

**CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022, 7:00 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING**

VIRTUAL MEETING INSTRUCTIONS:

The meeting will be conducted exclusively as virtual meeting. Commission members and members of the public who wish to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting may use the following entry information:

Join from the meeting link

<https://westhartfordcommunitytelevision.my.webex.com/westhartfordcommunitytelevision.my/j.php?MTID=m5b9b976bf1315922137a7f140e728e49>

Join by meeting number

Meeting number (access code): 2559 631 3494

Meeting password: tMHjmXP235B (86456972 from phones and video systems)

Join by phone

+1-650-479-3208 United States Toll

+1-646-992-2010 United States Toll (New York City)

1. Call to Order and Attendance
 - a. Briefly introduce Roszena Haskins, Town Executive Director of Equity Advancement
2. Public Comment Opportunity
3. Old Business
 - a. Approval of minutes from September.
 - b. Approval of amended minutes from June and July (amended to acknowledge C. Feely public comments).
 - c. Guest: Catherine Diviney. Discussion of opportunities for coordination and/or combination with other town commissions. Update on discussions held by our sister Commissions. Discussion of options for organization of efforts by CEC and/or super-Commission, using Bloomington, MN and past CEC activities as examples.
 - o See resources for further reading below for ideas that can be drawn from other towns or organizations.

- Vote on desired course for CEC (i.e., combine with one or more groups or stay separate)
 - d. Discussion of C. Feely proposals regarding municipal land management.
- 4. New Business
 - Joint Letter to support ARPA “sustainability projects” (draft letter to follow after Clean Energy Commission meeting)
 - Introduction of topical areas for further study/discussion:
 - Waste, especially food waste.
 - Composting.
 - Water resources.
 - Others?
- 5. Adjournment

Resources for Further Reading

What Conservation Commissions in other towns working on: <https://sustainablect.org/actions-certifications/actions>

Pollinator Pathways: <https://www.pollinator-pathway.org>

Other helpful resources/links:

<https://www.savethesound.org>

<https://www.ctaudubon.org>

<https://ctconservation.org>

<https://ctland.org>

<https://www.rockfallfoundation.org>

<https://frwa.org>

**CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022 - AMENDED
IN PERSON MEETING**

1. Call to Order and Attendance
 - Call to Order at 7:03 pm
 - Present: Emilee Mooney Scott (chairperson), Ted Newton, Kim Hughes, Rick Bush, and Jim Fishman
2. Old Business
 - Christine Feely offered public comments on encouraging the use of electric lawn equipment and ideas for more sustainable landscape maintenance.
 - Tabled approval of minutes to forthcoming meeting.
3. New Business
 - Joint discussion including the Conservation and Environment Commission, Clean Energy Commission and Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission regarding coordination of efforts of the three commissions, facilitated by Catherine Diviney.
4. Adjournment
 - Chairperson Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Rick Bush seconded.

**CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - AMENDED
MONDAY, JULY 25, 2022
IN PERSON MEETING**

1. Call to Order and Attendance
 - Call to Order at 7:11 pm
 - Present: Emilee Mooney Scott (chairperson), Ted Newton, Kim Hughes, Jim Fishman and Shawn Daly (by phone). Rick Bush joined after the meeting was called to order.
2. Old Business
 - Christine Feely offered a written proposal for the town to reduce energy use and foster native plants and pollinators by converting municipal grassy areas with native trees, bushes and flowers. Ms. Feely's comments also included recommendations for encouraging use of electric lawn equipment.
 - Tabled approval of minutes to forthcoming meeting.
3. New Business
 - Joint discussion including the Conservation and Environment Commission, Clean Energy Commission and Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission regarding coordination of efforts of the three commissions, facilitated by Catherine Diviney.
4. Adjournment
 - Chairperson Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Rick Bush seconded.

Comment to Conservation and Environment Commission – July 27, 2022
Christine Feely

In recent discussions about the commission's role and potential actions, one or more commissioners recommended asking Town residents to bring potential environmental projects to the commission for adoption. Therefore, I am submitting this proposal as public comment at the July 25, 2022 commission meeting. I am submitting this proposal in written form instead of as oral comments so as not to use the time devoted to the joint commissions meeting. I hope that the Conservation and Environment Commission will soon have another regular meeting; many concerns and potential projects need to be addressed.

I propose that the commission commit to the following actions and, with the input of interested residents, immediately start work on a full plan to implement them: 1) reduce energy use for mowing municipal grassy areas by replacing those areas wherever possible with environmentally sound uses, specifically native trees, bushes, and flowers; and 2) use the converted areas as models for residents to replace parts of their own property in the same manner.

