



**CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION  
Virtual Meeting**

**March 30, 2022 at 7:00 PM**

This meeting of the Clean Energy Commission was conducted as a virtual meeting.

A recording of the meeting is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyYXroPnsYg>

**AGENDA**

1. Meeting Opening – Call to order
  - Roll Call – *Commissioners; Bernie Pelletier, Max DuBuisson, Joe Campanella, Stephen Sack, Dave Mello, Catherine Diviney (joined late) Public: Mason Capone (Student, Conard HS), Christine Feely, Michael Dawson (member Avon Clean Energy Committee)*
  - Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2022 - *approved*
  - Youth representatives – *great to have youth representation - Mason - join tonight!*
  
2. Old Business
  - HeatSmart – *Bernie and Chris Feely gave update on efforts with our ongoing 2022 HES energy efficiency and heat pump education campaign. 113 residents expressed interest to-date. Great group of volunteers working on events including.*
    - *Apr 24 - Earth Day event – various vendors and activities and games at 100 Mayflower. Will include the Energize CT mobile bus.*
    - *June 11 & 12 – Celebrate WH – will include the EnergizeCT mobile unit.*
    - *WH Social Services assisted by including about 400 HeatSmart flyers in mailer*
  - SAG Presentation – March 3, 2022 - <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/government-services/boards-commissions/sustainability-advisory-group>
    - Commission/Organizational Structure – joint meeting
    - *Bernie explained that based on the work of SAG – the Town has initiated a process involving Clean Energy, Ped Bike, and Cons & Env't Commission in looking at potential revisions to commission organization and scope to enhance their effectiveness. Clean Energy and Ped Bike, in particular, should be established by ordinance not by resolution. Presents a good opportunity to think about what commission does (e.g., provide expertise, implement campaigns, outreach, etc.) Bernie will be attending a meeting on Friday morning with Town Manager. Steve emphasized need to coordinate between commissions – communication and gaps.*
  - Business Education with Chamber & Econ Dev – TBD. *Steve initiated idea of biz webinar, joint with Town Econ Dev and Chamber. Environmental System Corp (local WH-based) will present. Commission members could attend – biz association meeting are not closed to public. Joe emphasized need to present good case studies - either new ones from ESC's or old ones Joe had if program information not outdated – to show economic argument. There was some discussion of owners vs tenants. Catherine and Kristen Gorski (Town Econ Dev) are working on confirming speakers and promotional materials. Date moved to late April/May.*
  - Ground Mount Solar – *no additional progress, have not met with Planning again.*

- SolSmart – *Town has submitted a letter and will be participating in this municipal technical assistance program offered thru Sustainable CT/USDOE. Kick off meeting tomorrow. Intent is to assess baseline and look at Bronze level certification. Avon is also looking at this.*
- Solar Workshop – WH Library – April 19. *Catherine/Bernie trying to confirm date with Eversource speaker and/or installer, resident then flesh out program content.*
- Elementary School Air-Quality Projects (9 schools, CIP - \$3M per year, 15 yrs)
  - *Duffy, Web Hill – interviews are complete and 2 separate architect/engineering firms will be hired to complete this projects in summer 2023. Focused on HVAC/Fresh Air ventilation and windows.*
  - *Additional funding? – Consensus in interviews was that funding committed to these projects is low. If town receives additional federal funding, Town may be able to get some traction to allocate additional funds, but this is all TBD.*
  - *Joe asked about LEED or other qualifications for firms selected. Catherine indicated there were no specific certification for the firms, but the RFP did include language around energy efficiency and long-range strategies (exact wording in last month's minutes).*
- New Elmwood CC – *Joe is the Commission representative for the building committee. Catherine will check on when this committee will start meeting. Need to get the conversation about net zero started early.*

### 3. New Business

- EV/EVSE
  - *CMAQ (CTDOT, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) grant in paper - \$20,952 Catherine indicated that the Town was awarded a grant, but it has been over a year since the application and they need to discuss internally how to proceed, since some things have shifted – including available of vehicles, and town's overall approach to EVSE (EV supply equipment/charging)*
  - *Municipal planning in general – Dept of Public Works will be taking lead on EV charging stations throughout town. Eversource indicated that the funding is not likely to run out this year, since it is a 9 year program.*
- *Avon/CT River Valley Energy Fair – May 14 – Avon's Clean Energy Commission has turned over recently (Carrie Firestone, chair) and is looking to ramp up and work with neighbors. Michael Dawson indicated he is here to learn and work together – maybe cross promote events - Energy fair and HeatSmart/Earth day, etc.*

### 4. Staff Report

- *Energy Update/Budget – no written update. Energy use is up, natural gas prices were up – maybe over budget this year, but Utility Service Fund, helps protect Town from fluctuations year to year. Bernie indicated general feeling that energy prices are not coming down soon.*

### 5. Public Comment

- *Joe wondered if we could ask Cons & Env't commission if they would look at methane gas leaks, which represent about 20% of GHG emissions. Ethical issue with gas companies but could be very cost effective.*
- *Michael from Avon asked about West Hartford's use of ARPA funds. Catherine indicated that majority of those funds were not allocated to energy projects. \$300K to EVSE/charging infrastructure, there is some new construction (Eisenhower Pool) but significant amount going to local economic support (there was an article in patch outlining how funds will be spent).*

- *Mason shared information about what Conard Enviro Club is working on (earth day projects – trees, decorating schools, Instagram facts, community group) and expressed interest in having speakers.*
- *Christine expressed desire for April 19<sup>th</sup> solar presentation to focus on nuts and bolts of how to go solar from a residents perspective – what they need to do and how to do it, including helping residents understand options for financing solar and how to choose.*
- *Dave suggested Avon might be interested in WHPS food waste diversion programs (Christine mentioned Greenwich has a pilot too). Catherine offered to connect them with Katherine Bruns – WH Recycling Coordinator.*
- *Joe wanted to make sure Conard Enviro Club was aware of April 24<sup>th</sup> Earth day event and encouraged them to come and even volunteer. Christine said she will get sign-up to their advisor.*
- *Joe encouraged Avon to start with easy quick wins. There was some discussion of LED street lights and ownership.*
- *Catherine offered to give presentation to Conard Enviro Club.*
- *Bernie shared current data on rapidly increasing methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) concentrations in atmosphere.*

## 6. Adjournment

"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."