

Vision 21 Implementation Committee
Notes – Meeting of June 16, 2005
Accepted July 20, 2005

Members Present: Donna Brescia, Matt Hausmann, Jennifer Page, Paul Solomon
Members Absent: Victoria Haase, Meg O'Brien, Sara Oaklander, Diane Stafford
Others Present: Donna Griswold, Jan Kruse, Heather Tuttle

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by the Chair, Jennifer Page.
2. Minutes: Lacking a quorum, the committee did not approve recent minutes. Notes will reflect the topics discussed in this meeting.
Introductions were made.
3. **Belmont Neighbors Network and “Newcomers”**. Jennifer presented background information on the Belmont Neighbors Network. The big question now for the group is “what next?”
 - Donna Griswold shared her experiences as part of a newcomers club in Foxboro. Key points:
 - Club was introduced to Donna by her realtor at the closing.
 - There were monthly general meetings, with a board, meeting notes, reports from subgroups (e.g., Playgroups, Brunch; Book Group; Girls Nights Out).
 - Club had a five-year limit on membership.
 - Demographic of members were young, suburban families (very heterogeneous).
 - The group then discussed the need in Belmont. It was agreed that the objective is connectedness: feeling connected to others in the community as well as the community at large (i.e., connected to Belmont). It was also agreed that there are many demographic segments that need to be considered in Belmont: young singles; older singles; young families. It was agreed that, in general, connections to Belmont are felt by most families with school-age children. Matt stated that some of the functions described by Donna G. actually are met by a group called Mothers & More. Others pointed out that Mothers & More creates connections to others in the group but does not necessarily create connections to the community as its membership crosses town borders.
 - It was agreed that we need to call the Belmont Neighbors Network back together to discuss next steps. It was also agreed that the group will need additional members and energy to move ahead. Donna B. agreed to review the list of interested citizens from the 2004 Meet Belmont and begin some outreach to them.
4. **Sustainable Belmont**. Jan Kruse and Heather Tuttle provided an update on the efforts of Sustainable Belmont. The group currently has 12-15 core, active members; approximately 15 - 20 people show up for each meeting.
 - MCAN (Massachusetts Climate Network): MCAN has invited Sustainable Belmont to join MCAN, a group of 21 groups from towns in Massachusetts that work together on issues at a state level. Some points to note:
 - Sustainable Belmont joins; not the Town of Belmont. Membership is free.

- Sustainable Belmont would provide its mailing list to MCAN with an “opt-out” capability.
- A member of Sustainable Belmont would serve on the MCAN steering committee. Sustainable Belmont offers MCAN additional people to help get things done.
- MCAN provides training, expertise, grant-funding assistance, information, and literature.
- MCAN may be able to assist Sustainable Belmont with its stated priorities.
- Sustainable Belmont members voted to join MCAN.
- Sustainable Belmont representatives will attend the next Vision 21 meeting so that we can vote on Sustainable Belmont joining MCAN.
- Paul suggested that Sustainable Belmont present to the Board of Selectmen on their current efforts, including looking at joining MCAN. Jan and Heather will try to meet with each of the other two Selectmen individually first to bring them up to speed on the group.
- Renewable Energy Credits: Jan led a discussion on efforts around Renewable Energy Credits and Belmont’s efforts to date in this area.
- Currently, 1-3% of the Town’s needs are met through hydropower. The Belmont Municipal Light Board agreed to buy into a wind turbine project that would raise this to 5-10%. Many MCAN towns have a goal of 20% by 2010. Tim McCarthy believes this would be difficult for Belmont to achieve, though a goal is helpful.
- There are several ways that Belmont (as individuals and/or as a town) could be part of a renewable energy credit program. The Board of Selectmen approved a check-off box in the light bills (Individual Option #2). However, we have learned that this could be very complex from a legal standpoint. It was suggested that we consider Individual Option #3. However, Jan pointed out that Tim McCarthy was leaning towards one of the town options.
- Regarding next steps, Paul suggested that Town Counsel may have some expertise in this area, so they should be contacted. It was also suggested that we speak to the City of Newton.

5. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Hausmann
Secretary Pro Tem