



# TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 772-4709

[www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)

## PUBLIC NOTICE SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sustainability Advisory Committee will meet in the Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices  
at 10 Front Street, Exeter on Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 at 7pm.

1. Call SAC Meeting to Order/Welcome
2. Public Comments
3. Presentation Dover Solid Waste Study Approach and Findings (Dave Dinzeo, Dover Solid Waste Advisory Committee)
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 5<sup>th</sup>
5. 2025 Planning
6. Styrofoam Collection Event 4/26 Planning
7. Solid Waste Subcommittee Update – Dates available for Spring visit
8. Police and Fire Station Subcommittee Update
9. Joint SAC/EC Meeting Date (May 14, 2025 3:30 pm)
10. Correspondence from Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee re: plastic bag petition
11. Other Business
12. Adjourn

Next Meeting: May 14<sup>th</sup> (joint meeting with Energy Committee), 2025 3:30 pm.

*Denise Short, Chair Sustainability Advisory Committee*

*Posted March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 Exeter Town Website [www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov) and Town Office kiosk.*

**TOWN OF EXETER  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
5 Feb 25**

Meeting was called to order by Chris at 7:05pm

**Members Present:** Chris Zigmont, Jim Breeling, Denise Short, Julie Gaunt (alternate), Sarah Koff (alternate), and Chetana Palmer

**Staff and Select Board Member Present:** Kristen Murphy, Conservation & Sustainability Planner; Dan Chartrand, Select Board Representative

**Public Comments:**

- No comments from the public; no one from the public was present, nor did anyone submit an email to the committee prior to the meeting. Ms. Manzur, who sent an email last month requesting guidance regarding support of proposed state legislation, requested to present under public comment at tonight's meeting. She was not present; if she shows up, the committee would make room in the agenda for her to speak.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

- No comments or questions. Jim motions and Chetana seconds to approve the minutes from the 8 Jan 25 meeting. Motion passes unanimously.

**Election of New Chair**

- Chris is looking to elect a replacement chair during this meeting. He is looking forward to continuing to be a member of the committee. No one sent an email since the last meeting putting their name forward as chair. Chris opened the floor for someone to volunteer.
- Jim asked what the estimated hours per month would be with the position. Chris said it can be as much as 5 and as little as 2. If someone had more time to give, all the better. Jim then asked what would happen if the Chair were absent. Chris said there is a Vice Chair who would step in (Chetana).
- Denise Short volunteered to assume the role of chair. Jim motions (nominates), Chris seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

**Deliberative Session Updates**

- Due to unforeseen circumstances, both Chris and Kristen were unable to attend the Deliberative Session held on Feb 2. Nina Braun was able to present on the styrofoam warrant article using the slides Kristen had put together. Denise said there was no opposition or questions. Dan said that people have been approaching him with enthusiasm about the proposed articles.
- There was a brief discussion about access to the transfer station and the cost for a sticker. The SAC could advise the Select Board on the topic if the warrant article passes.
- Select Board Member Julie Gilman presented on the EV charging station at the deliberative session, no comments or questions. Both warrants are conditional on receiving federal grant money. Even if both don't receive funding, the SAC would consider moving forward regardless and investigate other funding streams.

### **Police and Fire station Subcommittee**

- No updates

### **Solid Waste Subcommittee**

- No updates on subcommittee activities.
- Planning for 2025 Styrofoam collection: The Styrofoam drive held at the end of 2024 was a huge success, and citizens want it to happen again. Chris is thinking maybe quarterly. The SAC then discussed hosting it at the town vote on March 11. The SAC would need to engage with Kate Miller, Town Moderator for permissions and well as the SST. The YMCA may also be willing to partner on the initiative. Denise suggested there might be some student involvement available as well; Chris said he would check with his son via the committees he's part of. Fallback date would be the Saturday before the town vote, March 8. No one thought it would be a problem if out-of-towners wanted to participate. Kristen will investigate the budget to get a truck. Public works also has truck that we could use if we need.
- Town Composting: Over Thanksgiving capacity is usually pushed to the maximum. Kristen can help to promote an increased budget request in 2026 to increase capacity during high times during year. It might be a good time to re-up community awareness. Chetana suggested that maybe we could study who is paying for curbside compost and then target a neighborhood for adoption. Dan said that there is some research that neighborhood organizing has pretty good success. Members of the SAC should try to do some reading and come ready to discuss at next meeting.
- Kristen reminded the SAC that Dover had a consultant review their solid waste process, and a representative from Dover would be willing to come to Exeter to share the details of the report and the impacts of the report on Dover. The Committee agreed to add this to March's agenda.

### **Other Business**

- Chetana wanted to congratulate the Energy Committee on the very successful, very well-run Window Dressers [insulating window inserts] initiative. She would encourage the SAC to be more engaged in this effort next time so that it can be even more successful.
- There are some calendar dates upcoming that the SAC could piggy back on to raise awareness for initiatives and other sustainability stewardship (e.g. Earth Day)
- Joint SAC/Energy Committee meeting date: The Energy Committee meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 3:30pm. It makes sense for the meeting to be held during one of our normal meeting times since the room is already available. The tentative plan is to meet during their meeting slot in April. Kristen will set up a doodle poll to see which date is best for both committees.

