



TOWN COUNCIL VOTES!

Climate Emergency Declared!

In April, the Town Council unanimously voted to declare a **Climate Emergency**. This action officially states that our town is aware of the dire effects of fossil fuel emissions and other major environmental issues, and authorizes the Environment Committee to assess and measure Somerset's carbon footprint. With this information, the EC plans to focus on developing recommendations for consideration by the Town Council, as well as upholding and honoring the Paris Climate Agreement. The Agreement encourages countries/cities to reduce their carbon footprint by 45% or more by 2030, and 100% by 2050.

Apiaries (Bee Boxes) Coming to Town

The Town Council also voted unanimously to bring apiaries to Somerset. The bee boxes will be placed inside a 12' x 16' x 5' high fence situated in our forest next to the creek, about a hundred yards from Wisconsin Avenue. The fence has already been constructed and the bee boxes will arrive in the coming weeks. We can look forward to a plethora of flowers and blossoms all over our neighborhood and more than a little "local honey" that may become available to buy. Please come visit the apiaries but, for the sake of safety, do not enter the fenced area, which will be locked at all times. Our beekeeper, Sarah Keele, will be organizing educational talks for Town residents and Somerset ES students. Details and dates will follow.

Send us Your Sustainable Action Story!

We would love to hear about what sustainable actions you and your family are taking these days. In general, most of us are influenced and inspired by the actions of our family members, friends and neighbors, so please share your present and future sustainable actions to help move the needle toward a more sustainable future. Send your story here to: TOS.EnvironmentCommittee@gmail.com

Recycling /Reusing

The Environment Committee recently invited Lara Ilao, founder of PlasticTree.com to make a presentation about her innovative and futuristic company. This company not only recycles materials but also reuses materials. This means that all of your Amazon boxes and carry-out plastic containers can now be collected and sold to a buyer who will reuse these materials. As you can imagine, reusing has a much smaller carbon footprint than recycling, and Lara's vision is to reinvent the way our nation handles discarded objects that can be reused. Glass and other objects can also be reused by Plastic Tree. We encourage everyone to watch Lara's presentation at the recent Environment Committee meeting (starts at minute 31): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDYD36OImWo&t=2050s>



Presently, the Town contracts with a recycling company that combines all recyclables into one stream, which unfortunately corrupts much of the recyclables and thus requires many items to go to a landfill. Plastic Tree, on the other hand and with your help, would keep objects separated and would share data about the Town's discarded materials so that we can learn what we are recycling and reusing. Plastic Tree intends to submit a proposal for the Town Council's consideration in the coming months.

Proposed Change to Town Process for HVAC Replacements

By Franny Peale, Councilmember, Uppingham Street

At the April 5, 2021 Town Council meeting I introduced a proposed ordinance to amend the Town Code regarding the process for replacement of HVAC (air conditioning and heat pump) units. This proposal would streamline the process for units replaced by new equipment in the same location, and not otherwise subject to an open building permit application. I think that these simple replacement permits should be issued by the Mayor, rather than by the Town Council. This means that this administrative function could be carried out on a convenient timetable

for residents. The applicant would still need to notify all adjoining and confronting property owners of the planned work, and the new unit would still need to comply with the applicable noise standards.

If you would like to read the text of the proposed ordinance, you can find it here <https://townofsomerset.com/DocumentCenter/View/1089/No-4-21-2-ac-units-1>. We will discuss this ordinance at our next Town Council meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021, and I hope you will join us if you have any questions. In the meantime I would be happy to answer your questions by email to me at fpeale@gmail.com.