

**Green Committee, Town of East Haddam  
Special Meeting  
Town Office Annex  
7:00 P.M. Wednesday, June 11, 2008**

**1. Call to Order**

The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Green Committee was called to order at 7: 01 P.M by Chairman Ken Simon.

**A. Attendance:**

Regular members present: Ken Simon, Martha Hansen, Roger McNelly, Yvonne Rubin, Jon Russell, Sue Staehly, Richard Watson

Alternate members present: Allen Compagno, Nancy Gieseey

Regular members absent: Toni McCabe, Jonathan Morris, Jennifer Peacock, Ruth Ziobron

Green Stewards present: Theresa Govert

Audience: Alex Rubin

**2. Introduction of Members**

The members introduced themselves and stated their experience and interests.

**3. Explanation of Process**

A. Selectman Peter Govert explained the meeting process and the expectations for the committee and its individuals.

**Committee Process**

- The committee will meet once a month, usually on the first Wednesday, from 7-9 P.M.
- Each item on the agenda will be assigned a time frame to keep the meeting on track and moving along.
- Ken Simon will be the facilitator, Martha Hansen will take notes, and a committee member will be the timekeeper (Sue Staehly volunteered) and signal Ken when it is time to move on.
- The next meeting's date and agenda will be set at the end of the current meeting.

**Group Norms**

- Members should arrive on time.
- Members should stick to the topic of discussion.
- Members should email or call Ken Simon if they can't attend ([ksimon@simonpure.com](mailto:ksimon@simonpure.com) , 860.873.3328).
- All members should be able have their say.
- All members should participate.
- Members should expect to commit about 6 hours a month (a 2 hr. meeting plus 4 hours of work) to the committee.

**Expectations – Peter Govert and members**

- Raise environmental consciousness in town.
- Get the town's horticultural practices in line with environmental practices.
- Compile and provide a list of Farmer's Markets to town residents.
- Connect with other towns.
- Find out what Connecticut and other states are doing to address environmental and energy issues (for example the CT "Do 1 Thing" initiative).
- The group should be very visible in town, communication should be a priority.
- Change people's habits to be more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.
- Set up a web site that reports on what the committee is doing, with an email notification option.
- Publish an article in East Haddam Events four times a year; the newsletter is mailed to every household in town.

**B. General Discussion**

Ken Simon led a discussion on “what it means to be green”. Natural living is conscientious living, balanced, healthy and efficient. Small changes can have a big impact. For instance, the average family uses over 1,000 plastic bags a year, which could be greatly impacted by using reusable bags. Also, for example, printing on both sides of the paper will save many trees over time (13 reams of paper = 1 tree).

Green practices and financial costs fall into four categories:

1. Things that are good for the environment and save money right away.
2. Things that are good for the environment, cost money now and save money later.
3. Things that are good for the environment and cost money.
4. Things that are good for the environment and are paid for by grants.

The committee would like East Haddam to become the greenest town in Connecticut and develop a set of green “best practices”. For example, if everyone in the U.S washed their laundry in cold water, we would be 8% closer to complying with the Kyoto Protocol. Ken feels we are at a crisis point regarding food, fuel, climate and energy.

Allen Compagno stated that this small group of 10 or 15 people will have a hard time trying to accomplish anything; we need to get more people involved. He encouraged people to contact CL&P to set up energy audits for their homes.

#### **4. New Business**

##### **A. Set Goals for Committee**

The committee’s charge is to “research, study, educate, and make recommendations for the following purposes:

1. To create healthy and sustainable living environments
2. To protect, restore, and maintain ecological integrity
3. To encourage and support the use of clean energy, to conserve energy and natural resources, and use them efficiently
4. To balance social, economic, and environmental concerns in decision-making”

The committee will be contacting the different groups in town, beginning with Town government and departments, and will try to identify their energy and environmental footprint. Later, the committee will contact businesses, town groups and churches. At least two town meetings will be held to get input and ideas from townspeople. The committee also will be pursuing grants for green initiatives.

Jon Russell asked if it would be redundant for the group to investigate clean energy because of the state’s 20% by 2010 Clean Energy initiative. Peter Govert stated that there is a requirement for the town to have a Clean Energy Task Force in order to participate in the initiative. He would like a few people from the Green Committee along with some others in town to serve on the Task Force.

##### **B. Other**

Peter Govert went over the brainstorming list generated at the Green Committee formation meeting in March. Other ideas were then added by the committee:

1. Institute of Sustainability contact – Fred Lockson
2. East Haddam Lakes Association – water resource protection
3. Heating schools with bio-diesel
4. Impervious surfaces in general – replace walkways and driveways with permeable surfaces
5. Paper recycling at town offices
6. East Haddam Events – have a Green section
7. Reduce light pollution
8. Composting program at the schools
9. Encourage carpooling and commuter parking
10. Promote outside clothesline drying
11. Wind energy
12. Eat less red meat
13. 100 clean energy (solar only?) households = 1 solar panel
14. Employ a LEED certified architect for new town offices (done)

15. Fuel cells for new town offices
16. CL&P energy audit
17. Municipal electricity co-op
18. Farmers markets
19. Hybrid vehicles for the town
20. Swap-a-rama at school (bartering for clothes and other items) – also Freecycle.org
21. Catalogchoice.org to reduce junk mail
22. Increase % of recycling in town – acquire town comparables
23. Encourage local activities
24. Promote an East Haddam “Earth Hour” – turn off lights for 1 hour on a certain date - earthhour.org
25. Bio-diesel campaign for town busses and trucks
26. Ride-your-bike-to-school day
27. Promote walking and bike riding
28. Add green issues to school curriculum
29. Participation in CT’s Farm to School program
30. Promote school gardens
31. Encourage people to grow their own food
32. Sponsor Eco-races – bike, kayak, etc. to promote appreciation of natural beauty in town
33. Create safe walking and bike paths.
34. Install rain gardens at municipal buildings to handle storm water run-off
35. Promote ‘no storm-water run-off from any property’
36. Improve town building codes- “Green” the code
37. “Green” other town regulations – Inland Wetlands, Planning & Zoning, etc.
38. Hold an environmental fair (Earth Charter Climate Change Fair Oct. 11, 2008)
39. Encourage “Cradle to Cradle” methodology (downcycling rather than recycling)
40. Have a “Localvore Challenge” to encourage people to eat local food
41. Buy Local campaign
42. Encourage conservation
43. Investigate the possibility of generating hydroelectric power in town
44. Investigate the possibility of a tidewater generator for electricity
45. Investigate bulk purchasing of goods – food, energy, heating oil- by the Town, households, and businesses
46. Investigate methane gas production from town waste
47. Analyze transfer station for maximum recycling – get town comparables
48. Investigate reduction or elimination of pesticides and promote findings
49. Review road regulations
50. Replace Styrofoam trays in schools
51. Grants for CFL bulbs from C&LM, CL&P
52. Audit used & recycled product potential at schools and town facilities
53. Investigate composting at town level
54. Study “pay per bag” charge for garbage
55. Canvas grocery bag sponsor
56. Encourage local merchants to cut down on bottled water and plastic bags
57. Promote alternative energies
58. Inventory local green businesses such as Farm Fresh Direct, Green Cycle Carriage
59. Build a town snapshot of energy and resource use and potential savings.

## **5. Audience of Citizens – no comment**

## **6. General Discussion**

### **A. Review of Any Handout Material**

Ken Simon distributed copies of his “Working the Land” documentary about the history and current state of agriculture and farming in Connecticut and invited everyone to watch it at home. He also distributed a list of the Top Ten

Environmental Problems (from the book “Green to Gold”). He recommended the website energysavers.gov for energy saving tips.

The committee will inventory East Haddam’s green practices and make recommendations, starting with town government and the schools. Peter Govert handed out a list of East Haddam town contacts. The members divided up the list and will interview the contacts about the green practices they are using now and the ideas they have for the future. Ken Simon will prepare some interview questions for the members to use to standardize the process. The committee members should gather ideas without being prejudicial. Interviewees will have the option of being anonymous. All ideas will be considered. The focus should be on saving resources and being local.

The list is divided as follows:

Mark Walter, First Selectman- Allen Compagno  
Fred Thum, Public Works Director – Jon Russell & Roger McNelly  
Ellen Solek, Superintendent, EH Public Schools – Dick Watson  
& Bob Carroll, Business Manager  
Linda Dadona, HS Principal – Yvonne Rubin & Alex Rubin  
Jason Peacock, MS Principal – Sue Staehly & Martha Hansen  
Cindy Mello, ES Principal – Sue Staehly & Martha Hansen  
Joanne Roszniak, Senior Center- Nancy Giesey

**C. Other**

Sue Staehly mentioned that the churches in Glastonbury are working together to promote a greener town. Roger McNelly will be speaking to Dr. Roark at the High School about a composting program. Jon Russell reported that last Sunday’s Hartford Courant contained a very informative section on energy and CL&P’s energy audit program. Dick Watson mentioned that the Earth Charter will be hosting a Summit and Climate Fair on October 11. Dr. Gary Yohe will be speaking about Climate Change. Dr. Yohe, who is a professor at Wesleyan, was a member of the team that shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore. Mark Walter will host a panel composed of area Selectmen discussing what local towns are doing to address climate change. Colchester had a Green Committee last year; Ken Simon will contact First Selectwoman Linda Hodges to find out about it.

**The next meeting will be held on July 2 at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Hall Annex.**

**7. Adjournment**

Motion by Ken Simon at 9:14 P.M. to adjourn, seconded by Roger McNelly and unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Hansen  
Secretary