

Minutes of the Meeting of the Nelson Sustainability Group

The meeting took place on January 15, 2015, in the meeting room in the lower level of the library.

Members Present:

Agricultural Commission: John Bunce, Barbara Fraser, Judi Lang, Jackie Roland, Val Van Meier, David Voymas

Conservation Commission: none

Planning Board: none

Select Board: Maury Collins, David Upton

David Upton called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

The motion by John Bunce, seconded by Maury Collins to approve the Minutes of the Meeting on 11/20/14 was approved unanimously.

David Upton reviewed the contents of his paper, “A Sustainable Economy for Nelson”. He also explained the use of the “Action Matrix for a Sustainable Nelson Environment, Economy, and Society”, in which sustainability is defined as the ability to continue a defined behavior indefinitely. He reported that he had attempted to organize the suggestions for action, contributed by the members of the group, under the various

categories identified in the Action Matrix.

The group proceeded to discuss some of these action items. Michael Iselin expressed his strong belief that the members of any sustainable community must practice thrift by minimizing consumption, ie., reduce, reuse and recycle.

The group discussed the suggestion of importing electric energy from Canada and/or natural gas from the West. It was generally agreed by consensus that doing so relied too heavily on corporate capital and did not meet the criteria of an independent local energy production economy.

Under the action item, “Provide Efficient Transportation”, a “Ride Share Program” was discussed. This program would allow those who wish to offer transportation to others to have their names, contact information, destinations, and times of travel listed in a data base maintained by our Library. Val Van Meier and Jacqueline Roland volunteered to contact the Library Trustees to see if such a program could be established.

Jacqueline Roland suggested that before we continue to propose many new projects that we develop a Mission Statement to help guide our work. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea and that each member would draft such a statement for discussion at our next meeting.

Possible educational programs were discussed. Michael Iselin advised that the concepts and teachings of the “Village Program” would serve as a good model. Others suggested that a “Nelson Forum” could be established to present programs of interest to the community.

Finally, the group discussed the desire to operate a farmers' market in our Town. Maury Collins and David Upton expressed the support of the Select Board for such an activity. However, they attempted to explain that the Select Board must represent the concerns of all the residents of the Town and would not expose them to the liability risks created by a farmers' market without have the necessary organizational structure and liability

insurances in place.

The next meeting of the Nelson Sustainability Group is scheduled for the 4th Thursday in March, 3/26, at 7 pm, in the meeting room in the Library basement. At that meeting we will discuss the Mission Statement and continue to discuss items in the Action Matrix. The question of how often meetings will be held going forward will also be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Upton