

Pomfret EP&DC Regular Meeting Transcript 06/09

Anyway, so we have a quorum, it's 801 and.

So the first thing on the agenda is approval of the minutes. The last time we met was in person about 16 years ago on March, 10 2020.

If I sent an email with the minutes, and with the agenda I hope everybody got that Mary can open their package.

JOHN Paulson, I've got a question not concerning the minutes of March, 10. Okay.

But I see in the minutes it says there was no meeting to four. On March, and February, so the minutes were not approved. Correct. Um, was there a meeting in January, there is a January agenda and I know I wasn't at that meeting but I don't know if the meeting happened or not. I believe there was of Charlie Tracy, I believe there was John, and I'm better at doing things and keeping records of things that I've done.

You know, I, if there if there isn't a yeah minutes for that meeting, I apologize and we'll have to get them up at the next meeting.

Okay, because those those minutes obviously have not been approved yet because they weren't approved in the March meeting so I guess if they are actually on the website we can't approve them at this meeting but maybe we could put it on the agenda for the July meeting. Good point. Thank you.

Charlie Tracy Any other comments.

Oh, approve the minutes of the March meeting.

Have a second.

I'll second that.

Okay, thank you.

Okay. All those in favor Aye. Any discussion on approving the minutes of the March 10 meeting.

Okay. No comments. All those in favor say aye. Aye.

Any opposed. Any abstentions okay and.

Okay, Moving on to, again, Charlie Tracy any audience of citizens.

Wanting to citizens any additions to the agenda.

Okay, new business, sustainable Connecticut, sustainable Connecticut is something that has been around for a few years now. And it came to our attention. I'm going to say sometime in 2018. And we've had a bunch of false starts and we try but we just don't seem to be getting air anywhere with it. And so we've kind of taken it as a challenge for 2020. There's two times in the year when you can get approved for sustainable Connecticut. There's one in the spring around April, then there's one in, I think it's August. And so we've taken it upon ourselves to shoot for the August deadline. And to that end, I am working with two young people.

tauren red Sione if I'm mispronouncing his name I apologize. He is a newly hired person for the Institute for Sustainable Energy working out of the East, Eastern Connecticut State University campus. And then we have an intern who's working through ni COC Her name is Zoe Duffield. She's a student at UConn, and she's working specifically with Pomfret. And it's kind of interesting because she'd never heard or been through conference. So, I'm looking forward to getting her the the grand tour, along with tour and the more tour and and I speak. The more he feels he made a

mistake buying a house and Gail's very wished he lived in conference and Zoey is from Ipswich mass and Turin is from someplace else in Connecticut. So that was just as way of introduction to the team we have working with us at the state level. And for sustainable Connecticut there's different levels, there's the bronze level which, if you acquire 200 points you acquire bronze status, if you get 400 points you hit the silver status, it's not practical for a town of Pomfret size to shoot for the the silver status and the 400 points, But we're certainly within firing range of hitting the 200 points for the branch status. And there's 10 categories. I'm going to briefly list them for anybody interested you could go to sustain a pulse CT and get a complete list you can see what towns have qualified there's, there's a wealth of information in there, but basically they're looking for thriving local economies. Well stewarded Land and Natural Resources, vibrant and creative cultural ecosystems, dynamic and resilient planning, clean and diverse transportation systems and please don't take notes I'll put all this in minutes. Efficient physical infrastructure and operations, strategic and inclusive public services, healthy efficient and diverse housing, inclusive and equitable community impacts and innovation action. So within these 10 categories, there's there's a host of points, and you need to get 200 points in it sounds like 20 points per category you nailed it. And if it was that simple everyone would be doing it.

And it's an interesting process, because you do the entire process, and you can't get your mileage markers along the way. For example, because we have an updated plan of conservation and development and thank you everybody who worked on that. We are qualify for up to 40 points just for that one document. However, we won't know if we got the 40 points or any points, until the entire project is done and submitted to the state.

And I find that a little bit frustrating because we're working with pay professionals and a bunch of well intentioned volunteers and, you know, there's always time to do it. And there's never time to do it over. So, I wish we could get the mileage markers set and say okay we got this 40 points, let's work on the next category.

But having said that, I just wanted to point out why it would be a good thing, and beneficial for for profit, and for economic development to be involved in this project. It helps make profit and attraction and more of a destination. It helps with federal and state funding for projects we're working on. And because we're working on this, there are different grants that may be available to help us facilitate any of the documentation, we may need or to or to put pamphlets together.

Is that how that was me. Okay. Okay. Um, and helps our businesses source funding and advice for everything from sensitivity training to energy savings. See pace and the Green Bank is one of the obvious things. And we're working on putting together some kind of a, maybe a zoom meeting or something where the Green Bank can come in and explain what they have to offer to the local businesses and. And as far as the sensitivity training I went to a 12 hour Oh, good morning.

I went to a 12 hour block of instruction for sensitivity training which we were supposed to get points for but because we were lacking one other person from being there.

I was taught to how to be taught how to be sensitive and nobody else reaped the benefit of it but you know it actually was a pretty good thing and it opened it opened us to the concept that is something we could do town wide if we felt the need to, and with what's going on in the country right now. Maybe it's something we'd care to look at.

I'm going back and we can get points for some of the things that we've done in town sidewalk upgrades road crossings, the crossings for the airline trails, and the sewer line, we can get 15 points for each project up to 60 points and supporting the arts. I was showing town, that the Audubon Society has an art gallery. And if the town supports that in any way shape or form, which a lot of this is done through the proper times.

You know, we can get points for that. So, without knowing it poverty already doing a lot of the things that are at the core of being part of sustainable Connecticut. It's just a matter of bring everything into focus and getting this product these projects done was something I've been working with Taryn and Zoey and meeting every Thursday at one o'clock. without the zoom benefit but we've been meeting on the phone, and each week. We try to peck off a different project, with the goal of being done, sometime in July, so that we can coordinate everything and submitted before the end of July, which is way before the August deadline.

I kind of threw a lot at you here.

But it's just, I just wanted you to know that because we haven't been meaning it doesn't mean things haven't been happening.

This time I would like anybody who's interested to help in any of these projects there's 10 categories. There's a bunch of different ways to get points.

I think it's time for me to be quiet let somebody else, jump in here. Mary Collins, what do you need me to do for Charlie Tracy, for example, We are trying to map out the local businesses and Maureen was gracious enough to give me a list of the registered businesses in Pomfret and there are 325 listed businesses. Now, some of them are businesses, some of them are somebody doing something from home and I don't think they'd appreciate the public knocking on their door to, you know, so what we need is a letter, going out to these people that just to verify their name address and information. Perhaps a website or an email address, And then the, and then what category, they would be in, whether it be restaurant, agriculture, there on the website, they list a bunch of categories. So we categorize these people get their basic information and map it. Now whether the mapping is done through Google mapping, or it's actually just some kind of map of the community with the you know the businesses pointed out on the, on that map. We get points for that but it also helps them, and barely yes girlie Martha Emilio. We do the palm for proprietors, um, there is a website that already exists listing the businesses in town. Does that qualify. Absolutely. And, you know, we had done outreach with our town my tax sale for 14 years now so I think we're having another one upcoming in September. So I think, you know, we could utilize that listing we have a website already we have a listing of proprietors of businesses.

And we are doing an outreach for the tag sale, we are calling everybody, but we could also back that up with a letter that would fit awesome that might already tick, one of the things off your list. Yep, that would be marry you there.

Yeah, I can help you Martha I do have the list or. Yeah, I mean it's already been done so that might be something to be checked you have 25 like they're saying.

Um, I don't have a list in front of me.

That's that's a lot we have a list that we called I want to say we have 165 that are you know that are more not in home, but more, you know like accountants and elevator companies and salons, that are more have a shingle outside as opposed to just an in

home business is Shelley Tracy, are those those businesses categorized by like salons or elevator.

On our old map they used to be. But not within within the directory I mean that can easily be done. Okay. All right, I can easily be done.

Oh, lights, Maureen, we do have a business trip last year but during that we put together a couple years ago, that categorizes every business by category, I believe. And I do have the spreadsheet from the proprietors of the businesses. And we did talk about doing a mailing. That would be in conjunction with the town wide tag sale on September 4, and

the October event that we're planning for the town wide Scarecrow and cooking competition so we were going to work to get a letter out sometime in. What did we say Martha.

July was a July.

So we'll be calling that list of businesses together and putting out a mailing.

That would be a very good place to pull your list together.

From there, and we did send out the, the registration for the business directory and we got some responses back we just.

Yeah, it's half the old directory and the new responses we just haven't updated that because we just need the manpower, basically so Bonnie has that in the town hall.

Getting a little bit of dust on it.

But we are we, we have those lists we have those categories we do have a town wide directory of businesses that needs to be updated so all of that could funnel into this project and I do appreciate all the time and effort you've put into it, Charlie. This sustainable, Connecticut, Connecticut, project is a great project and I would love for the time to become certified it's just, we're small enough that we, we just lacked the manpower to push it over the hill, it's like, it's like a dung beetle just pushing it, you know, we just have to get

this is Walter henchman Do you have Massa or Maureen Do you have people like druvan little chesky or Kevin Lin gal or real recognize businesses, not kind of hidden in the back room. Right, working on a home and don't have a real office.

Yeah, yes, those kind of people included.

Yeah. Yeah, go visit Pomfret calm and you'll be able to visit Tom Ferry calm. Yes.

And you'll see a listing of directory of businesses and we're always trying to get the businesses to be on that priority list has a list on their website. The town has a directory. And now we're trying to really sort of merge everything together I think is what we'd like to do an update.

Well we are kind of a branch of the economic development committee because we did initially get seed money from the town. So, you know, we should be considered as a part of it so

yeah no I just mean that there's two groups working to it. Yeah, yeah.

You gotta coordinate. Yeah. Yes, probably Tracy when I typed in poverty, calm. There's a, there's a visit poverty, calm.

That's visit.

No more calls we have a winner. Um, well that's pretty cool.

Um, there was a discussion about having a YouTube presence, not a YouTube excuse me, a Facebook presence for the town.

And has there been any further discussion on that.

I'm sorry, let me back up.

Well there was a meeting.

Recently, about the Scarecrow event, and the giant pumpkin event and I apologize, they're on the agenda, but it's something that. The town has been working on and there was a meeting of interested parties, when was that morning.

Last week, yeah. Last month last year so last week, um, with the Scarecrow event. The the concept of is that scarecrows will be set up at different businesses and or residences and you drive through town. And you, there'll be different categories and without getting into chapter and verse, there'll be prizes and awards for the best scarecrows in different categories youth adult etc etc.

And then, giant pumpkin. And, I'm sorry, Alex. No, no. is involved in the giant pumpkin thing and held a seminar, we like it last Saturday. I don't know if anybody was there, and I don't know. Okay, how many people showed up about 30. Excellent. Excellent.

And we thought for that, that perhaps we would extend it beyond Pomfret for participants, but then the giant pumpkins would be displayed at the town hall or somewhere where people again could drive through. And the point of this is there's no fairs going on this fall. So let's do something impoverished that still gives you that flavor and they can have some fun. And, incidentally in sustainable Connecticut. If we do the giant pumpkin thing through the auspices of the agricultural commission we get get points for that. And if we do the Scarecrow thing through the Department of rec. We get points for that.

So it's a way to double dip on doing a program that would coincide with each other.

When, what did the letter go to last Green Valley since that meeting. No, I have spoken, sorry it's Maureen I have spoken to Bill Reid. He knows it's coming in we haven't finalized that I have to get back with Chris could is in the next couple of hours.

Okay.

To write up a description of it, you know, to give us a little bit of flexibility on what we're going to finally do what we have to get the description in for the October category catalog, which obviously they're, they're a little bit delayed in pulling it together, the deadline was June 1, but with so many things being cancelled they're not really sure what's

gonna happen with October, but this event is kind of like a drive tober, instead of, you know, people do it with social distancing so it works out great.

So, we have a few details to work out but I think we're, we're halfway there.

JOHN Folsom question Charlie. Yes Are this sustainable Connecticut, those parts of it that are more environmental or green or something is the Pomfret Green Team done anything that we could get points for.

I defer to Maureen on that. Hi it's Maureen, the green team was interested in following up on sustainable Connecticut in the beginning. They had other projects that they were interested in doing so they declined, pushing this forward because they just didn't have enough manpower, but certainly there are you know the movie series that they do probably would qualify, they're working on an ordinance for reducing fossil fuel use in the town.

Certainly I think those things would talk.

Yeah. They're not focused on meeting sustainable Connecticut guidelines, posts, goals, but they have projects that certainly would meet some of those goals. Kelly Tracy I think when a green team was originally approached on this project. They were asked to like parent the entire project, and this is one of those elephants, you've got to eat it one bite at a time because if you try to jump on the whole thing. And that's why tauren and I have determined that we're going to work on one subset every week. So that rather than be overwhelmed by the project and not get anything done. We could work on a few things for example, there's a charging station at the town hall. Well, all he required was a photograph of the charging station to demonstrate the profit had and in fact complied with that. And he already had some information for meetings to indicate that the town had received a grant hat and had in fact installed the charging station. I went down and took a picture and emailed it to him BAM this 10 points. So, you know, another project or somebody is photographically and inclined, they could take some pictures of this, the sidewalks, that have been installed recently any crosswalks, and the, the updated work on the airline trail, with the weather where they may have done some clearing. And each one of those. Once we have the documentation to prove that we are have in fact done it within the last three years. There's 15 points per photograph. So if somebody wants to volunteer for that. Cricket Cricket. Maybe one more thing I Maureen's play. Okay. I do have some photographs of the sidewalk already because they recently did some unfortunate work on it. But yeah, I can do that in the crosswalks in, and I'm working on a third crosswalk to put out in front of you, to cross the road in front of the library so I have submitted a request to the state for that crosswalk as well. Excellent. Okay. Excellent. Thank you.

When we get those two torn and the beauty of having torn involved is he's a paid professional working exclusively on sustainable Connecticut so he is great, but she's a summer intern and can do what she can do within a timeframe and Taryn is willing to take the documentation the raw data we sent him and put it in a format that would make it easier to get the points for. So they're there, you know, they change the criteria, but they're also willing to work with a community to help get it done. And out of 169 communities, there's maybe half that have qualified so far.

So it's something to shoot for. And it would give us a little more cachet, especially with what we came out of the branding study with this would fit in so nicely with all of that.

So,

I do have one other comment on a letter that would go out in July, they would they would Pat us on the back and thank us for any efforts that happen. You know I said if we try to put together a meeting for the Green Bank, and we send a letter out in July, everyone's on vacation who's wanting who wants to go to a meeting in July or August. And he said, Well, having the letter would be nice but having some results is better. So if a letter was going out and we had results by the end of July respondents even if it's not, 100%, at least there's there's an indication that things are going in the right direction, then we get points for that.

So if that affects timelines.

You know, just just want to make that point, Mary you're smiling what's up.

See, Mary, my husband's here, and I'm like, I'm like I'm on you. never mind. Today, I just noticed my sunburn I'm like, I hate looking at myself this early in the morning.

Oh hi it's Maureen.

I don't think we can probably push the.

The Green Bank thing through in the next month, because there's so many other things to do, but we certainly can plan for doing that in the fall. I did check the website the seed paste

link is on the town's website I think that was something that you had asked me about yeah somebody to have that.

I think that's something that we can plan on and schedule for a workshop in the fall and possibly with another town would be beneficial to partner with another town because there'd be more people involved that would, you know come out to hear the presentation about the Green Bank.

Charlie Tracy excellent Maureen it's you know sometimes it's as important to figure out what you can't do and is not realistic to do. Rather than try to, you know, chase that down when it when it just isn't practical, there's enough other things that we could be working on that are viable and still qualify, and within the 10 categories so excellent point. Thank you.

Anything else this morning. I'm going to go around the room, Martha you're right there so I'm going to ask you first questions comments snide remarks.

Um, no, I just think that well. Um, no, not really. I have to think about it. Okay. think about Yeah. Okay. All right.

