

NRZ Steering Committee Meeting

Special Meeting
February 9, 2012
4-5 p.m.
At The ACCESS Agency

MINUTES

- 1) Call to order: 4 p.m.; present Chair Brenda Sullivan, Treasurer Roger Morin, Steering Committee member Andrew Seeling, Secretary John Latour. Absent: Nancy Rivera, Ed Rivera, Rosita Vining.
- 2) Approval of Minutes: No Minutes from prior meeting - deferred until next meeting.
- 3) Old Business:
 - a. There was discussion about moving regular NRZ meetings to other locations with the purpose of being accessible to more residents/businesses within the NRZ, and attracting more members and ideas for projects that fit the NRZ's strategic plan. Other suggested locations could include the community room at the Savings Institute, the Safety Complex meeting room, Town Hall, and the Windham Chamber of Commerce, the arts magnet school. Brenda will make inquiries about these options. There also was discussion of holding some Saturday meetings, again to be more accessible. And the committee agreed by consensus to change the regular meeting time to 4-5 p.m.
 - b. There was discussion about contact information for the NRZ which currently has no P.O. box address. It may be possible to have any correspondence sent to/from the NRZ using the Windham Chamber of Commerce or WINCOG address. (Brenda will make inquiries.) Members also considered a temporary logo for official letterhead to be printed from VistaPrint – and the idea of inviting art students at Windham High School to create designs for an official logo.
 - c. Brenda discussed the NRZ FaceBook page; 23 people currently follow the NRZ page, agendas and minutes are posted there, and submitted to the Town Clerk to be posted on the town web site.
 - d. It was agreed to create an NRZ email address, NatchaugWillimanticNRZ@yahoo.com
 - e. Andrew Seeling discussed the fence damage at the Taylor Court Community Garden (struck by someone driving a stolen car, evading police) and finding a way to make repairs. Possible grants for improving the fence – i.e. making it taller in order to deter some of the theft that occurred this past year – was also discussed. Andrew also noted St. Paul's Church volunteers will expand their use of the garden this spring. All produce grown by the church is donated to the Covenant Soup kitchen. Pam, at the soup kitchen, has indicated what kinds of vegetables she'd like. Three new neighborhood residents intend to use plots, as well as some of the children in the Taylor Court neighborhood. And a volunteer has come forward to help maintain the areas outside the fence, in response to complaints from the town's blight enforcement officer this past fall.

- f. Brenda mentioned two possible guest speakers for the March meeting – a Town Planner who has helped create NRZs in the state, and Mansfield’s Deputy Mayor Toni Moran who wrote the NRZ guidebook. The consensus was to encourage Town Manager Neal Beets and Town Planner James Finger to attend this meeting.
- 4) Treasury Report: Rodger Morin reported \$3,427.69 remaining. Roger is in contact with Maureen Willis in Windham Finance Dept for account balance.
 - 5) New Business:
 - a. Members discussed the need to have an active marketing and outreach campaign to foster support for the NRZ and its mission.
 - b. Members discussed the possibility of bringing on board committee members from the Police, ECSU, and other community groups.
 - c. Members discussed updating the annual report, possibly dividing it into sections for each member to review. The goal is to keep the report brief and easy to read and most importantly, to submit the updated report in a timely fashion in order to meet state regulations. There was also discussion of holding an NRZ-wide meeting for all constituents in the NRZ neighborhoods.
 - d. Members discussed setting goals/benchmarks for the next 6 months.
 - 6) Next Meeting Date: 4 p.m., Thursday, March 22, 2012 at the Access Agency, conference room 2, 1315 Main Street, Willimantic CT.
 - 7) Adjournment: Andrew 1st, Roger 2nd, unanimous - 5 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, NRZ Secretary John Latour