



WEST HARTFORD SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

June 30, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

The third meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Group was conducted as a virtual public meeting. A recording of the meeting is available on West Hartford Community Interactive: YouTube and www.whctv.org. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1W8SPlu5Ok>

MEETING MINUTES

1. Roll Call
 - a. Ed Perzenowski -Meeting Facilitator; Julia Farber - Minutes
 - b. In attendance (20)
 - i. Mary Donegan, Catherine Diviney, Kevin Nguyen, Christine Feely, Dan Becerra, Denisse Gutierrez, Grace Furia, Heidi Green, Johannes Evelein, Jonathan Humphrey, Kathye Cipes, Kim Hughes, Luciana Grandstrand, Michael Elfenbaum, Ted Newton, Vanessa Borkowski, Julia Farber, Erin Conneely, Rachel Virgin
2. SAG Wishes Letter
 - a. Ed shared the draft letter with the full group
 - b. Links to the draft are in the presentation, which will be available to the broader team
 - c. Wish list was shared during the last meeting
 - d. Would like to turn the wishes into a summary or visual graphic; Rachel and Kathye offered to work on that, would like to incorporate into the letter ideally
 - e. Edit the Wishes by July 2, so it can be delivered to Town Council by July 13
 - f. Any questions – please direct to Catherine if you can't access the document.
3. Sustainable CT Action Updates
 - a. 1.3 Equity Statement – Heidi and Natalie are working on this. Meeting tomorrow to create a course of action
 - b. 3.12 Pollinators – Kim shared that they have 2 projects, and feel connected with important parties in town. Will be connecting shortly

- c. 6.1 Complete Streets – Johannes and Ed met last week. Kathleen is also engaged. Looking at ranking on Leagues of Cyclists; also looking into different projects implemented across town. Town has kept good records about its achievements because Complete Streets is a CT law.
 - d. 7.3 Achieve High Performance for buildings – Downloaded LEED Docs from 2017. Need to chat with Fellows to find out if there are any time limits on this one. Project was certified in 2017. Has not recertified; could be a recommendation to do so in the future separately.
 - e. 7.5 Energy Plan – Town Council adopted the new Energy Plan on June 22. Will go through the plan to figure out opportunities to expand. Worksheet needs to be completed.
 - f. 8.1 Sustainability Event – Christine Feely, Michael, there are numerous events that are in progress or just seeking a collection of previous events hosted on this topic. Coordinating
 - g. 8.3 Training municipal reps- Ted Newton, on Conservation Commission. Spoke to Catherine and appears we just need one more Commissioner to attend one more training to get us to the 10 points. Ted has offered to do it. One more Commissioner has already completed it. Denisse also mentioned that she knows other Commissioners have attended additional training and she attended one as well. Erin Conneely the disability commission have also completed training to be submitted. Bernie, Erin, Denisse, and Ted, to take a look at board and commissions, email them all, and see about all of the trainings.
 - h. 9.1 Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste – Dan reported to Katherine. Starting data collection just now. Do have access to the data necessary. Will have an update soon.
 - i. 9.4 Food Waste – Kathye Cipes spoke to Blue Earth Composting. Kathye to connect after call. No city sponsored program for food waste management, however there is a restaurant food recovery program to share with the community for unused food. Katherine Bruns is evaluating the creation of a program even though that won't be ready before August. Perhaps we want to do an awareness raising event. Blue Earth will help make event zero food waste. Need to clarify if residential pilot qualifies and also collecting food waste from kitchens for biopower.
 - j. 10.4 Community Growing Spaces – Starting to develop a plan. Team is meeting soon. Will be straight forward to solve
 - k. 11.3 Priority Sustainable, Diverse Housing – Initial action was completed by the Town. Just need to confirm with Sustainable CT Fellows aligns.
 - l. 12.2 Strengthen Municipal Workforce Capacity to Address Homelessness – Just got in touch and will start working on it soon. Catherine was a little delayed in sharing information. Catherine said they need to talk to social services managers.
4. Next Steps
- a. Keep working on actions
 - b. Review Sustainable CT and take a look at other town's submissions
 - c. Connect with Sustainable CT Fellows: Thomas / Sean

- d. Focus on action for now, but think about ways that the town can improve or action related to the actions
 - e. Next Meetings: July 21 and August 4 at 6:30 PM LIVE at Town Hall in a large conference room
 - i. May be a virtual option
 - ii. Corporation council is making the decision about Live Meetings very shortly
 - iii. Julia to lead next meeting. Ed to take notes.
5. Round Table - Q&A, comments, announcements?
- a. Kim Hughes: Can we do a Land Acknowledgement? Meaning that we start a meeting with a gratitude to the indigenous peoples of the land. Kim will send through some links. Perhaps we even want to ask the Town to do it for all Town meetings?
 - b. Chris – Where do the Diversity Actions live? Equity Sections? Cross cutting. More complicated to write up. Catherine did not assign those to anyone on this group. If we're interested in helping write up the others, Catherine can include us.
 - c. Catherine will have a list of extra Actions she's been working on and allow us to opt into supporting on beyond those that are assigned
 - d. EV event – Happened on June 20, 2021, was on Father's Day. Wasn't well attended, but it was attended. Was there e-Bikes there? E-Scooters? E-Buses? Should this be an E-Transit event? E-Lawnmowers? E-Everything!
 - i. Would also address silence corridors?
 - ii. Create incentives to natural-scaping, create more silent sanctuaries
 - e. Juneteenth Celebration- Could we count that? We have beautiful mural and the art for decorating the downtown
 - f. Rachael – Was thinking about how we're working on resiliency ahead of heat waves, and other climate challenges. Are there formal programs we can think about? Emergency preparedness and resiliency? Could we tie it to a disaster preparedness event?
 - i. Town has the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT); how can we get more folks to get engaged. This is our first responder community maintains a list of possible contacts who need help;
 - ii. Town went through a Nature Conservancy workshop on town resilience and climate forward planning. Report was just finalized with some action items
 - iii. West Hartford has also been engaged in the regional work
 - iv. Luciana points out perhaps we could recommend that the town create a future events and resiliency, in a formal Climate Change Plan? Others agree.
 - v. Some municipalities have been asked to consider the climate to ensure each decision is considered, pointed out by Mary
 - vi. There are some silos created by the town, about how housing, the economy,

waste, food, schools, energy use are divided; it's hard to ignore them when was connected. Would love to see normal governance connecting sustainability to all the pieces. (here, here!)

- vii. Remember to go into the wish list items because it could be a catalyst to start to make those connections.
- g. Catherine urges us to think about the different boards and commissions; is that serving the right functions or should there be a restructuring that takes place? Should there be joint meetings? When the town council is reviewing policies should there be additional sets of questions or reviews that need to happen that capture those cross cutting ideas
 - i. Could this be a commission or the solution in the future?
- h. Note: Great conversation - Harness productive friction (Mary) to get to solution for the town
- i. Catherine will connect with Ted Newton and Conservation and Environment Commission, Town Manager would like this Commission to research policies to ban the gas leaf blowers!
- j. Let's do pronouns! Make sure to change on future WebEx or in person
- k. If anyone is involved in a group that wants to work on TCI contact Mary Donegan. Mary's contact is mary.donegan@uconn.edu
- l. Upcoming events:
 - i. Rachael hosts a Gifford Rd parade for kids in the morning for Fourth of July; it's only for Gifford Rd but it's really cute
 - ii. Fourth of July is on Monday

"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."