This proposal is consistent with a commission recommendation passed at the February 2022 meeting that the Town of West Hartford adopt a resolution identifying the benefits of switching from combustion-powered landscape maintenance equipment to battery-powered equipment and, with community input and engagement, phase out the use of combustion-powered equipment over time as quickly as practicable, and to encourage residents to do the same.

Accordingly, the commission recommended the creation of a working group composed of members of the Clean Energy Commission, the Conservation and Environment Commission, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission, the Sustainability Advisory Group, and other stakeholders, including youth. The working group would develop strategies for phasing out combustion-powered lawn equipment use and for the creation of a public education campaign. The working group may also make recommendations regarding the establishment of a "swap fund" to incent consumer changeovers to non-emitting landscape equipment.

Note: If the February meeting minutes can be amended, the recommendation should be added to the minutes, so that residents can have full information about the commission's actions.

The status of the commission's recommendation is unclear to me, but assuming that the Town Council accepts the recommendation or a version of it soon, this

proposal suggests an additional component to the overall effort to phase out combustion-powered equipment. Replacing grassy areas would be an appropriate conservation action, because it would reduce mowing needs and overall energy output. At the same time, planting trees, bushes, and flowers is an important environmental action because they will improve the soil and remove more carbon dioxide from the air compared with grass.

These converted areas would attract pollinators, which the commission has discussed, as well as birds and other animals. Some current pollinator gardens could possibly be enlarged to include a wider variety of plants. Many native trees, bushes, and flowers are appropriate and available in Connecticut, and many expert resources are available, including the UConn Extension services and the Connecticut Horticultural Society. As stated above, converting the spaces could serve as models for residents to convert grassy areas through engaging neighbors in planning and having educational sessions. Because only organic pesticides and no herbicides would be used, these spaces could also help residents learn the best ways to phase out their use of treatments that are harmful to humans, pets, and wildlife.

Potential areas for replacing grass could be identified using a map of properties that are mowed or otherwise maintained by the town and then evaluated for feasibility. Some places may be particularly good starting points for this concept by virtue of their visibility in a neighborhood and because the grassy area clearly doesn't have other uses.

In conclusion, I urge the commission to consider this proposal and start discussions of how to execute it. I look forward to working with you on this project.

Thank you.

**CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2022
VIRTUAL MEETING**

1. Call to Order and Attendance

- Call to Order at 6:04 pm
- Present: Emilee Mooney Scott (chairperson), Ted Newton, Kim Hughes, Jim Fishman, Emily Sexton and Shawn Daly. Rick Bush joined after the meeting was called to order.

2. Public Comments

- Nathaniel Goldschmidt (Hall High School) introduced himself as a student interested in participating in CEC activities. While CEC does not have a student representative slot we can discuss such an option further and value student participation.
- Christine Feely drew the CEC's attention back to her written comments submitted at the July meeting and offered further comments on municipal land management and native plantings.

3. Old Business

- Approval of June 2022 minutes (Sexton and Daly abstain, others in favor)
- Approval of July 2022 minutes (Sexton abstains, others in favor)
- Continuing discussion of opportunities for coordination with the Clean Energy Commission and Bike Ped Commission.
 - Overview of meetings held in June and July with sister commissions, reaction of commissioners to topics discussed at June and July meetings.
 - Discussion of past efforts examining wetlands matters before applications go before Town Planning and Zoning.
 - Brainstorming of additional ideas for CEC activities, including water resources, stormwater, drought mitigation, composting, landscaping regulations (e.g., height limits).
 - Shawn Daly offered thoughts on potential structured brainstorming session.

4. Adjournment

- Chairperson Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Rick Bush seconded.

Comment – September 6, 2022

As a follow up to the proposal I submitted to the commission on August 29, I'm submitting the titles in the chat as resources about replacing selected municipal grassy areas with environmentally sound uses, specifically native trees, bushes, and flowers, and using the converted areas as models for residents to replace parts of their own property in the same manner. This project is expected to involve the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Public Works, Facilities, and Sustainability Committee of the Town Council, and potentially other groups and town departments. This list below is a small fraction of the information available. I recommend that you read the articles and watch the video. The book is available through the West Hartford library. As the conversation and planning for this action goes forward, other resources can be used.

“Yes, You Can Do Better Than the Great American Lawn.” Margaret Roach, New York Times, June 15, 2022.

“Kill Your Lawn Before It Kills You.” Video opinion, Agnes Walton and Kirby Ferguson, New York Times, August 9, 2022.

“The Rise – and Beauty – of Native Plants.” Chris Moody, Washington Post, April 4, 2022.

“How to Create a Meadow,” Heather McCargo,
<https://wildseedproject.net/2022/03/return-of-the-meadow/>

Lawns to Meadows: Growing a regenerative landscape. Owen Wormser, illustrated by Kristen Thompson. Stone Pier Press. 2020.

