



Community Resilience Working Group

Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2020

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm on Zoom Platform

Members Present: Peter Kelly-Joseph (HEAC and Chair); Christiane Turnheim (Agricultural Advisory Committee), Lucy Wallace (Select Board), Janet Waldron, (Conservation Commission), Ellen Sachs Leicher (Citizen Member), and Ron Ostberg (Citizen Member)

Agricultural Advisory Commission Members Present: Kerri Green

Staff Present: Christopher Ryan (Director of Community and Economic Development)

Others Present: Kari Hewitt, KLA, Hillary King, EOEEA

Convene and Preamble

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Introduction of Phoebe von Conta

Chris introduced Phoebe VonConta, a student at Oberlin College who is attending college from home during the pandemic, as the Committee's newest member.

Presentation of Draft Climate Action Plan for Harvard Agriculture by Kim Lundgren & Associated Project Team

Kari Hewitt from KLA presented the Agriculture portion of the Climate Action Plan. She noted that a major stressor for farmers in Harvard is the financial pressure caused by development and impact of climate on crop production. Peter asked what actions the public could take to mitigate this stress and what actions farmers were taking.

Hillary King noted the state Resilient Lands Initiative under the direction of Bob O'Connor as one program aimed at assisting farmer. Lucy asked about zoning tools; it was noted that some communities have adopted Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) as a way for farmers to realize the development value of their land by selling those rights for use in areas intended for residential or commercial use. Another option is allowing more diverse farm operations through Accessory Business Uses zoning.

Both Christiane and Kerri Green (Ag Commission chair) felt the Agriculture Chapter was vague, generic and lacking in detail and specifics relative to Harvard. Chris asked about the process for accepting the Plan and KLA's work. It was felt that this Committee would make its recommendation to the Planning Board (as it is a subcommittee of the Planning Board) which would then make a recommendation and seek the endorsement of the Select Board of the Committee's recommendations.

Discussion of Metroquest Survey Results

Kari Hewitt reported that there had been 335 responses to date to the survey, 314 of which had unique comments. While this is a very good response rate, she asked if we would like to keep the survey up for another week beyond its current close date of September 27th. There was general agreement to hold it open for another week.

Discussion of New Group Members

Chris noted that there are two additional recruits to be appointed by the Planning Board: Abbe Alpert representing HCT and Alex Cronin, another college student representative.

Discussion of New MVP Action Grant: Tasks and Timeline

Chris announced that Harvard is part of a 3-town project, Apple Country Nature Based Solutions, along with Bolton and Devens. The project was awarded a \$250,000 grant from the state. The kickoff meeting will be on September 30th.

Other Business

Ellen asked if we should develop specific actions to be taken now by community members to get engagement in addressing climate issues. She noted that Arm in Arm is sponsoring a Zoom program on religion and the environment, which we could encourage our network of connections to attend. Other options considered were to encourage homeowners to plant a tree or take up composting.

Adjournment

At 9:00 PM, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.