



WEST HARTFORD SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Room 400

August 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

MEETING MINTUES

Attendees:

Catherine, Katherine, Kathy, Kathleen, Rachel, Ed, Dan M, Hendree, Luciana, Dan B, Henry Kevin N, Johannes, Julia, Natalie M, Chris F, Mary, Michael E. Heidi, Priti, John, Ted, ?

Ed calls the meeting to order at 6:37 PM on August 4

Agenda overview

1. SAG Wishes Letter

Discussion of Draft Graphic (attached) - BIG Thank you to RACHEL!

- Tallest building associates with the most enthusiasm to start, and moves from left to right
- Rachel and her husband created a visual infographic
- Move Climate Emergency under Clean Energy
- Change Clean Energy to Energy
- Change Alternative Transportation to Transportation or Multi-Modal Transportation
- Preference for descriptions for the items underneath
- Think about lining up with the discussion for later
- Does Dense Development belong in Housing? Yes
- Could Housing Move Out of that Prioritization into a higher prioritization
- Homelessness and Housing?
- Could it actually be a table? Or a circle with colors?
- Could you ask an asterisk
- Or someone else could volunteer to help Rachel, given that she and her husband put it together
- Could it be a web of lines with one set on the left and the matches to the right
- Should we add a number, or a footnote with the explanation, priority moves from left to right; make a little note? Do we not want to weight them?
- Could we just list them in alphabetical order, then add some boxes

- It was articulated that perhaps it would lose the value of selecting priority over another given that it could be confusing to the Council
- We don't want Council to get lost in the infographic
- It's a long list, and it's hard to understand what we want, and it looks like it's a directive
- During our next conversation, we'll explain that we'll boil it down for the next phase
- In the letter, could the ask be at the top just in case the Council members don't read the letter?
- Could the town get distracted by our selected headers which could redirect us away from equity and inclusion? Could they say they'd rather have us focus on other things - no the purpose is that we can tell them what's important to us.

Next steps for the wishes letter and graphic:

- Some changes to the headings; Rachel will make some small tweaks
- List the headers in the letter
- Work on the language in the letter, and the wishes are connected in the letter and make it clear that this is NOT our final deliverable but just a starting point, which we anticipate will evolve
- Don't spend too much time weighting or categorizing things
- Current as of August 2021, categorization is subject to change
- Catherine and Rachel will take the next step and send the letter shortly
- The letter will not be an agenda item for Town Council, but when we present our final results, it likely will be presented to Town Council, and at the very least a subcommittee first and then elevated as necessary
- It will be emailed to the Town Council and some of us should volunteer to go live to the Town Council meeting.
 - Rachel and Julia have offered to go live

2. Sustainable CT Application Status

- Due August 24, 2021
- We are tracking 570 points, 37 big actions
- We are 50% done
- Silver is 400 points, we're shooting for more
- Our 12 actions are worth 165 points
- Almost everyone has sent in their actions!!! We're doing great.
- Catherine says thank you to all of us
- Catherine mentions that we will move forward and we do not need Town Council approval for this

3. Sustainable CT Action Updates – Have you submitted everything to Catherine?

- Provide Word Docs if you have not
- Catherine is going to read through her email submissions because she knows there are some submissions she hasn't gotten to yet

4. Phase 2 Discussion

Framework for Phase 2

- Output recommendation
 - Gap Analysis
 - Recommendations / Prioritization
- Lindsey has offered to be the master editor
 - Others will be asked to write, she will make it into one voice
- Recommendations to also include:
 - Recommendation on the Commissions
 - Suggestions for who is responsible for their delivery
 - Prioritized actions for 3 year plan
- Question to consider: do we want to align with Sustainable CT actions?
- Gap Analysis between where we want to be and where we are?
 - We will need to figure out where we want to be
- Gap Analysis to Cover
 - Resource Management
 - Energy
 - Water
 - Land / Landscaping
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Waste Management
- Groups to be organized into these subgroups - if we like these subgroups
- Each would also have the lens of Equity and Access, Climate, Innovation
- POCD is the Plan for Conservation and Development
 - <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/planning-zoning/plan-of-conservation-development>
 - Town used 4 Guiding Lenses: Sustainability, Connectivity, Innovation and Equity
 - Feedback from Catherine - does like the idea of mirroring some alignment for the town
 - The Town did have an issue with the word Climate, so they used sustainability

Feedback from the SAG:

- Good to connect to a document the town is already familiar with
- Nice cross cutting approach, likes the categories
- Our report should look at Equity and Access, Climate, Innovation
- Could we add it to Labor / Economic Development / Poverty Alleviation / Process (or Operating Model)? People, Process, Technology comprise an Operating Model
- Love plans and documents, will we constrain ourselves from having a larger discussion of a normative vision for the town?
- Would we limit our own vision? Before we say these categories and these lenses, we should have a conversation about where we want to go, and center the process of

decision making and agenda setting. We need to have a discussion about what do we want the town to be like

- When we had the first meeting of saying the one wish, are we already tightening ourselves down
- Brainstorming could
- It doesn't have to be a report with recommendations... but we want the town council to attend an event that has them participate in an active session to engage with residents and leave with an understand of the priorities
- Broaden the final exercise
- Reaction to the timeline:
 - Could we have a report, present it to council and then
 - If we want to get diverse voices it might be a little short, although our commission is the set of diverse voices?
 - Could we make the timeline a little longer... we could make the deadline longer if we want to
 - Half of the team felt it was too ambition
- Gap Analysis what is that process?
 - Still to be determined
- Could we use the Sustainable CT as our guiding concept?
 - It's missing Public Safety
 - Mental Health and Wellness
- On the first day we shared our wishes, and then the gap what was we did last time
 - Maybe we don't do the graphic at all? (Rachel offered this)
 - Maybe we're not ready to produce something yet?
- This activity was a strawman to attempt to put our thoughts together so that we would come to
- What is our deliverable to the town?
- Could we do the micro? What 2-3 things can the town actually get traction on?
- We could have a long term vision of what we want and a short term and near term and prioritize that way?
- Present an overall vision of sustainability to the town council, and here are the resources to get 2-3 things done quickly?
 - Gap analysis has a scope and not everything
 - 5 things to attain and makes it more practical and attainable
 - Then the graphic is a vision and the report is the granular perhaps
- Quick wins
- What we want in an ideal world, and here are some steps to take right away
- The actions that have the most overlaps are the ones that give you the highest impact
- Could we rank by impact? And priority? And accessible to the town?
- Would help to whittle down the vision
- We could do a heat map
- Short and long term could have a mix of the approach
- Do we need a re-envisioning session?
- Lots of aspirations

- We need to do the exercise to to calibrate
- Voice of the Community
 - Impact
 - What does the community want?
- Brainstorm, Organize, Plan, this is our going in position and then use the impact analysis to create a heat map to figure out what we want to look at it
- Take for instance 60 subjects, and then pick 10 subjects
- Articulate a grander vision that would also be necessary and helpful
- Vision of what we want for West Hartford
- Heatmapping brings the practicality to the action steps and match it with the vision to guide
- Establish the vision
- Do one meeting
- Should it be a document we have prepped before the meeting?
- What are the parameters for
- Likes the Sustainable C 13-14 categories
- If we make a Miro board and do this beforehand
- We could focus on the thing the Town is required to do by law
 - Identify those things that the town is falling short
 - Perhaps that would go into the gap analysis i.e. complete streets, GHG management, recycling targets
 - Don't want to overlook or toss out the laws from the brainstorming exercise because we have to make sure we comply with them
- Long term vision includes us meeting the legal requirements
- People cut corners; communities who are forced to comply with the law
- What if the Town had to submit an Annual Report on Emissions, it's a statement of deficiency? Publicly gets it out that we're falling short
- Mandated and voluntary reporting are different. Does West Hartford need a different group?
- Catherine asked again if we want the town to come in as guests.
 - It was recommended that someone takes up the first 30 minutes
 - Homelessness
 - Law expert of what we have to comply with
- Groundtruth our recommendations with a wider set of residents of West Hartford? Yes, we can

5. Next Steps

- Visioning exercise
- Gap Analysis - where is West Hartford falling short exercise
 - Use the suggestions from the meeting notes last time so we don't start from scratch when it comes to finding out what gaps we already see
- Catherine will present town priorities and maybe Matt Hart will present them to us live
- How do we manage success? Will be determined next time?
- Step 1: Vision Aug 25, Catherine will find a room

- Step 2: Priorities Sep 22
- Priti will help with prioritization and will help Julia to manage and facilitate the next meeting

6. Round Table - Q&A, Comments, Announcements (covered above)

Next Meeting is Aug 25 @ 6:30 PM and then Sep 22, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM

"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."