

Town of Essex
Energy Committee / Conservation and Trails Committee
Minutes

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

6:30 PM – Via MS Teams and Live (81 Main Street)

Present for EEC: Will Dodge (chair), Natalee Braun, David Skopin, Irene Wrenner, Michael Fink, Dottie Bergendahl (virtual), Phil March.

Present for Conservation and Trails Committee (CTC): Chuck Vile, Town Tree Warden; Darren Schibler, Town Planner; Ken Signorello, Public Member (online); Sharon Zukowski, Public Member (online)

I. JOINT MEETING (Main Room on 1st Floor)

Following introductions, A discussion was had regarding commonalities of interest in tree preservation (due to the positive effects for carbon capture), bike trails, volunteering to assist with the emerald ash bore egg removal, solar panels (including effects of runoff), and other topics. Major takeaway was to continue communicating and find areas where committees could work together.

[Please separately see the minutes of the CTC, available online, for more details.]

II. SEPARATE EEC MEETING (Upstairs Conference Room)

A. Button Up Preparations. The Committee members reviewed the schwag that had been collected, went over the logistics of tables and chairs for the event, identified follow-up items (including donuts and photocopying of key exhibits, and overall presentation).

Action Items: Setup and staffing of Button Up tables Saturday and Sunday, October 22 and 23rd, 9:30am-3:00pm.

B. Reachout from Andy Watts. Board members agreed that follow-up was needed – would be a renewed focus after Button Up.

C. Outreach Item. It was noted that the Rotary Club had thanked the Committee for the presentation, and that EEC would return the thanks and invite members to Button Up. Separately, Will’s interview with Max Dodson from VPR had been broadcast on the Sunday Weekend Edition.

D. Multi-Use Path. Will reported his findings through Local Motion and VTrans that progress is held up by the utilities.

E. Net-Metering Update. Will reported making progress with Jim Jutras (for the Village); still waiting to hear from Town DPW on potential credit opportunities, while continuing to work with Kevin Davis from Norwich Technologies.

F. Essex Rescue Project. A discussion ensued regarding options for ensuring that the new building off of Essex Way is equipped with geothermal and solar. Mike pointed out that not every property is ideal for geothermal, but that solar and air sourced heat pumps would make sense. It was agreed to keep an eye out for the Act 250 notice / hearing.

Meeting was adjourned following a motion by Irene, seconded by Natalee.

Next Meeting: November 10, 2021 at 7:00pm.