



# TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

## MEETING MINUTES

### West Hartford Clean Energy Commission

June 10, 2019

7:00 PM

Rm 422

#### 1. Roll Call 7:00 PM

Member	Present	Alternates	Present
Catherine Diviney	Yes	Robert Palmer	No
Chris Nelson	No	Dave Mello	Yes
Joe Campanella	Yes	James Capella	No
Bernie Pelletier	Yes		
Max DuBuisson	Yes		
<b>Total</b>	(3 needed for quorum)		
<b>Additional Attendees</b>	Owen Eagan – Jim Henkel – Katherine Bruns – Ted Loewenthal – Julia Farber - Samantha Dynowski – Matt Macunas		

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- a. May 13, 2019 - Approved

#### 3. Communications/Administration

- a. Fellowship Housing Project – 20H Starkel Rd – 2 Letters

- It was agreed that the Commission will write two letters – one to the Board of Fellowship Housing and one to the town. In this letter we will recommend that the new buildings be designed to be net zero or nearly net zero. Catherine will draft.

- b. Update on combining with Cons & Env't Commission

- While there is broad support for combining the commissions there are multiple issues that need to be considered:
  - i. Workload – the WHCEC already has full meetings and there is a concern that combining the C&E Commission with the WHCEC may result in neither commission getting its work done
  - ii. Staffing – the C&E Commission has eleven members (3 vacancies) and the WHCEC has 8 members
  - iii. The C&E Commission was formed by statute (<https://www.ecode360.com/7293005>) Relevant sections are appended to these minutes. The WHCEC was formed by Resolution. Thus, in any combination we need to be mindful of the legal requirements.
  - iv. The two commissions report up through different channels. The reporting relationships need to be examined in any combination.
- One possible solution was the use of subcommittees reporting to a singular commission.
- It was decided to have a working meeting between some members of each commission and town staff.

- c. Should WH declare a climate emergency? This topic was combined with the TED talk (see below)

- <https://www.treehugger.com/corporate-responsibility/>

#### 4. Upcoming Events

- a. June 24, CTGBC meeting @ Legrand <https://ctgbc.org/meetinginfo.php>

- Julia Farber encouraged members to attend. An excellent panel will present on net zero buildings. Catherine has encouraged the Fellowship Board to attend. It is \$20.

#### 5. Business

- a. “TED” talk – Bernie – video?

- Video was held for future meeting in lieu of Climate Emergency discussion
- In light of the IPCC report numerous communities have begun declaring climate emergencies. Locally this is under consideration in Hartford and New Britain (and perhaps elsewhere)
- Julia Farber led a discussion of this topic. It was agreed to continue to review this topic as a means of educating the public on the gravity of the current state of the world-wide climate.

- b. Event Recaps

- Celebrate West Hartford recap/poster
  - i. All participants noted that the WHCEC didn't attract much attention. However – when a person did engage with commission members it was a positive event. The poster was a great help – but it was felt it needed to be larger
  - ii. It was agreed to keep this up next year but to begin planning earlier. A larger poster and some more interactive form of engagement were suggested. One idea was to use a map to show where schools with solar were located.
  - iii. People seem to be very wary that we are trying to “sell” something. Need to highlight fact that we are a TOWN COMMISSION SERVING THE COMMUNITY.
- Sierra Ready for 100 – event recap
  - i. Samantha Dynowski update the CEC on the Sierra Club WH Ready For 100 meeting.
    1. A committee has been formed – Samantha Dynowski – Ann Pratt – Julia Farber – Patrick Sanady – Christine Feely – Elizabeth Fleming – Bernie Pelletier
    2. Samantha will host a networking meeting on June 27th
- Simsbury Multi-town Meeting
  - i. David Burnham, Manager, ISO Policy and Economic Analysis at Eversource addressed town representatives from Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, Simsbury, and West Hartford. The topic was “Grid 101”. The meeting was held as a start to having towns and the utility work together on issues such as resilience, grid improvement, solar and renewable deployment. Eversource distributed a map of their territory that showed the areas where hosting capacity (ability to handle solar) is constrained.

