

Minutes: RTM Environment Committee – Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 7:30pm

(This meeting was conducted on Zoom)

Committee Members Present: Ellen Lautenberg, Chair; Wendy Batteau; Clarence Hayes; Melissa Levy; Claudia Shaum; Kristin Schneeman

Town Employees Present: Colin Kelly, Director of Conservation Department

Others Present: Paul Lobdell, Chair of Flood and Erosion Control Board (FECB); Gately Ross, Sustainable Westport; Jonathan Steinberg, State Representative

Agenda:

1. Organizational meeting to discuss committee members' interests and their thoughts on potential projects for this year.
2. Get input from Conservation, FECB and Sustainable Westport on our potential projects.
3. Discuss briefly the relationship of our committee to Long Range Planning Committee meetings about the impact of Climate Change on Westport.

Ellen Lautenberg gave an overview of our role as the ENV committee and asked each member to introduce themselves.

Committee members mentioned various interests and suggested topics to pursue. This included issues such as reducing use of pesticides, reducing PFAS, reviewing existing and potential new turf fields for toxic substances, reducing clear-cutting of trees, increasing solar power, mitigating flooding, recycling, food/solid waste and composting, increasing open space, incentivizing more sustainable building practices, encouraging pollinator pathway plantings, protecting the shoreline and water quality, metrics for assessing where we are now vs goals and more.

In addition, we discussed reviewing town priorities and conservation goals as well as how we might help to educate the public on some of the issues and what they can do to participate.

We also discussed other groups we should work with including: WESTCOG, RTM LRP and HHS Committees, Conservation, FECB, Sustainable Westport, Earthplace, Health District and others.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm and there were no votes taken.

Recorded and submitted by Ellen Lautenberg