

Environment Committee Meeting, December 8, 2021 (via Zoom)

Present: Barton Rubenstein, David Kathan, Ralph Wooden, Veronique Marier, Donna Harmon, and Robin Barr.

1. Minutes of the October 6 meeting were approved. Donna moved their approval, and Veronique seconded.
2. Barton started a discussion of having solar panels in the Town, in particular, the Pool House roof and along the road next to the Town tennis courts. Several members asked why we are looking at the Pool House again, since Andrew had already reported that another company said it was not economic. Barton said that he believes that the DC SRECs should make it worthwhile financially to do it. Barton also believes that placing solar panels near the tennis courts. This will require some process with the Parks and Planning Commission to approve its installation. Barton spoke with neighbors and the tennis court committee and everyone is supportive. The only issue is that in order to get the DC SRECs an underground cable would need to be laid for several hundred feet in order to tap into the DC grid. Veronique proposed having the town do a RFP process and put it out to bid, and is also concerned that laying the underground wire may not be allowed in MD regulations. The work needed to this was then discussed by the team. David Kathan made a motion to recommend to the town to go forward with the studying these solar installations –
The Environment Committee proposes that the Town put out to bid through a RFP process the potential installation of solar panels on the Pool House roof and/or along the street near the Town tennis courts. The Committee members will support Matt Trollinger in the development and review of this RFP and bids.
Veronique seconded. The motion did not pass. David withdrew his motion and will send draft to Barton.
3. Barton briefly noted problems with stray cats and wildlife.
4. Barton reported on the status of the gas-fired leafblower ban. He will send out copy of the flyer on the ban, and will work with the Town to get it distributed. Robin Barr suggested using incentives from the Recovery Act monies that the Town will be receiving, such as providing direct incentives to landscapers or maintain a set of leafblowers that the Town would lend out to landscapers and homeowners. Some support for incentives, but questions were asked about the feasibility of incentives and the lending program. Consensus of the Committee was that this is worth investigating.
5. Recycling. Barton reported on developments on single-stream recycling. Barton will be going on a field trip to visit Goode company's new facilities to process multi-stream recycling on January 18, 2022. The Committee then turned to discussing means to expanding composting to the full Town. Veronique expressed an interest in examining a holistic approach to include composting as part of the refuse and recycling program. Robin Barr reported that expanding the compost contract would double the cost for the Town. Timing of this expansion and whether the program would be an opt-out or opt-in program was also discussed. A motion was moved by Veronique – "In an effort to make a more holistic waste management program, the Committee asks the Town to move the existing composting program from an opt-in program to an opt-out program at a date of their choice in 2022." Donna seconded the motion. The motion passed.

6. Barton noted that a new minute taker will need to take over from David starting with the next meeting.
7. Agreement to meet in January.
8. Meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm.