

Freeport Sustainability Advisory Board: MINUTES 9/11/2023
Location: Town Council Chambers, 6:30 PM

In attendance: Josh Olins, Mandy MacPherson, Valy Steverlynck, Susana Hancock, Bob Stevens, Kristen Dorsey, Megan Shore, Meddy Smith (Sustainability Coordinator)

Taking minutes: Meddy

BEGIN MEETING 6:30 PM

APPROVE MINUTES: 5 min

- A motion was made by Valy to approve the meeting minutes of 8/21/23. Mandy seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously with Megan abstaining due to absence (6/0/1)

EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS TARGETS – NEXT STEPS

- The board discussed the recent presentation to Town Council on the topic of setting targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) based on the recommendation voted on by FSAB during the summer.
- FSAB members in attendance at the Council presentation noted the general willingness of council members to vote on this recommendation during the upcoming October 3rd council meeting. Members reflected on several important discussion points council made, including the value of bringing in more voices to this target setting – and larger planning – conversation. Council hopes to include opportunities for input in a town-wide mailer this fall and hear a range of perspectives during the October 3rd vote.
- The group discussed ways to expand opportunities for feedback, including adding a comment box to the Town site, as feasible, requesting councilors send the input they are hearing from constituents to FSAB, in addition to setting up an interactive poster at Town Hall to collect feedback. FSAB members will also be sharing information about targets and promoting attendance at the October vote to their personal networks.
- **Transportation Data**
 - Board members noted the value of understanding the contribution of tourism and commercial activity on the towns GHG emissions in order to develop targeted strategies. The group noted that a visual of the annual fluctuations in vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) will help illustrate the change in transportation patterns.
 - Meddy reported that GPCOG has hesitated to gather this information due to limited project scope and their perspective that this information is not accurately able to be extrapolated directly to tourist activity. Meddy shared the idea that it may not be necessary to have these modeled numbers in order to focus strategies on tourist activity, and that through the Climate Plan process the board and community can rely on qualitative firsthand experience of tourism activity in town to drive the main strategies or pursue a more accurate measurement, such as a traffic study.

- Board members discussed the value of retaining month-by-month VMT data from GPCOG and that the group could use its annual budget to fund this out of scope work. Meddy is to request this information from GPCOG and report back to the whole group.
- The group also discussed the impact of commercial activity on town-wide emissions and particularly the anchor institutions and downtown district. Meddy reported that it is impossible to narrow down commercial transportation data from GPCOG and the group discussed the value of engaging the wider business community in order to refine business-specific data and develop and implement strategies. The group noted the value of engaging the business community during this planning process to lay the foundation for action.

REVIEW TIMELINE OF CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

- Tabled

ACTION PLANNING

- Tabled

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Tabled

LECTURE SERIES STRATEGY

- Tabled

OTHER ITEMS:

- Kristen gave an update on the Tree Task Force work including their efforts to create a Tree Ordinance, a Tree Trust, and propose amendments to the zoning to protect public trees. She noted that the Task Force may be requesting FSAB support in coming months.
- Susana gave an update on the RSU sustainability board and reported that school leadership is voting on Wednesday, Sept 13, to dissolve the Sustainability Committee and form new committees for Facilities and Operations. Susana and Valy reported that while consequences of this restructuring is unknown, it could mitigate some roadblocks that the former committee faced over the years. Susana informed the group they are welcome to attend the vote, send a letter, or create a letter endorsed by FSAB.

- **ADJOURN BY 8:00 PM**