



WEST HARTFORD SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING

MAY 25, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

The kickoff meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Group was conducted as a virtual public meeting. Members of the public may watch the meeting on West Hartford Community Interactive: YouTube: <https://youtu.be/eyw4PKuAipl> and www.whctv.org.

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance: Mayor Shari Cantor; Town Manager Matt Hart; Energy Specialist Catherine Diviney; Recycling Coordinator Katherine Bruns; 31 members of the Sustainability Advisory Group.

1. Welcome: Catherine Diviney opened the meeting at 6:02. Mayor Cantor gave a welcome address thanking all who volunteered to serve. She highlighted four pillars of sustainability: human, social, economic and environmental and noted that they are all interconnected. She said West Hartford has been in the forefront of sustainability for over 10 years. She said the West Hartford Sustainability Advisory Group (SAG) will guide the town for times to come and that it may become a commission. She left for annual budget meeting. Matt Hart, Town Manager, gave next welcome, thanking Sustainable CT for its leadership and for getting the Sustainable CT program up and going. He thanked Catherine and Katherine and all volunteers.
2. Overview of Sustainable CT (see slides): Keynote Speaker: Alyssa Norwood, Program Manager at Sustainable CT. She gave an introduction: a West Hartford resident since attending Law School in the area. She started her West Hartford life in a multi-family home before moving into her current home. She highlighted what she searched for when looking for a home which was diversity of housing options, walking distance to parks, access to trees, walkable, bikeable and not dependent on cars. She wanted access to trails and diversity in the schools. She sees opportunity for growth in town and looks forward to diversity street by street, urban agricultural, common use of transportation.

Alyssa then gave an in-depth overview and explanation of Sustainable CT stating that it is an independent non-profit with 100% of support coming from philanthropic circles. It is housed on the campus of Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, CT.

She discussed the 13 categories on the Sustainable CT Action List. Certification lasts for 3 years. Application for 2021 is due August 24, 2021.

Alyssa then gave a tour of Sustainable CT website noting: 2020 application highlights; “Resources for your Team”; the 4 free equity trainings available to all volunteers; student fellows who will work 40 hours a week for 3 months to support application process; free technical assistance and support; the Sustainable CT Community Match Fund; and training calendar.

Q&A:

- Johannes Evelein asked about towns with best practices. Alyssa noted that the most recent town certification reports will likely contain more useful examples, since actions and requirements change over time. Also, some action responses are marked “CT Success Story” which indicates that the reviewers thought that particular town’s submission was one of the best for the action.
- Stephen Sack asked if the state is involved. Alyssa noted that the program does try to align with state policies and goals, e.g., Comprehensive Energy Strategy, CT Coalition for Strategic Materials Management, etc. and that Sustainable CT does collaborate with state agencies and other partners in the development of the program’s voluntary actions and requirements.

3. Member Introductions - see chart below

- Results! Even = 18; Odd = 13; Letters = 1

4. Advisory Group Responsibilities & Requirements – see slides

5. Administration – see slides, **Next meeting June 16th, 6:30**. It will be virtual. Facilitator & Secretary: Julia Farber, Edward Perzanowski.

6. Next Steps – see slides

"ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING SHOULD CONTACT SUZANNE OSLANDER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, 860-561-7580 SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING."

Member Introductions

Name	Yrs in WH	Odd or Even	Sustainability Wish
1. Catherine Diviney	0, Simsbury	Odd	That the Town take a more visible top-down approach to sustainability with leadership, Council and BOE requesting action rather than ideas being pushed from below. Get all remaining street lights (decorative) converted to LEDs.
2. Christine Feely	4.5	Even	See WH move strongly, assertively towards energy efficiency, clean and renewable energy at all sectors
3. Dan Masciello	2	Odd	More transparency from town with information about what town does with our waste
4. Daniel Becerra	2	Even	WH have more robust cycling infrastructure
5. Edward Perzanowski	10	Even	Greater adoption of complete streets and bike lanes. More resilient transportation system
6. Grace Furia	16 Entire life	Even	Works for CT Coalition to end homelessness; goal for CT and WH provide access to homelessness prevention resources; McKinney-Vento Act
7. Heidi Green	14	Letters person	For WH to proactively decide to be an anti-racist community
8. Hendree Milward	10	Even	For WH to pass Climate Emergency resolution and join 24 other towns doing it
9. Jane Roth	28	Odd	To no longer see yellow signs indicating use of toxic pesticide in parks and lawns
10. Jay Stange	1	Odd	For WH residents to take a more active role in climate resilience by, for examples, turning backyard compost piles and spending 30 min day in active non-car commuting
11. Johannes Evelein	20	Odd	WH to become less car dependent; robustly invest and support cycling infrastructure.
12. Jonathan Humphrey	2.5	Even	Single use plastic ban for WH. Does a lot of trash pick up
13. Julia Farber	3	Even	100% clean and renewable energy future, accessible to renters and other residents
14. Katherine Bruns	17	Odd	Town wide reduction in food waste coupled with food waste and all organics diversion
15. Kathleen Roche	Entire life	Even	Increase public transportation and awareness of it

16. Kathye Cipes	33	Even	Food composting recycling initiative. Home food composting program, Blue Earth
17. Kevin Nguyen	17? Entire life	Even	Increase youth engagement in the town
18. Kimberly Hughes	15	Odd	Provide all children outdoor learning experiences. Connection to land and soil is all of our common ground.
19. Lindsey Whitcomb	4	Odd	Push food waste diversion, land fill reservation, no organic waste in trash bins.
20. Luciana Grandstrand	1.5	Even	See more resilient food system in town, local food production, local agriculture. Food systems
21. Mary Donegan	6	Odd	Overhaul zoning and land use to promote dense development, lower cost of living for equitable community. Housing is cornerstone of all things sustainable.
22. Maura Beaudreault	?	Odd	Have more sustainability related programs at the library. Yellow pesticide signs to disappear.
23. Michael Byrne	2013	Odd	Town needs to share metrics around what town is doing. Energy usage, etc. Then can compare year to year
24. Michael Elfenbaum	18	Even	More usage of solar energy in town.
25. Natalie Mendes	25	Odd	Equity and inclusion; African/American history interest (state is introducing curriculum). Increase diversity in staffing in WHPS, and raise awakening
26. Preeti Dua	12	Even	School district to have greater interest in sustainability
27. Rachael B. Virgin	21	Odd	Homelessness
28. Ted Goerner	21	Even	Tree canopy; preserve, restore and increase the tree canopy
29. Vanessa Borkowski	?	Even	Every resident to have a Compost bin
30. Steve Sack for Clean Energy	Longtime	Even	Cost effective approaches to GHG reductions, and have town push to state level.
31. Matt Macunas for Cons Env't	10	Even	Clean energy
32. Erin Conneely for Persons w/ Disabilities	Absent		
33. Denisse Gutierrez For Ped Bike	4	Even	Homelessness