“9 Native, Fruit-Producing Trees of North America,” Jonathon Engels
<https://www.onegreenplanet.org/lifestyle/9-native-fruit-producing-trees-of-north-america/>

Second comment: Sunday, September 25, an electric event will be held as part of National Drive Electric Week. This event was mentioned in the July joint meeting, and the C & E Commission was invited to participate. There will be another planning meeting this Thursday, September 8.

RECEIVED SEP 9 1973

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

A meeting of the Conservation and Environment Commission was held on Monday, June 18, 1973 in Room 104, at 8 p.m. in Town Hall.

Commissioners

Present: Chairman Marsh, Philip Hall, Wendell Stephenson, Natalie Lewis, William Hagan, Walter Morrison, Joyce Burgess, Marvin Ruzansky.

Commissioners

Absent: Dyke Spear, Jonathan von Ranson, Isabel Peterson

Guest: Richard Shaffer, Sup. of Cemeteries and Tree Warden

The minutes of the May 21, 1972 meeting were unanimously approved.

ITEM 1

Chairman Marsh had received a letter of resignation from Jonathan von Ranson, dated May 23, 1973.

ITEM 2

Mr. Shaffer recapped his memo to Mrs. Marsh regarding a tree planting program for West Hartford. Highlights are as follows:

1. A brochure could be prepared by Parks and Recreation Dept. listing types of trees, shapes and height along with other pertinent data. It should also indicate that this is part of the beautification program for West Hartford to encourage residents to participate.
2. There is definitely a possibility of joint purchasing with other towns of planting stock.
3. Price per tree would vary, according to the order, would average approximately \$12 per tree.
4. Mr. Shaffer feels this is a program the Commission should initiate.

Discussion: Some Commissioners felt we should only purchase trees through town nurseries as a public relations idea. We have received a verbal commitment from the Long River Council to assist in planting, however we would not guarantee the life of the trees. We would request the bids specify quotes for different quantities.

MOTION - proposed by Commissioner Hall, seconded and passed

That, we embark upon a tree planting program recommended by Mr. Shaffer on a one year pilot basis.

The details of the program will be worked out before September, with a promotion in October and bids and orders in November.

ITEM 3

The Commissioners agreed to meet the first week in September and not on the 17th as originally scheduled.

ITEM 4

Ford Foundation Grants: The grants are renewable on a yearly basis, and this will be pursued at a future time. We might want to consider printing an open space brochure in line with recommendations proposed by Mr. von Ranson.

ITEM 5

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board shares the same concern with our group. We received information from Corporation Counsel in the form of an ordinance scheduled for hearing on June 26, 1973. If the enforcement is built in, Commissioner Marsh will appear at the hearing to support this ordinance. If it is tabled for clarification of language, Commissioner Burgess will appear at a later date.

ITEM 6

Brace Road Parking: Information received by Chairman Marsh indicates a joint meeting is suggested for August.

ITEM 7

TARS tree planting program - Mrs. Burgess will continue to follow-up on this program.

ITEM 8

Two August subcommittee meetings: (1) the five-point program to be worked into a preliminary type form - set up for a public hearing.
(2) Tree planting program - send out proposals early in September.

ITEM 9

Special account for receipt of monetary gifts: The Commission agreed to request a special account be set up to receive funds for the Commission to be used as it directs. The recording secretary was requested to send a letter to Mr. Russo in this regard.

ITEM 10

Linear Parks - After the state completes a flood control project, the municipality takes over the maintenance - (southend of town). A legal problem in negotiating with the state exists, and town's corporation counsel will assist.

ITEM 11

Proposal to limit the intensity of sound producing devices:

MOTION - proposed by Commissioner Hall.

THAT we set some limits on sound producing devices and forward to Corporation Counsel and offer our assistance to write up something more scientific.

ITEM 11 (Cont.)

The Commission will request a copy of the ordinance recently passed by the Town of Fullerton, California.

ITEM 12

Mr. Stephenson discussed the earthen berm experiment as a result of a meeting he attended. Presumably, the state will proceed on this experiment.

ITEM 13

Proposed Plan of Development - Chairman Marsh reviewed in detail the 45 proposed changes and spoke on the impact of various ones. It was agreed upon that Mrs. Marsh speak at the public hearing with respect to change #36 Old Gerth Property, and if feasible, we would request that every attempt be made to include this under cluster development.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Patricia Corcoran
Recording Secretary

Town Clerk

CONSERVATION &
ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Chairman
Lydia B. Varga
Vice-Chairman
Alan M. Levere

February 16, 1993

A regular meeting of the Conservation and Environment Commission was held February 16, 1993 in Room 110 of the Town Hall.

AGENDA:

Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M. by Chairman Lydia Varga.

