

TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2017
5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Quint David, Benjamin Scarboro,
Christian Gentry and Lee Ball

COUNCIL
MEMBERS PRESENT: Charlotte Mizelle

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Christy Turner, Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby,
Committee Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David called to order the meeting of the Boone Sustainability, Economics and Environmental committee, held in the Planning & Inspections - Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 West King Street, at 5:34 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member Gentry to adopt the agenda as amended by adding the following topics: Gotcha Bike, Farmers Market plastic bags and Town Hall intern.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member Ball to approve the July 13, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

STARS COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM DISCUSSION

Chairperson David presented the STAR Community Rating System (permanently attached). He reviewed the topics on page seven of the handout that the Town is already doing in each of the categories of the rating system.

Built Environment

Chairperson David talked about the built environment category. He said the Town has a noise ordinance for the ambient noise and light category, the Town is getting points for having a community water system and the Town will get some points for the transportation choice category. Member Ball said these are great points for benchmarking and setting future goals. He also noted that as these topics are brought to the public's attention, it is a great framework to raise awareness for Sustainability in the Town.

Climate and Energy

Chairperson David talked about the climate and energy category. He said there is a great opportunity for classes on climate adaptation and to ask for help from the university on the calculations. He said the Town spend close to \$1 Million dollars a year in their 2014-2015 budget on energy.

Discussion ensued on energy efficiencies. Chairperson David said we need to locate someone who can help with suggestions on this topic. Council Member Mizelle said the new water meter replacement program should help the Town with water consumption. Chairperson David said the Town receives points by leading by example as a local government.

Discussion ensued on waste minimization. Council Member Mizelle talked about the improvement to recycling by going to single-stream. Member Lee said it is great that the Republic Services company is used because they use single stream. She said we can now recycle milk cartons. She also felt that we do not publicize recycling enough. She mentioned that the SEEC had talked about placing articles in the newspaper regarding this topic. Member Lee talked about the frustration of university student's inability to recycle at the large apartment complexes.

Discussion ensued on making it a requirement for new development to include a location for recycling. Council Member Mizelle suggested having mini dumpsters to promote single-stream recycling. Member Lee suggested talking with the Republic Services company recycling service to see what they could do on improving recycling in the area.

Member Lee said what needs to happen in the High Country is the County needs to give up their recycling system and let the Republic Services company recycling service operate the County facility as a transfer station. He said right now the County collects recycling at the transfer station at the landfill from all of the satellites from around the County. He said the satellites sort the recycling and take it to the County who bundles it and sells it. He noted that Republic Services company recycling could use the Watauga County landfill as a hub for recycling from other counties. He said there would be less labor, they could streamline single stream and operate compost in one location.

Member Lee said he is looking into doing a flesibility study for composting. He said he feels a very good economic case can be made for composting. He said what we need to know is where are the local farmers getting their compost and how much are they spending on it and how far away is their compost located.

Member Lee talked about the Town, County and University collaborating together on composting which would give innovation credits.

Chairperson David noted that every residential house gets a free recycle bin and pickup but the apartments do not have recycle bins and pickup. It was noted that a recycle dumpster would be great at the apartment buildings. Member Lee explained that the GDS recycle trucks come to Boone twice a week from Conover, North Carolina to pick up the residential recycling. He said it would mean more truck runs to empty apartment building recycling dumpsters. He said if GDS recycling service had local trucks they could use the trucks to run to a local transfer station.

Chairperson David said he would like to know which apartment buildings have the ability to have a recycling dumpster and how much it would cost per apartment building to have a dumpster and to have the recycling picked up.

Member Gentry noted that 46 percent of the apartment buildings in the Town have recycling pickups.

Discussion ensued on Town trucks picking up recycling. Member Lee said it is not being done by the Town because of a liability issue.

Chairperson David asked the SEEC if they would be interested in pursuing one of the rating system categories and writing a report on that category to see if the Town is already involved in that category. He also talked about locating a class at the university on one of the categories. Member Lee said it would be a great experience for university students to help with these category topics.

Chairperson David asked for a motion for a recommendation for the SEEC to go ahead and look at the Star Community Rating System categories and research them as the SEEC sees fit to find out if the Town is already doing any of things listed in the categories.

Motion and Vote:

Council Member Mizelle made a motion, seconded by Member Gentry to make a recommendation for the SEEC to pick out a category from the Stars Rating System presented at this meeting and review it to see if the Town is already working on that category.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson David said he would email the Star Community Rating System information to the SEEC. It was noted that the SEEC would look over the information and decide on a topic to work on within the next couple of weeks.

ENERGY ACTION PLAN DISCUSSION

Chairperson David reviewed the Climate and Energy CE-3: Greening the Energy Supply (15 points available) see handout (permanently attached).

Discussion ensued on the number of electric vehicle charging stations. It was noted there is one located on Depot Street in Downtown Boone and at Legends at the university.

Discussion ensued on making it a requirement to have vehicle charging stations at new developments. It was noted that if it is made a requirement the developer will have to include them in new developments.

Discussion ensued on public and private natural gas refueling stations. It was noted that there is natural gas in the Town.

Council Member Mizelle asked Ms. Turner to check with Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections about expediting permits for Sustainable green building projects.

Discussion ensued on LEED building. Chairperson David said because of the change in the energy code, if you are not LEED building you are still constructing a more efficient building.

Chairperson David said the university students in the Communication class that is working on the Stars Community Rating System will give the SEEC the information that will be used for a recommendation for the Energy Action plan. Council Member Mizelle suggested sending a couple of recommendations to Council for approval to gain some progress in achieving the goals of the Stars Community Rating System.

Chairperson David asked Mr. Turner, if she and Mr. Ward would make sure that the students in the Communication class are on track with these goals.

OTHER MATTERS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR STAFF

Ms. Turner informed the SEEC that Mr. John Ward, Town Manager provided some information on the Gotcha Bike Share Program to be reviewed and discussed at the next SEEC meeting (permanently attached). She also said that Mr. Ward wanted to make the SEEC aware that the Farmers Market is still using plastic bags. Ms. Turner suggested talking with Ms. Marsha Story in the Public Works Department to see if the Town could provide the Farmers Market with recyclable bags or paper bags. She also let the SEEC know that the Town has an available intern that they can use at no cost to the Town, if the SEEC would like to utilize the intern on any project.

Discussion ensued on the Gotcha Bike Share Program. Chairperson David said this is an option but maybe not the right option right now mainly because of the cost. He said it would work great, if people could ride their bike on a greenway rather than on the side of dangerous highways. He talked about the need for more bike lanes for safer bicycling. It was noted that 17 percent of the Boone workforce walks to work and five percent of the workforce bikes to work.

Discussion ensued on liability rates. Member Scarboro talked about a possible waiver being included with the bike rentals.

Member Scarboro talked about the knitting together of plastic bags to make larger reusable bags.

AJOURNMENT

Member Gentry made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mizelle to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary