

Environment Committee Meeting, January 6, 2022, 8-9pm (via Zoom)

Present: Barton Rubenstein, David Kathan, Ralph Wooden, Donna Harmon, Yogesh Rajkotia and Robin Barr, Barbara Marenus, Pattie Friedman, and other town residents.

1. Minutes of the Dec 8, 2021 meeting were approved. Donna moved the approval, and Ralph seconded. The motion unanimously passed.
2. Barton reviewed a previously discussed idea of having solar panels in the Town, in particular, the Pool House roof and along the road next to the Town tennis courts. Barton reminded everyone that DC SRECs are very valuable (over \$400/unit) and thus would make this project financially viable, both for the pool and potentially for the tennis courts, assuming we can run a cable to the Wisconsin Ave town meter. David Kathan made a motion to recommend to the town to go forward with the studying these solar installations:

The Environment Committee motions to propose 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.

Ralph seconded. The motion unanimously passed.

3. Barton briefly discussed the need to distribute door-to-door of Leaf Blower Flyers and asked all members to participate in this task in the coming months.
4. Barton asked that all members going forward participate in taking the minutes with each member doing two consecutive meetings. This will be in alphabetical order by first name, with Barton going first (ie these minutes are his first), followed by Andrew, David, Donna, Ralph, Veronique, and Yogesh
5. David discussed the importance of reducing salt during the snow season. He gave a Powerpoint presentation showing the near-dangerous levels of salt (defined by EPA) in the creeks in Somerset and its surrounding area, with the highest level found at the town pool creek. Barton mentioned that the town contract will end at the end of this snow season and that Matt has asked that the EC recommend specific actions to help reduce the amount of salt used. David proposed that the EC recommend that the Town do a careful study of the amount of salt being applied on Somerset streets, and based on the results of the study align its salt dispersal levels with statewide guidelines (or better). David also mentioned that Garrett Park uses sand instead of salt, ie there are alternatives available. Pattie Friedman mentioned that Somerset uses much less salt than other neighborhoods but that more can always be considered. Yogesh made the following motion:

The EC motions to request that the town rebids the salt/snow contract to use at a maximum the amount of salt that the state guidelines stipulate, and simultaneously to solicit proposals for alternative ways to reduce salt use even further.

David seconded. The motion unanimously passed.

6. Barbara Marenus was invited to give a presentation about the new town website being developed. In particular, she hopes that an EC member can update and manage the EC page of the website, so that it can in a timely manner reflect all of the activities of the EC. Barton offered to do this.

7. Robin discussed the details of THRIVE Montgomery County, a 30-year project to, among other things, increase the housing density of the Wisconsin Ave, Friendship Heights Metro Station 1- mile radius area, which includes TOS. Robin asked for the EC members to discuss environmental concerns and consider making recommendations. This was a preliminary meeting and discussion is to continue at future EC meetings.
8. Barton said that the next EC would be in one to two months.
9. Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.