



Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2020 – 6:30 P.M.

Remote Participation

In Attendance: John Hayes, Jeff Cohen, Rick Nye, Doug Bowker, Gail Kubik, Meg Riccardi (Council Liaison), Esmeralda Bisono (City staff), Jenna Ide (City staff)

Not in Attendance: Chris Cantone, Phil Koch

Public: Alan Hanscom (SATV), Pat Gozemba (SAFE), Dave Rowand (SAFE), Amos Meeks (RMI), Stan Franzeen (SAFE), Cindy Keegan (SAFE)

Introductions

Public Comment

Review & Approve Meeting Minutes

- Jeff Cohen makes a motion to accept the minutes. Doug Bowker seconded.
 - A roll call vote was done, and the motion passes unanimously.

Discussion with Councilor Patti Morsillo re: Protection of Wetland Areas

- Ward 3 Councilor Patti Morsillo has submitted this letter to Conservation Commission & Planning Board.



- https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=3281958285217686&id=2317167131696811
- Councilor Patti Morsillo – Background information: There are a lot of development projects in Ward 3 so Councilor Morsillo has been attending several Conservation Commission and Planning meetings to keep up and stay informed so that she can inform her constituents.
 - Lately at the Planning Board meetings there has been a lot of questions about wetlands protection. There are specific development projects in Salem that are proposed to be in wetland areas.
 - There are no ordinances in Salem that protect the buffer areas of the wetlands. Several communities in Massachusetts have been passing ordinances related to this and it is time that Salem does the same.
 - Councilor Morsillo is pro-housing and agrees that more housing at all levels of income are important. But did not know that there was no protection for these buffer zones.
 - In the letter, Councilor Morsillo is asking these boards that the City think about buffer zones and wetland protections because housing is now intersecting with climate change, which will affect households in the coming years.
- Jeff Cohen – We always talk about how resiliency in our community takes a back seat and we do not think far enough into the future. Building on vulnerable lands and wetlands has irreversible consequences that are only imagined at this point.
 - SERC would consider signing on to the letter/proposal after more review
- John Hayes – Can you send us the existing ordinance language?
 - Patti Morsillo – Yes, visit Salem.com and search for “wetlands chapter 50” for the existing language.
- John Hayes – Wetlands Protection Act for Massachusetts: what is the exact number of feet for this state law?
 - <https://www.mass.gov/guides/protecting-wetlands-in-massachusetts>
 - Gail Kubik – There are other communities in MA that have 200 and 250-ft buffer zone ordinances, which is what we should model.



- Doug Bowker – Re: the example of the backyard sitting in the buffer zone: there has been so much development in the past few centuries that we have drained areas of the wetlands. I wonder if this contributes to the mentality that there is not much we can do, because there is already so much development in these areas. But we must, at some point, create true protections and boundaries and not leave it up for interpretation.
- Gail Kubik – This type of ordinance would not only protect the wetlands, but it would serve as the foundation for true resilience planning.
 - Patti Morsillo – Yes, the City spends so much time on various projects and boards on climate and coastal resiliency, yet we are not protecting our own wetlands and creating that foundation needed.
- Jeff Cohen – We applaud you for taking this initiative on, and we can support you any way needed to protect our community.
- Jenna Ide – The Engineering department is looking into redoing the stormwater regulations, so you should talk to Deb Duhamel. We are also looking at the Green Building Ordinance so there might be overlap, which we should discuss. Deb Duhamel is also interested in looking to a watershed study for the City to research how things drain and where they are draining. The City implements pervious pavement in several projects as well, which is cost-effective.

Ordinance Updates

- Jeff Cohen – Jenna and Esmeralda have been reaching out to relevant City Departments to review and give comments. We have agreed to take our time a bit with this ordinance.
- Jenna Ide – We had another meeting with Tom Daniel (Planning Director), Brittany Dolan (Conservation Agent), and Esmeralda Bisono (Sustainability & Resiliency Coordinator).
 - We are looking into getting a grant to hire a consultant to help us review this in more in depth.
 - We are looking into splitting the ordinance between municipal and other factors.



- Jeff Cohen – We should have a small group meeting with Meg Riccardi, Jenna Ide, and John Hayes.
- Meg Riccardi – I met with the North Shore Realtors group last month and they gave good feedback. Legal review was a concern, so it is good that we are looking for a grant to support this.