Maureen.

No, I think it's great that we've got these two sustainable Connecticut folks to work with us and that you're willing to spend the time that it takes to push this forward. We've been, you know, I think we have a lot of good projects in Parliament that qualify that you know it's it's not a matter of doing more it's a matter of documenting what we've already done, and we have done quite a bit.

So I would love to see that happen to see the town. Get that recognition.

Find out what else we can do to make it happen would be great and I think, reaching out to the business community is important and trying to pull up data directory and send a letter out in conjunction with the time I tag sale. I think those dovetail together pretty well. So that would be that would be great. Excellent. Thank you. Thank you, Mary.

I'm Mary Collins, I'm not quite clear what what I'm supposed to be doing. It just a, what do you, where do you need me to go do I need to go to town hall to help do I need to go with Martha, to help with the letter. I'm not sure like I just looked up visit conference, and there's not many businesses on there that I saw. I couldn't find myself so I don't know if I was looking in the wrong place but I'm happy to help. I just don't know where when what you needed to do, just give me a task and I'll do it. Okay. It's Maureen maybe what we should do is Martha Mary and myself could get together and start with them.

Yes, list that we have from the providers and the updated forms that we have for the directory and try to pull the directory together again.

In conjunction with the proprietors Do you think that would work Martha. Absolutely. I'd love to do it Oh absolutely, yeah. And maybe, maybe we start a draft of this letter and then give it to Chris, and she would magic on it. You know, while we're up while we're updating the directory we can pull together the mailing list and pull on another updated

list from the assessor's for our businesses in town and check that off one off against the other, and do a mailing maybe we could.

The deadline is this Friday for the past four times we might be able to just put a small ad in there for businesses to contact somebody somewhere. Let us know when you want to get together aware, and I need to put it, you know, the I live busy right now you can't imagine how busy real estate is it's like blown up. I have been this busy in my life, I had a new listing yesterday I had 10 showings three offers one day.

But no, I'm just like, we're just you know pent up demand you talk about pent up demand it's exploding in Pomfret right now. But, um, so I need to, if you're going to get together, you need to let me know ahead of time and, you know, so I can put it in and block it out for you, but I'm happy to help him we do something on the 11th on Thursday afternoon like after 12 o'clock. Yes, I know. We can't go. I can't.

No, no good luck that was, yeah this coming Thursday no all day, are you. Yeah. Okay. Um, yeah.

Tomorrow.

No, no, no I opened up on Friday Fridays. I can do anything Friday on. I can't do Friday, I can do, I can do Saturday afternoon.

I don't want to work on the weekend but I have showings on Monday, but I'm free after the afternoon, I'm always working. How about Monday the 15th 10 o'clock.

What time 10 o'clock.

I think so. Monday take So, where do you want to be right here.

Okay, now we can do it in the tech we can do it at the town hall. I'm out on the front porch we could have a meeting. Okay.

Just this is Martha Amelio just to let you know that about a week and a half ago, we did send out a listing of that we had compiled between the contract proprietors the directory and the listing from the tax assessor of the businesses and names were assigned you remember that Mary, I have that list. Yeah, there are people who I was assigned to though.

Well, it always blank, when the pandemic hit us. Right, well we sent out an updated list I can resend it to you. Okay, what and what she did is she did it so you know all of Mary's would be in one thing and all of Maureen's would be in one thing I don't know you're on an MRI or whatever. So, I mean, we do have the combined list so that should be a jump off start you know we don't really have to make the list up it's all kind of combined already so that's a, you know, an initial step.

So I'll read it, I'll find it and I'll resend it to you I'll have it on I could send it out I got it in an email so I can print it off so that that's available I I don't know how they contact is going for, you know, members. They probably need a little joyful reminder. So call them. But what's nice is you can print it off I just printed it off with the ones I had to contact so I didn't have like a 20 page list.

So, are we good.

We're good. Okay.

Thank you. Thank you.

This morning Charlie I think this is a good project and I hope we can move along. Well, I also want to take the opportunity to point out Walter that a lot of the points that we potentially be getting were based on getting that updated plan of conservation and development. So thank you for your efforts in that.

