issues to the *Lakeville Journal*. Use some of the SEEC budget to place an advertisement, with the goal of perhaps a bi-weekly 'public service' advertisement in the local paper. Each Commission member is asked to come up with a 50/60 word advertisement for the January meeting.
7. Update on efforts to preserve open water on the Sharon pond: the pond was originally 10 acres, now is 1 acre. A previous meeting had explored the option of using beavers in the pond. Mike Nadeau explained that beavers are not the solution. Beavers eat trees, and as the land around the pond is private property, this could be hazardous.

Beavers are hard to control with burgeoning populations of offspring. Beavers don't eat invasive plants. Lyn will talk to wetlands commission for weir idea. Installation of the weir would raise the level of the pond to kill some of the phragmites and the cat tails, this would not reduce phragmites but would stop encroachment.

8. Consideration of a plan to recruit people to address invasive vines attacking trees on public roadsides. Discussed working with other organizations such as Greenagers, Garden clubs. It was agreed that as a Commission we should not use buckthorn blaster, which is made from glyphosate.

Any hollow stem invasive plants, knotweed and phragmites, can be controlled with applications of agricultural vinegar in the fall, when the plants are pulling nutrients down into the stem; this takes two years, interrupting a plant's ability to do photosynthesis. Mow in spring, inject vinegar in fall. Michael suggests the use of the JK-injection gun, which pressurizes the vinegar and squirts it into the stem, (use dye). Knotweed is edible and the root is used in remedies for several maladies.

9. New Business:
Sharon to be on pollinator pathway. Educate people about using native plants to attract pollinators. Northwest conservation district sells native plants.

Katy Kinsolving made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Oscar Martinez seconded the motion.

Next month's meeting will be on **January 28th, Thursday, at 5:30 in the Town Hall or on Zoom.**

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