

Minutes to the Weston Sustainability Committee Meeting

December 14, 2017

Attendees:

Jens Buettner	Weston Sustainability Committee (WSC)
Marc de Mul	Weston Sustainability Committee
Amy Kalafa	Weston Sustainability Committee
Natalie Terrill	Weston Sustainability Committee
Lorenzo Wyatt	Home Comfort Practice, Inc.
Charlene Chiang Hillman	Director of Social Services, Town of Weston
Larry Shore	Weston resident

The meeting opened at 7:38 PM.

The minutes of the meeting on November 9, 2017 were approved unanimously.

HES campaign

Lorenzo gave an overview of Home Comfort Practice, which has been in business since 2010, and has done work for Income Eligible households since 2011. HCP does home energy audits, starting with basic safety testing (e.g. CO output) and blower testing to find air leaks. It has 11 energy audit crews, 10 insulation crews. HCP insulates and air seals 75% of the houses they audit, typically a week after the audit. When that is done, there is no reason to return for another audit. Income Eligible services are free of charge but paperwork is cumbersome. HCP has 12 people helping with the application. HCP audits about 65 households/week and insulates 30/week statewide. Only use celluloses for insulation. HCP is paid by the State of CT energy efficiency fund.

Natalie will find out from the utility company what % of households in Weston have been audited.

Weston social services income eligibility guidelines are higher than the state guidelines, but above state guidelines the audit services are not free but cost \$149. The service is the same in both cases. For income eligible households, the house can be insulated free of charge and if there is funding, there are subsidies for replacing windows and the refrigerator/freezer.

The WSC can help promote the program on its website and Facebook page, and hand out fliers. A letter going out with electric bill will explain that either vendor (HES or HCP) will be acceptable. An announcement could also go in the Weston senior center newsletter. Natalie will circulate a copy of the Eversource letter to the committee.

A video of an audit would be extremely helpful in explaining the work that is done. Amy can help with this.

Jonathan and Chris will review the agreement with Eversource and agree if OK. It will then go out in the mailing of utility bills which will take 6 weeks. After that, the WSC can promote the service.

Reusable bag initiative

The committee needs to decide on an objective for this initiative. Larry proposed a plan for implementing a reusable bag plan which was OK'ed by Karen Magee at Peter's Market (PM), the main source of plastic bags in Weston. The bags PM uses currently contain recycled material and is reusable. PM tried handing out free Servco reusable bags a few years ago and customers were not interested. We need to start with an education campaign about reusable bags.

Objective: encourage reusable bags and reduce the number of disposable bags used in Weston, to avoid bags being disposed in the environment.

Amy: maybe we can place a plastic bag recycling box in Weston Center

The draft agreement should say that reusable bags will be available in the store, signs will be posted, and checkout staff trained. A 3 month transition period should be sufficient.

The committee agrees that an ordinance is needed based on the tentative agreement with PM and the Westport ordinance with some changes. We will write it by email before the next meeting in January.

Sustainable CT Initiative

Modeled on Sustainable Jersey. Weston can show some leadership as a small town by joining the initiative. The WSC agreed to pursue this further.

Other items

Lachat Farm is interested in collaborating on outreach programs. We should build a list of initiatives to promote.

Marc presented a design for a WSC website as part of the town website, which was accepted.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 PM.