



Community Resilience Working Group
Outreach and Communication Subgroup
Meeting Minutes
December 30, 2020

The meeting convened at 7:02 pm in the Volunteer Meeting Room, Town Hall, 13 Ayer Road, Harvard, without a quorum. Quorum was met at 7:30 pm.

Members Present: Arianna Thornton and Ron Ostberg.

Staff Present: Christopher Ryan

Others Present: Ellen Sachs Leicher

Convene

The meeting officially convened at 7:02 pm.

New Business

Members discussed initial tasks and actions. One suggestion was to get the logo out there. Send it out via social media, posters, and other ways. One idea was the “Tantalizing Encounter” for peaking curiosity. Start with the logo, sans name; ask the question, “What is This?” Gradually add information...eventually provide website address.

Ron suggested using the Press to get some recognition. Arianna said the school bulletin board might be a location for putting up the logo. We could ask people for their email, Instagram, and/or text contacts. We could keep a spreadsheet of contacts.

Having social media accounts for the group was discussed. Chris asked about moderation. Arianna said that certain functions could be disabled.

Chris asked who the constituencies are that we want to initially focus on. Ron suggested the following:

1. Schools: students (Instagram)
2. Schools: families (emails)
3. Older cohorts: Empty nesters and seniors (newsletter)

Arianna suggested that there would be a self-selection of platforms. Ron said we should consider engagement expectations on a spectrum from minimum to maximum including:

1. Contact (one way street) - post cards, email, signs, website
2. Dialogue (two way street); come to meetings/zoom
3. Active participation - volunteer and assume some responsibility

Arm in Arm – Uses a Google Sites for its web page. Does not give a clean URL.

We can also try to engage the PTO, Scott Hoffman, Sendpulse.

Fivesparks – Has a newsletter for their membership. Scott Hayward has one too for the General Store. Our website – should it be the Town's site...or something else?

Arianna suggested Google Sites. Ellen acknowledged that is how they created the Arm in Arm website and it isn't searchable on google. You need to know the website address.

Ellen showed the MassEnergize site and discussed why it would be a good model for our website. It is already set up so it does not involve having to design from scratch. It has a place to put in events, videos from past events, specific Harvard information and actions one can take and complete. It shows an individual's progress and the amount of carbon offset. Six areas of actions are standard for everyone and are more common things people can do. Ellen believes these actions would be part of our climate action plan. We can then create specific ones for Harvard and they help set that up, such as one that covers what we can do with our forests, waterways, and agriculture. It is more action oriented than policy, but Ellen believes it can be a hook to get people interested and feel like they are making a contribution. It could surely be combined with other ideas, such as the newsletter (a blog supposedly can be added), column in the Harvard Press, etc.

Ron wanted to go slow and not immediately adopt this. We are building a robust structure unlike any other in town. He noted that this is a very long-term affair...not unlike, but much more elaborate than a land conservation program

Chris liked the idea and said that it seems to be something that we can use, either as a primary portal or ancillary.

Ron said that we can deal with different groups differently. He emphasized that there is no place for shaming in our outreach. We need cooperation, not competition. He further noted that we need to educate, not intimidate; no condescension. There should be enthusiasm for action in the face of scary prospects.

Chris suggested a set of communication principles the group should create and ascribe to. There was apparent agreement of this idea.

Ron asked about the Town website. Was it due for an update? Ron said that he would contact Robert Curran to see what he could do or suggest.

Web Site Options

1. Town Site – Plus: it is available and free. Minus: Hard to find and no flexibility.
2. Go Daddy – Cost of domain and server space.
3. Wix – Cost of Domain and server space.
4. Wordpress – Difficult to learn and use. Templates cost money.
5. Google – Cost of server space. Domain recommended and costly.
6. MassEnergize – Cost (\$750 for set up, \$450 per year. Ellen is asking HEAC if Green Communities grant could support this). Great graphics and interface. No standalone domain.
7. Hybrid – One option plus MassEnergize?

We can flesh out the plusses and minuses and present to the full Group on the 12th.

Ron said that we need to get more volunteers for this all to work. We can't rely on a small group of volunteers...we need advocates, participants and partners; we need to collaborate with entities such as Harvard Conservation Trust, Fruitlands (Trustees of Reservations), the Lions.

Chris said that there is a chicken and egg dilemma, we need to do more to get more and get more to do more.

Our group needs to be a bridging organization...needs to be a coordination of the public and private. It will not work in just one domain. Regarding a profile of actions, it was noted that some people need/want to understand the context; others not so much, so we need to address both. From a timing perspective, there are things to be done today and things that will require years of work. Actions can be categorized in a range of extremes: NOW - an electric car; LONG-TERM - A FOREST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

Harvard Press – Chris said that he would discuss a column with John Osborne.

We need to evaluate conventional and social media; identify most appropriate for each constituency, including:

1. The Harvard Press - a regular column/blog
2. Next Door – Maybe just information pointing to other platforms
3. Town web site - hopefully better than existing
4. Independent website (see options above)
5. Email; Text; Instagram; Twitter; etc.

Chris talked about how Arianna could work with the social media ideas, Ron and Chris with Press articles or column, Ellen can provide us with more information about MassEnergize, and we can go from there.

Chris talked about the repository of information and data including links, articles, reports and other resources for visitors to learn about the issue.

The topic of group leadership was broached and Ron suggested that this did not need to be addressed at present and there was general agreement.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm