

## Sustainable South Shore Meeting Minutes

Norwell First Parish, December 8, 2011

The towns represented at our fall meeting were: Milton, Braintree, Quincy, Scituate, Norwell, Hull, Cohasset, Duxbury, and Marshfield

Representatives from these towns presented the following updates:

**Milton** – The second annual Green Home Fair was held earlier this year, with vendors selling products, ranging from solar pv systems to energy audits to cleaning products. Milton has instituted a Free Movie Night where they have shown five documentaries on sustainability issues. All the schools in town, as well as the town hall, are scheduled to get solar panels. A proposed wind turbine is currently in litigation.

**Braintree** – The Braintree farmers market is thriving, and currently includes an indoor market. Sustainable Braintree has received a grant to do recycling and another to get technical assistance for building trails and bike paths. They are involved in plans to do a rehab of the building next to town hall. Their annual gala is scheduled for March, and they will be selling raffle tickets (\$100 each) for a luxury vacation in the Caribbean.

**Quincy** – Quincy has plans to install solar panels on a couple of schools. The Quincy group is working with the town on a variety of activities from planning for LEED certified buildings, to cultivating native plants, to providing electric plug-ins at the parking lots. The town has received a grant for salt marsh restoration. The Quincy group's big project is weatherizing senior housing on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Scituate** – Sustainable Scituate has had a community garden to benefit the Food Pantry for the past three years. There are also multiple efforts to expand on recycling, to add another 30 recycling bins to the 20 that are around town. They have begun to work with the schools and senior housing to encourage recycling. The Solarize Mass program resulted in 30 signed contracts for solar pv in Scituate. As part of an unofficial phase II, people are investigating the concept of community solar gardens for those who couldn't install on their residences. There is also a project in process to develop bike tours to historic sites, with a website offering downloadable maps to support that. Over time, there is a plan to have bike rentals near the train station.

**Norwell** – There are now solar panels on the middle school, and a bike path plan is in place to connect the middle school to the high school. The Norwell CSA is in its second year.

A Norwell family is seeking a special permit to erect a temporary meteorological study tower (MET) in order to determine if there is enough wind at their family farm to erect a wind turbine. The wind turbine will power equipment and operate pumps to maintain the farm operation on their 42-acre homestead. The Norwell Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), after initially denying the permit, voted unanimously in October to grant the permit. There is still some opposition from a neighbor, but this will set a new precedent in Norwell as there are currently no zoning by-laws for wind turbines.

**Hull** – Members of Greener Hull have multiple projects in process. The solar personal rapid transit project is underway, headed by South Shore Mobility. The company JPODs is working on a plan for a starter section of Hull which would be .3 of a mile. It is a \$4 million project, and the organization is looking to sell shares for \$100 each.

Greener Hull put on its annual Expo in April. In May, they sponsored a bike week event, promoting all the bike racks in town. They are also working with the municipal light plant on a variety of projects, including one to begin implementing LED lighting for street lights. A Greener Hull member, Nancy Kramer, continues her role communicating on a wide variety of sustainability issues and events, a most valuable service to all in Sustainable South Shore.

**Cohasset** – Cohasset sustainability activists sponsored a warrant in their town meeting to lease the roof of the high school and to lease the landfill for \$1 per year, in preparation for renewable energy projects.

**Duxbury** – The Alternative Energy Committee has signed a contract to put solar on the landfill in order to power the new police station. However, there is still controversy over wind. Sustainable Duxbury is in the process of obtaining a four acre plot from a private trust for community gardens.

On May 27th 2012 there will be a celebration of Rachael Carson and the 50th anniversary of the publishing of Silent Spring at the Spring House on Powder Point Ave. in Duxbury. There will be an open house from 10-3 pm, panel discussion featuring noted naturalists from 12:30- 2:30, and bird walks with Peter Alden. For details contact Judi Vose at copperfarm@comcast.net 781-934-2467

**Marshfield** – Sustainable Marshfield is working with the town to encourage the use of organic fertilizers. They are also working toward using two acres along the South River for a Memorial Park. Marshfield has passed zoning laws to facilitate the development of solar pv and wind, and has made a lot of progress in instituting energy conservation measures for town buildings.

**Pilgrim Watch**

Anna Baker encouraged Sustainable South Shore members to get involved in one of several organizations including Pilgrim Watch and Pilgrim Make Us Safe Today, which are watchdogs on the re-licensing of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant, in the wake of the Japanese disaster. The license is scheduled for renewal in June, but it could happen much sooner. This is of great concern to those in our area, as the plant design is identical to that of the Fukushima plant. For more info, contact [annazoebaker@yahoo.com](mailto:annazoebaker@yahoo.com)

### **South Shore Celebration**

Ben presented a slide show of the 2011 South Shore Celebration and led a discussion on future celebrations. Approximately 2500 attended the Celebration and many vendors present indicated that it was the best festival they had ever participated in.

Financially, there was a loss of about \$4000, but this was expected for the first year. Celebration organizers have a good handle on how to make the event more financially viable in the coming year. Ideas range from advertising at the Marshfield Fair a few months previous, doing more with visual art through the South Shore YMCA, and reassessing the revenue stream coming from the vendors and sponsors (i.e. more vendors? Higher fee? More sponsors?).

Ben has sent out the call to all sustainability activists within the Sustainable South Shore community, as more participation by a greater number of volunteers will go a long way to making this next year even more successful.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

January 31<sup>st</sup> – on local food and fisheries

March 29<sup>th</sup> – on renewable energy and energy conservation

May 29<sup>th</sup> – topics to be determined

### **MCAN**

The group voted to donate \$100 to our parent organization Mass Climate Action Network.