With no additional business, Denise motioned and Chetana seconded to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Gaunt





Kristen Murphy <kmurphy@exeternh.gov>

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## another resolution -- a request from Durham

1 message

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Susan Richman <susan7richman@gmail.com>  
To: kmurphy@exeternh.gov

Wed, Mar 19, 2025 at 2:22 PM

Hello Kristen Murphy,

Thank you for the help you have given Nell Neal as the Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee (IWMAC) uses your resolution as a template for our own request that Durham eliminate single use plastic from town business and events.

I'm writing now to ask whether Exeter would consider a resolution endorsing a statewide asking the NH Legislature and CEOs of major grocery chains to ban plastic bags at the check-out. The Town of Durham just endorsed this petition, attached below.

This petition has been launched in a number of towns and cities. It was initiated by the Plastics Working Group of NH Network, now in its fourth year -- a statewide network *"linking citizens statewide to share information and implement actions for a sustainable NH."* There are Exeter residents in NH Network, so we could ask them to sponsor the resolution.

We are hopeful of the petition's success, having been invited to discuss possible legislation with NH's Solid Waste Working Group, chaired by Representative Karen Ebel. Our case will be strengthened if we can obtain more municipal endorsements.

Access to the petition and the Durham resolution are pasted or attached below.

We hope Exeter will consider endorsing this petition.

Yours,  
Susan Richman, Durham

**Online petition:** [bit.ly/noPLASTICbags](https://bit.ly/noPLASTICbags)

**Paper petition:** [bit.ly/paperNOplasticBAGS](https://bit.ly/paperNOplasticBAGS)

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*Susan Richman (communications)*

**NH Network: Environment, Energy, Climate**

<https://www.newhampshirenetwork.org/>

**Re-Think Plastic with the Ten Towns • Ten Actions Toolkit**

<http://10towns.org>

Home: 603-868-2758; Cell: 603-842-1937

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**2 attachments**



**DURHAM #2025-06 - Supporting a Petition to Reduce Plastic Bags in Grocery Stores.pdf**  
111K



**Online petition wording AN.docx**  
17K



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## **RESOLUTION #2025-06 DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

### **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A STATEWIDE PETITION REQUESTING THAT GROCERS REDUCE THE DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS**

WHEREAS, In January 2021, Durham joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM), in which local governments commit to undertake measures to reduce/limit greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, plastics across their “life cycle” are a considerable source of such emissions, as documented in *The PLASTIC ATLAS 2019, jointly published by Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin, Germany, and Break Free From Plastic*: “The production of plastics is one of the largest and fastest-growing contributors to these [global greenhouse-gas] emissions. Plastics are petrochemicals. More than 99 percent of plastics come from such fossil-fuel feedstocks. Petrochemicals are the fastest-growing form of oil consumption globally; the International Energy Agency forecasts that they will account for half of the extra demand for oil by 2050. In the United States and elsewhere, plastics and other petrochemicals form a large and rapidly growing destination for fracked gas. As plastic production grows, it will lock in new fossil-fuel infrastructure and increase emissions that arise from the exploration, extraction, transport and refining of oil, gas, and coal. Global production of plastics has increased from 2 million tonnes in 1950 to 400 million tonnes in 2015. The production and use of plastics have nearly doubled in the last 20 years; they are expected to double again over the next 20, and quadruple by the early 2050s”; and

WHEREAS, plastic bags are the “low hanging fruit,” the easiest plastic to do without, at no cost to retailers and little bureaucratic oversight needed. As of 2021, 500 municipalities in 28 states had plastic bag legislation and 12 states had single-use plastic bag bans <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/containers-and-packaging-product-specific> ; and

WHEREAS, plastic bags are a waste problem. A 2022 report found that only 5% to 6% of plastics in the U.S. are recycled, and a separate 2022 study from the U.S. Department of Energy found the same <https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Plastic-Bag-Bans-Work-January-2024.pdf>. NH has 2.7 billion

pounds of grocery bags in landfills now and forever because plastic does not decompose, it just breaks apart, as each year another 65 million lbs. of grocery plastic bag waste is added in NH. Bags tangle in waste equipment, costing time and money; one facility estimated \$114,000 each year in repairs. The City of Dover reports: Dover has strong programs on how to recycle, but product & packaging materials are too intertwined to separate; and

**WHEREAS**, plastic packaging is also a public health issue. There are at least 16,000 chemicals used to manufacture plastics that can leach into food and beverages. Micro- and nanoplastics escape from landfills in runoff and dust, carrying toxic chemicals into water, soil and crops. They have been found throughout the human body including in placentas, hearts, lungs, testicles and brains. Toxics from plastic have been linked to metabolic disorders and endocrine disruption <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/endocrine>; and

