

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
JOINT MEETING
of the
Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Agricultural Commission,
Conservation Commission and
Energy Committee
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2013
7:00 P.M. – Great Barrington Fire Station**

PRESENT: STEPHEN BANNON
 ANDREW BLECHMAN
 ALANA CHERNILA
 DEB PHILLIPS
 SEAN STANTON
 KEVIN O'DONNELL, TOWN MANAGER

Energy Committee - Chris Vlcek Brandee Nelson Beth Moser
Agricultural Commission – Luke Pryjma Vivian Orlovski
Planning Board – Jonathan Hankin Brandee Nelson (Associate Member)
Conservation Commission – Andrew Mankin

1. CALL TO ORDER

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

MOTION: Deb Phillips to nominate Cara Davis for the Town Manager Screening Committee

SECOND: Alana Chernila

VOTE: 4-0 Andrew Blechman not yet present

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Members of each committee that were present introduced themselves.

3. GENERAL DISCUSSION REGARDING SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON

Brandee Nelson said that the Energy Committee is working on the development of an energy reduction plan, which is the criteria for entering the Green Communities Program. This will open the Town up for funding to help implement energy efficiency projects. This will be a 5 year plan.
Brandee read the letter that the Energy Committee wrote in response to the Board of Selectmen's questions. The letter was submitted to the Selectboard.

Luke Pryjma - Agricultural Commission- read a report regarding solar arrays entitled, "Report on Sustainable Agriculture in Great Barrington and Solar Installations in Pastures by Great Barrington Agriculture Commission."

He then read a sustainability report entitled, "Report on Sustainable Agriculture in Great Barrington; by the Great Barrington Agricultural Commission."

Both reports were submitted to the Selectboard.

Vivian Orlovski spoke about a book entitled, The Town that Food Saved by Ben Hewitt. In an interview, the author spoke about guiding principles for a de-centralized food system that the Agricultural Commission endorses. Vivian read through these principles.
She also mentioned a New York Times column "Lawns into Gardens."

Vivian said it is important to look at the fundamental resources on which agriculture is based; water and soil. These resources need to be preserved for the future.

Andrew Mankin – Conservation Commission – would like to help in regards to regulations related to protection of resources.

Jonathan Hankin – Planning Board – said that this conversation is leaving out the economics of sustainability. He said that solar energy restrictions will not help encourage solar energy. Jonathan feels that we are running out of farmers.

Sean Stanton suggested restrictions on single use plastic bags.

Beth Moser responded that ‘Green-Barrington’ presented information about bag use and awareness in the past. Many private businesses were interested in participating in a ban on plastic. The larger stores felt that it would be impossible. Guido’s said if 65% of their customers used their own bags, they would be willing to stop using plastic. This goal was never met.

Andrew Blechman said that there is a ban on Styrofoam but it’s still being used. Andrew asked if there is any enforcement.

Deb Phillips suggested that a By-law be written (about the plastic bag ban) and run by Town Counsel. Andrew Blechman said that education and a convincing presentation will be the key at Town Meeting. Kevin O’Donnell said that he will write a By-law for the Selectboard’s review.

Deb Phillips spoke about the impact that flushing ‘swiffers’ can have on the Waste Water Treatment Plant. This costs money in repairs. She suggested that they think about other items that may have this type of impact on the town.

Brandee Nelson spoke about ‘Solarized Massachusetts.’ This has been a positive program for the solar potential of businesses and residents. Brandee said it is a program with a lot of outreach. The town needs to engage in the application process. She will e-mail the webinar and power point presentation to the Board of Selectmen for their review.

Vivian Orłowski spoke about local investments by those who are non-accredited and how it could help local businesses. She said that finance can be used for sustainability.

Sean Stanton spoke about the market for slaughter houses. He said that he is hoping that the Planning Board could look at setting up a way to allow for slaughter houses.

Brandee Nelson suggested using the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Luke Pryjma responded that the Agriculture Commission is planning a trip to go to a mobile slaughter facility in Glenwood.

Sean Stanton spoke about the possible need for an Economic Development Committee.

Chris Vlcek said that they need to put forth a coherent vision of what sustainability means. What is the “essence” of the Berkshires?

Andrew Blechman responded that a mission statement would be helpful. There should then be a list with more specifics in categories.

Beth Moser said the creation of a mission statement should be conscious of people outside of the groups present. It should be inclusive and accessible.

Andrew Mankin said that the overall health of the community is what should be accomplished. If there is an overall view of what that means, you can then figure out how to achieve it.

Chris Vlcek said that the Master Plan is the container for this idea; the health of the community over the long term.

Deb Phillips said that she will write a vision statement for all to review.

The Chairperson from each group present agreed to talk about a solar by-law to see if there is a way to move it forward.

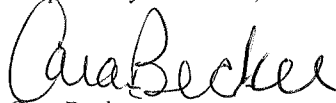
Deb Phillips re-iterated that they need to figure out how to encourage solar and then create a mechanism to do so.

Vivian Orłowski said she would like to see ways for residents to own solar panels. She spoke about PACE.

4. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Steve Bannon, seconded by Deb Phillips, the Board adjourned its meeting at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cara Becker". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Cara Becker
Recording Secretary