That's done but if there are other things, people need, you know, a part time helper I'll be glad to help if you just let me know. Careful you made you made visual thank you john. No, I guess, thanks to Blake for engineering a meeting. Absolutely. Thank you, Blake Boolean and my pleasure.

Okay. I'm, Ellie you're you've been very quiet today.

Yes, generally alpha chase I usually am very silent I'd never speak up.

That said, I think the idea, or discussion any idea of having a one consolidated merge list of all the businesses is a great thing because I think some people may be spinning their wheels don't duplicate work. And I think it'd be good to have some kind of a established process for updating that on a periodic and maybe semi annual annual basis by really looking at all the feeds, whether it's in the taxes or whatever to see who's left the business the director really is all about. I recall, and maybe I've been dreaming that I've seen them a brochure. In the past with a picture so pop the businesses, and it was more like 20 to 25 businesses on this brochure map it. I don't think it was 100 plus. And I'm just going from memory which is not always accurate. That said, I very much liked the idea of some kind of a visual for people that are, you know, looking at this, visiting conference that does a brochure that with a little map in it that would fold out or. So, it would be able to people to see where all these businesses are.

We couldn't put 115 on here or whatever but we maybe could put 115 dots on and then have a. Some of the major ones start out, and maybe have a directory listing on the back of the little fold out brochure. And that way, people who were in town, out of town and wherever it could get that get that brochure they'd have a real good picture of what's going on and plan for business wise. And then the other comment I'd make is the kiosk it was we've had up discussions about updating the kiosk. I think there was information there, and about the power station, about businesses.

And also there was a plan to do trail signage. I don't know if that project could point to something on businesses.

Hi it's Maureen I can respond to some of those questions. Um, we are working on a signage project with a grant that we received from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, in conjunction with. We have actually a couple of grants. And we're working with the Historical Society and we have a graphic designer.

And those signs will go up and we're updating the signs at the conference station trailhead.

The problem with. We've discussed this at great length, putting the businesses on there is we want the signs to last for several years and sometimes the businesses don't. So we're avoiding putting on the signs, but we may leave an area to put a sticker on there or something with local businesses we just haven't figured out how to do that. The other thing that I would mention to folks is some businesses in town, do not want to identify or be identified in our list of businesses for whatever reason I don't know why.

I guess we have to gain their confidence, over a few years or a couple of tries.

We're not trying to overtax them or identify them we're trying to promote them as a business in town and help them be viable and, and survive. So I think we have to work at gaining the trust of some folks in town or retail sales retrace again, the idea of the trail signage maybe there could be some notation on there that a business directory is

available somewhere at the vanilla bean or the kiosk or the town hall or well if we if we Maureen again if we get really up to date on that we'll put one of those QR codes on there that will lead that will take you to that conference town website and what's near you, I mean the plan was possibly to have a QR code on each side and it would it would identify what's nearby, but that takes a lot of work, and it takes a lot of commitment to keeping it current. So, if you're at the you know the town hall and you flash your phone on the QR code it would tell you that you can get off here and, you know, get a burger and a sample and vodka, or is there.

Also chase again.

I have a project today. I got six acres of hay mowed, and I'll be raking and baling today. And at the end of the baling. There's always a team to help pick up the 600 bales or so so in any of you who were just hanging out.

Of course I'm kidding motto I thought you were you live up the road you could you could be free.

Okay, excellent place to end our conversation this morning. Again, Charlie Tracy. Thank you for everybody who was in attendance and as John appropriately pointed out thank you Blake for all your time and effort on this project and continuing efforts with the town. I would entertain a motion to adjourn. Oh, are you having a meeting next month, July 14 whether we have one scheduled or not I think it would be appropriate to me again to update what's going on at sustainable Connecticut, see where we are with pumpkins and scarecrows and lions and tigers and bears. Oh my. Okay, great. Thank you. Thank you. Good point.

Back here to make a motion.

There we go. Okay, got it. Alright, got it. We are. And everybody have a great month limbal see each other, assuming on July 14 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you all have a great day. Okay.