Project Updates

- **Rocky Mountain Institute’s (RMI) Building Electrification Accelerator Program** (Doug Bowker, Esmeralda Bisono, Pat Gozemba)
 - Esmeralda Bisono – We had a great conversation with Claire McKenna who helps run the program and Amos Meeks who is the Salem team’s coach. They gave us their comments on the Green Building Ordinance and tips on ways we can move forward. I have those notes written down and can forward it to Jeff and John.
 - I asked Claire about relevant grants for this project and she said she will get back to me
 - Amos Meeks – Thank you all for the work you are putting in. The Green Building Ordinance work is something that I am here to learn about and watch, as Arlington will likely want to follow these footsteps in the future.
 - Jeff Cohen – Claire McKenna had some great feedback on the ordinance.
 - Pat Gozemba (SAFE) – Thank you everyone! One of the great things about working with RMI is that we have access to technical and legal expertise as it pertains to MA law.
- **Resilient Together - Beverly/Salem Climate Action & Resilience Plan** (Jenna Ide & Esmeralda Bisono)
 - Esmeralda Bisono – Updates on the Plan:
 - We have a one-page fact sheet and our first survey coming out soon. For now, these will be posted online but we can discuss direct mailing. Not



sure if it is part of KLA's budget. They will both be translated to Spanish, Portuguese, and Albanian, both cities top 3 languages after English.

- Any newsletters you all suggest for us to send these to? I plan to send them to the Mayor, City Councilors, Salem Sound Coastwatch, and SAFE.
- Our website is live – ResilientTogether.org
- The Draft of the GHG inventory is done – Thank you to John and the committee for reviewing that and adding your helpful comments.
- The first Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting will be on October 8th. We are sad that John cannot attend due to classes, but we will make sure that the next one will be planned with all members in mind and that we send out a Doodle Poll.
- We will be creating a video that will promote and detail the Plan. Both Mayor's will play a part and we are looking for community members to be part of this. If you have any ideas, please let us know by next week.
- John Hayes – Can you please explain in more detail what the first survey is for and how it will be promoted to the public?
 - Esmeralda Bisono – We will be promoting it on our website, through newsletters and emails, and on our upcoming social media pages. This will be the first survey of about 4-5 surveys throughout the planning process. This survey is to get data on the public's knowledge of climate change, sustainability, and resiliency, and to get data on their priorities and concerns of these areas as well.
- John Hayes – Is there a question that asks if they believe that climate change is happening now?
 - Esmeralda – Yes, there is a question that asks if they believe it is happening now in their city and if they have witnessed it.



New Business

- Jenna Ide – City Projects Updates
 - Forest River and Bertram Field projects are continuing
 - The schools are participating in the Demand Response program
 - Green Communities grant that we applied for was accepted! The following projects are what was granted:
 - Three EV charging stations at two sites each: Forest River Park and Salerno Automotive School
 - Replacing two police vehicles with hybrid vehicles
 - Replacing kitchen appliance at two school and the police department
 - Two facilities City staff go through Building operator Certification Training
 - Administrative funds for a part-time position with the City
 - Part-Time position and Internships should be posted by tomorrow – We'll send those out to SERC members so you can forward them around.
- Jeff Cohen – The Mack Park Food Farm is a great project that has been underway and feeds the community local, healthy foods.
 - Gail Kubik – Is there anyone in the City that is looking into Urban Agriculture policies and how we can implement it into existing City codes/ordinances?
 - Meg Riccardi – Due to the success of Mack Park, they are looking into how it can be expanded into other schools and projects in the City.
 - Gail Kubik – Yes, it would be great if it were incorporated into school curriculums so that kids can learn more about the food and where it comes from. If no one is thinking about it, vertical farms are also a great option. It can be indoor or outdoor to save space.
 - Patti Morsillo – I believe that the Mack Park Food Farm workers/volunteers are looking to expand in other spaces, particularly at the schools. In addition, I did approach them about partnering with the Highland Avenue project development team. There is a space along Barnes Rd. where trees are going to be removed and add “nicer” trees/lawn, but we are asking that they add fruit and local trees and a small food farm there as well.



- Jenna Ide – Another great option is green roofs with farming options. There has been interest from Salem Prep High School on this, which Esmeralda has been in contact with.
- Gail Kubik – This is encouraging to hear. As we have all learned in 2020, domestic production is extremely important for residents and resiliency in general.
- The Committee continued the discussion on the recycling problem in Salem. The committee will invite Micaela Guglielmi (City of Salem Waste Reduction Coordinator) back to a future meeting to continue discussing these ideas.

Upcoming Events

Next Meeting – October 28, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

Adjournment

- Jeff Cohen motions to adjourn the meeting. Doug Bowker seconded.
 - The vote passes unanimously.

The meeting ended at 7:55 pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Esmeralda Bisono

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