- c. 100PercentCT report
  - Bernie Pelletier reported that PACE is working on a HeatSmart campaign which would promote the use of air source heat pumps. The program design borrows heavily from Solarize.
- d. Sister City task force report
  - The task force has had one phone meeting with Edina Minnesota. The ball is in their court to respond with some of the topics where WH would like to work with Edina (to mutual benefit) and how communication would be structured.
- e. Energy Plan
  - Mark Scully (PACE) has been working on a template energy plan that is intended to make it easier for the town to complete a Community Energy Plan.
- f. Energy Resources Letter
  - The letter has gone out in an e-blast to Chamber members.
- g. Solview
  - The letter to residents is nearing completion and the plan is for the letter to go out to top solar candidates in July. A question was asked – can all residents get their information even if they are not in the top tier of solar potential. Catherine is pursuing.
- h. Community TV
  - No progress
- i. Land Trust / Trex Community Challenge
  - Catherine is planning to reach out to the Rotary Club and Land Trust to work on a film plastic recycling program similar to what was completed in the WH Schools.
- b. Plastic Bag Ban /Schools Trex Plastic Challenge
  - The plastic bag ban was passed at the state level. The Trex challenge was successfully concluded.
- c. Brownfields in town – site for solar (Agora ballroom?)
  - No progress
- d. Business Advisory Committee Idea
  - No progress

## **6. AOB**

- a. Dave Mello shared the results of the Freedom of Information Act meeting. It was agreed that the Commission is in compliance.

## **7. Adjournment - 8:59 PM**

**Next meeting July 15, 2019 Town Hall Room 422**

## **West Hartford Code References to the Conservation and Environment Commission:**

### **§ 25-13 Establishment; purpose.**

A Joint Conservation and Environment Commission, composed of a total of 11 members, is hereby established for the purposes of developing and conserving natural resources and protecting the integrity of the environment within the territorial limits of the Town.

### **§ 25-14 Duties.**

**A.** The Commission established by this article:

**(1)** Shall conduct research into the utilization and possible utilization of land areas of the Town.

**(2)** May coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes.

**(3)** May advertise, prepare and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets as necessary for its purposes.

**(4)** Shall keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands, for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of such areas.

**(5)** May, from time to time, recommend to the Town Manager, the Council or the Town Plan and Zoning Commission plans and programs for the development and use of such areas, which may include the acquisition of conservation easements.

**(6)** May exchange information with the Commissioner of Agriculture and Natural Resources and may request said Commissioner, with prior approval of the Town Council, to assign technical personnel to it for assistance in planning its overall program and for coordinating state and local conservation activities.

**B.** The Commission established by this article shall:

**(1)** Investigate pollution problems within the Town, including alleged violations of clean air and clean water standards as established, respectively, by the Clean Air Commission and the Water Resources Commission of the state. It shall recommend to the Town Council procedures, ordinances, rules and interlocal agreements to abate and prevent such problems.

**(2)** Conduct such surveys as may be required, determine the source and nature of pollution hazards, review state, local and metropolitan district air and water effluent records and conduct public hearings for the purpose of obtaining information leading to the abatement of pollution.

**(3)** Keep records of such surveys, inspections or hearings.

### **§ 25-15 Definitions.**

As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

## **POLLUTION**

Refers to but is not limited to the contamination by any means of the air or water, the disposal of solid wastes, the use of pesticides or herbicides, offensive odors, excessive noise, litter, junked automobiles, the control of rodents, vermin and insects, the protection of fish, wildlife and trees, the preservation of historical, cultural, educational and aesthetic values, the maintenance of public health standards and the protection of recreational facilities.

### **§ 25-16 Compensation.**

The members of the Commission established by this article shall serve without compensation, but their necessary and actual expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties shall be paid by the Town within the limits of any appropriation made therefor.

### **§ 25-17 Secretarial and clerical assistants.**

[Amended 12-16-1986; 5-10-2005]

The Commission established by this article may appoint and remove such secretarial and clerical assistants as it may need for the performance of its duties, within appropriations therefor. The Directors of Health, Leisure Services, Community Services and Public Works, or their designated representative, shall be ex officio members of the Commission without the power to vote. Each department shall provide such technical and other information and assistance as may be requested by the Commission.<sup>1</sup>

[1]

*Editor's Note: Former Art. VII, which followed this section in the 1972 Code, regarding the community development action plan agency, was repealed 1-13-1981.*