

# Recommendations to the Lexington Board of Selectmen From the Sustainable Lexington Committee, June 9, 2016



The following recommendations are consistent with Article 33, which overwhelmingly passed Town Meeting with the support of the Board of Selectmen on March 11, 2013 and states that: The Town (a) include climate change in all its decisions and planning processes; (b) take action to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate; (c) reduce greenhouse gas emissions; (d) develop and implement a comprehensive climate action plan; all with the goal of making Lexington a truly sustainable community.”

## **Take a leadership role in the development of healthy, energy efficient, and resilient Town buildings.**

- Lead efforts to implement a sustainable, integrated building design policy for Hasting School and future building efforts: Successful building programs are driven by building owners. Without clear direction from the owner, the building design and construction team will be unclear of building goals and will only apply standard, sub-optimal building practices. The Board of Selectmen (representing Town residents) have responsibility for setting policy regarding the construction of municipal and school buildings where our teachers, Town staff and students will work and learn for the next 50+ years. By setting clear policy goals for health, energy efficiency, and resilience for all of our Town buildings starting with the Hastings School project, promoting the use of an integrated design approach, and soliciting input from key stakeholder groups at actionable points in the design and construction process, the Selectmen will help to build the best possible school building and establish a process for future building programs.
- Support the Net Zero Emissions Program: The Town will soon begin the process of discussing what it takes to move Lexington toward becoming a net zero emissions community. We encourage the active participation of the Selectmen in this effort to provide leadership and help ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to participate in these important discussions and the development of action plans.

## **Support programs to source renewable energy for residential, commercial, and municipal users.**

- Support the implementation of the Community Choice Aggregation program: The Task Force anticipates that the opportunity for Lexington residents to join together to purchase electricity from renewable sources will be available in late 2016. The strong endorsement of the program by the Selectmen as part of the program outreach will help to educate residents about the benefits of Community Choice and make this program a success.
- Continue support of solar programs: The Rooftop Program has been in place for more than a year and has generated significant environmental and financial benefits. The Hartwell Project is scheduled to be completed by January 2017 and will provide even greater benefits. Along with the Energy Conservation Committee, we look to the Selectmen to support the installation of solar panels at Town and school facilities, as well as open land, as opportunities arise.

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## **Provide support for focused projects aimed to improve Lexington's sustainability and resilience.**

- The Sustainable Lexington Committee appreciates the support that the Selectmen have provided to raise awareness of important focused projects, including the current effort to reduce/eliminate leaks in the Town's natural gas distribution system. We look forward to your continued support as we work with Town staff, business owners, and residents to: manage food waste, reduce the use of toxic materials, improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings, and take other actions, as needed, to make Lexington a truly sustainable community.

## **Create the position of Sustainability Director within Town staff to ensure that the cross-cutting issues related to sustainability are addressed in a coordinated and consistent manner.**

- The role will be consistent with actions being taken in neighboring communities (e.g., Somerville, Office Sustainability & Environment; Medford – Director, Energy & Environment; Arlington and Bedford share full time staff person). The Sustainability Director will be the key Town point of contact on climate and sustainability and will facilitate the implementation of the Town Sustainability Plan through broad engagement and consensus-building in Lexington and surrounding communities.