**WHEREAS**, Durham's Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee (IWMAC) had a meeting with Robin Bisson, Manager of the Durham Hannaford, and George Parmenter, then Sustainability Leader for the New England Hannaford operation, in which the Committee told the chain would only cease giving out plastic bags if they were assured other stores would do the same, and other towns have had similar conversations with grocery store CEOs, as well as being told the stores would do what was required by legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, in past years legislation to ban single-use plastic bags failed, due to the perception that the public and grocers were not in favor of a bag ban; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 19 the House Environment and Agriculture Committee suggested members of the "Plastics Working Group" work with Representative Karen Ebel's Solid Waste Working Group to work on legislation to deal with plastic bags (<https://www.youtube.com/live/0HNXQTQt3pY>, 1:22:20), and Rep. Ebel has since proposed two meetings this spring (*private correspondence Feb. 23*); and


**WHEREAS**, IWMAC views the success of this petition as an opportunity to convince both the grocery CEOs and the legislators of the public will to move forward with a plastic bag ban; and

**WHEREAS**, this petition has 12 organizational endorsements, but would be strengthened if endorsed by municipalities, who bear the cost and effort of dealing with plastic bag waste,

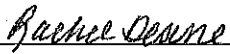


**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Durham Town Council, the governing and legislative body of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire, does hereby adopt **Resolution #2025-06** endorsing a statewide petition requesting that grocers reduce distribution of single-use plastic bags.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** on this 17th day of March, 2025 by a majority vote of the Durham Town Council with 9 voting in favor, 0 opposing, and 0 abstaining.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Friedman, Chair  
Durham Town Council

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rachel Deane, Town Clerk-Tax Collector

## **Say NO to plastic bags!**

### **Why This Petition is Necessary:**

- New Hampshire grocery stores distribute millions of single-use plastic bags annually, with each bag being used for an average of only 12 minutes but persisting in our environment for up to 1,000 years.
- Less than 9% of all plastics get recycled.
- The other 91% ends up in our oceans, streams, lakes, farms, forests, landfills, and incinerators, where they break down into “microplastics.” Plastics don’t decompose.
- Studies show microplastics in our lungs, liver, heart, and brain increase our chances of heart attack, stroke, or death.
- Scientists from the Green Mt. Conservation Group in Carroll County, NH, have discovered microplastics in well-water, backyard snow, and every river and stream sampled since 2022.
- Towns and taxpayers save money, significantly decreasing waste management costs when single-use plastic bags are eliminated from landfills.
- At recycling facilities, plastic bags clog machinery. One recycling facility computed the added cost as \$114,000 annually.
- Affordable reusable alternatives are readily available.
- Stores in Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts have successfully implemented plastic bag reductions mandated by law, and customers have adapted.
- Plastic bags are one of the top five items found in our coastal cleanups, from Hampton Beach to the Great Bay, threatening our marine ecosystems.
- Our tourist economy depends on natural beauty. Discarded plastic bags detract from our scenic landscapes and harm our wildlife.

**To: Major grocery stores      From: [Your Name]**

We, the undersigned residents of New Hampshire, are petitioning New Hampshire’s major grocery store chains to voluntarily eliminate the practice of providing free single-use plastic bags at checkouts.

### We respectfully request that your stores:

1. Implement an immediate "opt-in" policy where cashiers ask if customers need bags.
2. Provide incentives for reusable bags.
3. Provide prominent displays near checkout offering sturdy reusable bags for sale, with information on cost and environmental savings for all.
4. Make a plan for phase-out of single-use plastic bags.

### How we can help:

1. Provide information about alternatives to single-use plastic, such as mesh produce bags.
2. Write letters to newspapers and post on social media recognizing your store’s decision to voluntarily reduce single use plastic in New Hampshire.

The following organizations support this petition: Dover Plastic Reduction Group, Green Mountain Conservation Group, Kearsarge Climate Action, NH Healthy Climate, NH Network, North Country Alliance for Balanced Change, Portsmouth Climate Action, Save Forest Lake, Tamworth Recycling Project, Third Act New Hampshire, the Town of Durham NH

# Styrofoam Recycling Event



**SATURDAY, JAN 4\*  
9AM TO 11AM**



**\*NOTE: Snow Date:  
JAN 11th 9AM-11AM**

*Event is Weather Dependent:  
Snow on Jan 4 will postpone  
event to Jan 11 9am-11am*



**EXETER PUBLIC WORKS  
13 NEWFIELDS ROAD**



**For more info:  
[www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)**

*Brought to you by: The Town of Exeter Sustainability  
Advisory Committee in partnership with  
the Town of Gilford*





**Saturday May 10th**  
Founders Park, 10a-1p

*An Environmental Festival Celebrating  
the Annual Return of the Alewives*

**ART - KIDS ACTIVITIES - EDUCATIONAL DISPLAYS  
LIVE FISH - AND MORE!**

**Info: [www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)**