

**Draft Minutes of
Resilient Hartford: A Community Resilience Organization
June 24, 2020**

Members Present: Marsha Autilio, Kye Cochran, Frederica Graham, Laura Simon, and Chair Jack Spicer.

Liaison Members Present: Jon Bouton, Conservation Commission, John Reid, Planning Commission and Simon Dennis, Selectboard.

Staff Present: Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

Others Present: None.

A remote meeting of Resilient Hartford in compliance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. Chair Jack Spicer called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. He read the “remote public meeting script” developed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Matt Osborn reported that Dylan Kreis and Niki Thran e-mailed him to say they are unable to attend.

1. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Jack Spicer asked if there are any additions/changes to the agenda. There were none.
2. **Minutes of the May 27, 2020 Resilient Hartford Meeting:** Jack Spicer asked if there are any changes to the draft minutes of the RH meeting of May 27th. There were no changes. Jack Spicer said the minutes are approved by unanimous consent.
3. **Alternative Uses to Town Parks (Food Production):** Jack Spicer noted that Resilient Hartford (RH) decided to pursue food security as a major RH project for 2020 and look at using town parks as a way to increase food production. RH also agreed to form a committee and develop a plan. Kye Cochran, Frederica Graham and Marsha Autilio volunteered to serve on the Committee. Marsha reported that since the last RH meeting, the Committee met and developed a one-page description of their proposal. She proceeded to read it noting that the goal of this committee is to develop a process for enhancing the use of Hartford's parks beginning with two parks: Clifford Park, a rural park, and Ratcliffe Park, a more urban park, and to create prototypes. To meet these goals, Marsha noted that the initial steps will be to:
 - a. Research similar use of public space in Vermont and in other states.
 - b. Contact community organizations in our area such as the Upper Valley Food Coop, Apple Corps, and others who have experience in creating community uses for public spaces, for ideas and suggestions.
 - c. Create a short survey to distribute to residents in the neighborhoods surrounding these two parks. This survey would ask them how they use the park now, and, using ideas garnered from our research, suggest a few possible ways to make their park more enjoyable and useable.
 - d. Using the Town List Serv, the Potato Fest mailing list, and various other methods of outreach, invite interested residents to attend a (virtual) meeting to discuss their community's needs and wishes for the parks. Being involved in decisions regarding their neighborhood park will create a sense of ownership that will lead to more use of the parks.

Marsha noted the importance of getting community buy-in and therefore suggested a community meeting and survey. RH agreed.

Kye Cochran reported that she visited Clifford Park and noted that the turf is in poor condition. She stated that Clifford Park was hard hit from the Irene Flood of 2011 and the soils need improvement. She recommended visiting the edible pocket park in Strafford and cited the book “The Community Food Forest Handbook” by Catherine Bukowski and John Munsell.

John Reid noted that Clifford Park has always looked a little rough. He stated that he is worried about another flood impacting the Park. He suggested working with the Parks and Recreation Department. Matt Osborn noted that he spoke with RH member Dylan Kreis who is a supervisor for the Hartford Parks and Recreation Department and Dylan stated that the Parks and Recreation Department is very supportive of RH working on alternatives to lawns in Town parks. Jack liked the idea of developing a survey and plan for a fall community meeting. The Commission agreed. The Committee agreed to develop a draft survey by July 8th.

Jon Bouton thought RH should start in more fertile area than Clifford Park. He suggested that RH look at the two Town parcels near the town line in West Hartford that were acquired through the Hazard Mitigation Grant buyout program. Simon Dennis agreed and suggested that the Town should consider providing places for the homeless to camp on Town lands. Matt Osborn responded that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) has restrictions on what lands can be used for and that housing or camping in the flood zone would not be permitted and that uses tend to be limited to open space. Jack Spicer noted that he done legal research on HMGP uses and there are alternatives to open space.

Jack asked if there are RH funds available to purchase the community forest food handbook and pay for a speaker stipend. Matt responded that there is currently a town spending freeze, but there are remaining grant funds from the Vermont Community Resilience Organization grant RH received. He noted that CRO Vermont is aware of the alternative uses to parks effort and is supportive of the concept. Discussion concluded with Simon stating that this is an exciting project.

4. **Raspberry Revolution Park:** Jack Spicer reported that the raspberry plants that were relocated to Ratcliffe Park are doing very well. Frederica Graham noted that Apple Corps will decide on a permanent home for the plants.
5. **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:** Matt Osborn reported that the Selectboard discussed the Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan at their May 19th and June 19th meetings. Comments were submitted on the Plan by the Selectboard and the public. On June 18th, the Draft Plan was submitted to the Vermont Emergency Management Department (VEM) for their review. Once VEM completes their review, the Plan will be returned to the Town for revisions. Once the revisions are completed, the Draft Plan will go back to the Selectboard for their approval. Jack Spicer responded that he was impressed that the Plan was completed quickly. Matt agreed stating that it has been great working with staff from the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission.
6. **Coronavirus Committee Opening:** Matt Osborn reported that there are currently openings on the Town Coronavirus Committee. A standard town commission and board application is required.
7. **Resilient Hartford Opening:** Jack Spicer reported that there is still a Resilient Hartford opening. He noted that he will be moving to Tunbridge on September 1st and will be stepping down. He requested that RH members spread the word about the opening(s).
8. **Next Meeting:** Jack Spicer noted that next Resilient Hartford meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 22nd at 5:00 p.m.
9. **Announcements:**
 - a. Apple Corps: Kye Cochran reported that Apple Corps did a survey of plantings and that generally the plants are looking good. Apple Corps is planning a fruit walk in White River Junction at some point.
10. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.