

Opinion

Sustainable Marblehead: The Future is in Our Hands

By Submitted by Sustainable Marblehead

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Sustainable Marblehead has accomplished a lot over the past year. We've created a community of more than 350 residents committed to addressing climate change through local action and education. We've come together in small groups and at community meetings and in early May we did something no one expected. We passed two citizen-driven proposals at Town Meeting that will help Marblehead become a more resilient and sustainable community.

The first put Marblehead on record as supporting a goal of using 100 percent carbon-free energy in electricity production, building energy use, and transportation and "moving with fiscal responsibility and all deliberate speed" to achieve this goal.

The second called for the town to adopt the stretch energy code, one of the requirements for us to achieve Green Community status. As a Green Community, Marblehead would join more than 200 other Massachusetts cities and towns that are already Green Communities and become eligible for \$20 million in annual state grants to pay for energy savings projects to reduce our energy costs and keep our taxes low.

We want to thank John Livermore, who co-founded Sustainable Marblehead in 2017, for serving as our first executive director and spearheading these initiatives. He has an exciting new job as Northeast director of the Center for Sustainable Energy and has stepped down to devote his time to promoting clean energy throughout the region. Fortunately for us, he will remain active in Sustainable Marblehead, continue to share his ideas and knowledge and serve on our Board of Directors.

Replacing him is Petra Langer, a longtime Marblehead resident with a background in communications and public affairs. She previously held senior communications positions at the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare, Partners HealthCare, and the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts. She leads Sustainable Marblehead's Education and Awareness Action Group and is a member of the Cottage Gardeners of Marblehead and Swampscott.

Other members of our Board of Directors include: Co-Founder Judith Black, an award-winning storyteller and former director of Bridging Lives, a teen mentoring program; Co-Founder Nancy DeMuth, a physical therapist and holistic health practitioner; Brian Helmuth, professor of marine biology and public policy at Northeastern University's Marine Science Center; Chuck King, a designer for a social enterprise software company; Lynn Nadeau, President of the Clifton Improvement Association, co-Founder of HealthLink, and co-creator of Beach Bluff Park; Stephen Saltzman, a physician and general internist who has practiced on the North Shore for over 40 years; Lisa Sampson, who works in the investment management field and is a chartered financial analyst; and Co-Founder Patricia Sullivan, a physical therapist who works locally and internationally to improve access to rehabilitation services.

All of the organization's board members are Marblehead residents, and Sustainable Marblehead is a member of the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce and encourages residents to shop local whenever possible. In addition, both Black and Sullivan are active in the Marblehead Harbor Rotary Club.

Over the coming months, Sustainable Marblehead will be focused on continuing to work with town officials and others on a variety of initiatives to reduce Marblehead's greenhouse gas emissions, encourage the town to complete the process to become a Green Community, and educate residents on sustainable practices they can implement in their own lives that can make a difference.

Upcoming Events

June 24 — Sip, Sup, and Sustain Us fundraiser at the home of Lynn Nadeau, 10 Surf St., 5- 7:30 p.m., RSVP to sustainablemarblehead@gmail.com, \$50 suggested donation.

June 27 — Open Community Meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 28 Mugford St., 7-8:30 p.m., featuring speaker Barbara Warren, executive director of Salem Sound Coastwatch, who will talk about her work in helping Marblehead prepare for climate change.

Oct. 6 — Community-Wide Sustainability Fair at the Marblehead Community Charter Public School, 17 Lime St., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., a fun-filled day of electric vehicle demonstrations, hands-on exhibits, educational speakers, live entertainment and local food.

For more information, to join, or to make a donation, visit www.sustainablemarblehead.org.