SAC Plastic Bag Reduction Subcommittee Meeting

February 6, 2019

Present: Anne Heller, Kathy Smith, Lisa Brayton, Chuck Kabat, Allison Staton, Evan Michaeli, Jena Gibson, Elizabeth Michaeli, Doug Spaulding, Emily Walton, Ginny LeClair, Carmen DelloIacono

1. Revisit loose ends from last meeting
   1. 4 mil thickness seems appropriate to eliminate thicker plastic bags used in other towns
   2. Sewn bag, can hold 25 lbs, machine washable, can be washed 125 times… will use language from other bylaw (proposed Newton amendment)
   3. Grant for bags for every resident?
   4. Compostable plastic?
      1. Still decomposed into microplastics?
      2. Lisa has composted compostable plastic and it was no longer visible in compost
      3. Jena will look into this
   5. Enforcement
      1. Ken Simino (building commissioner) - too strapped to do it with their code enforcement officer;
      2. Kathy (board of health) - may not have bandwidth;
      3. Environmental Department as enforcement officer?  (could maybe apply for grant; rely on community reporting)
   6. Where do fines go?
      1. fines go to General Fund, could ask town meeting to appropriate $ that is collected in fines toward something else (recycle fund, for example)
2. Outreach to boards and community groups
   1. Present it as a draft and ask for feedback
   2. Wait until after spring town election
      1. Selectboard end of April
      2. Board of Health end of April
      3. Business associations end of April
      4. Remaining boards:
         1. Conservation Commission
         2. Planning Board
         3. Parks and Rec
         4. School Committee
         5. TM Chair of Chairs
   3. Info Sessions - Farmer’s Market
   4. House “parties”
3. Brainstorm: what are the key messages we want to get across?
   1. Why single use products are terrible (rolling timeclock of plastic bags produced on the planet).  Use it for average of 12 minutes and it stays for 1000 years. Awareness to what it is we’re trying to do in terms of sustainability.
   2. Preserve the environment, protect the earth and not waste it
   3. We’re so used to plastic, we don’t think about it. If you start to think about plastic bags, you don’t need all the plastic bags that we’re used to using.  All the bags we’ve used, end up in landfills, end up in oceans, pollute the environment, and we don’t need them! Basic premise of needing a plastic bag is wrong.  Stop and think about what you really need.
   4. Greater awareness - thinking about recycling more in general.
   5. Poison the environment
   6. Using reusable bags, reducing carbon footprint
   7. Behavioral change
4. Future meeting schedule
   1. Feb 27th, March 20th, then first and third Wednesdays of each month?