Members present were Lydia Varga, Margot Callahan, Alan Levere, Kathleen O'Reilly, Brian Toal and David Knishkowsky. Also in attendance were Ken Garrahan, Park Naturalist, Homer Scott, Earl Johnson and Lillian Gittings, Recording Secretary.

On a motion by Toal/O'Reilly the minutes were accepted.

Item 2. The Arlen Way IWW application has been withdrawn.

Item 3. The Hartford County Soil & Water Request was discussed. They requested \$1,700 from West Hartford for 1994. It was found that they are useful in organizing workshops and in doing on-site inspections. A motion was made by Toal and seconded by Callahan to respond positively to this request. Alan Levere will draft a letter concerning this request.

Item 4. West Hartford has not received a formal application from Farmington about the Westfarms application. The Farmington and West Hartford Councils have met to discuss common issues. There will be a Farmington public discussion to discuss the proposed closing of South Road.

A survey of Rockledge Brook from the Mall down to Sedgwick Road, including flyovers, is being conducted.



TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD TOWN HALL COMMON
WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06107
523-3123

Item 5. Renovations are being done at the Hunter House. Within a month the house will be resided, four windows will be replaced and other necessary work will be finished. The smaller adjoining house will be replaced, keeping many of the same features.

The total cost of all the work will be \$250,000. There will be a disposal fee of \$20,000 to \$30,000 depending on the method used in the removal of the house. Consideration of the lead paint will determine the way to remove the house because of environmental problems.

The barnyard drainage needs work to improve it.

Handicap trails and ground levels are being modified slightly in order to keep the water from rolling down and covering the trails. This should keep the gravel from washing down the hill and entering the pond.

Ken Garrahan would like to see a wheelchair dock built to enable the handicapped to participate in pondside activities. The cost of \$12,500 is estimated to improve the area for the handicapped at Westmoor.

Ralston Purina is sponsoring a "Dog Walk" at the park on April 3rd. The Fishing Derby will be April 24, Earth Day April 27. The Bird Walk which will start April 21 and continue every Wednesday for 7 weeks is open to the general public, with an enticement of bagels and coffee after the walk.

Ken Garrahan is the tree grant person. If anyone knows where trees are needed in town on town property in the general vicinity of electrical wires please contact him. He can help in deciding the type of tree to go in any specific area. Charter Oak needs trees as well as some school areas. The order for trees must be in by March 15th and Ken will do the paper work and help when needed.

Item 6. There has been no response to the Commission letter to the MDC regarding deterioration of trails used by bikes. Homer has the list of names necessary to contact concerning the bike trails.

Item 7. The Goals and Committees for 1993 are listed below:

Trees	Education
Electric Power	Open Space - nature areas
Recycling	Wetland/Water Shed
MDC liaison	Hazardous Waste/Toxic Waste
	What other towns are doing

Lydia Varga asked the Commissioners to think about these subjects and to pick one or two which they are interested in.

Alan Levere talked about septic tanks in the town. He would also like an inventory map of the wetlands in town.

The subjects that commissioners selected Feb. 16.

Brian Toal---Trees, Bike Trails, MDC & Trout Brook

Alan Levere---Westlands/Water Sheds inventories
and Education.

Kathleen O'Reilly---Education, recycling, pesticides.

Lydia Varga---Open Space/nature areas, Elizabeth Park.

David Knishkow---What other towns are doing.

Margot Callahan---Pesticides and Hazardous Waste.

Mark Levy---MDC liaison--not present to approve

Ken Garrahan---Open Space/nature areas, gardens and
Pesticides, also education.,

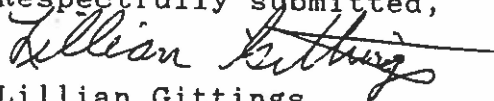
Commissioners will give reports on subjects selected
at next meeting. Reports should be in writing to give to Lydia so
they can be incorporated in the packet.

Item 8. Homer Scott brought in a letter about the salt and sand
situation that he sent to Andy Schatz, Physical Services Committee.
A good size sample of pure salt was given to the Chairman that was on
Red Top Drive and Foxridge Road. It was suggested that the
Commission ask the town about the type of salt and sand which is
being used on the roads. Perhaps all salt or all sand should be used
by the town truckers depending on location, since each has negative
aspects.

A discussion was held on question of Snow Days and the
possibility of cancelling the meetings. Meetings will be held unless
conditions are too bad for traveling. It would be necessary to post
a notice on Room 110 door, inform commissioners and any other known
interested persons. Lydia Varga, on behalf of the Commission gave
Homer Scott a beautiful cactus plant as a token of appreciation for
his 20 years of service to the CEC.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M. on a motion by
Levere/Knishkow .

Respectfully submitted,


Lillian Gittings,
Recording Secretary.