



SUSTAINABLE WEST HARTFORD COMMISSION

February 24, 2025
7:00 PM, Room 407, Town Hall

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
3. Administrative – vacancies, etc.
4. Communications & Community Comment (max 3 min each)
5. Ongoing Business
 - Student Rep Reports
 - Town Engagement
 - Discussion of priorities with Town Council liaison
 - [Earth Action Day](#), Earthday.org event with Town Council/Commission/Office of Equity
 - Resident Engagement
 - WHCi sessions
 - Workshop series (like last year's "Your Home is a Habitat")
 - Cool West Hartford
 - Working Group Reports - attached
 - Cool West Hartford
 - Waste
 - Nature-Based Solutions
 - Energy / Buildings
6. New Business
 - Land Trust Report
7. Staff Report
8. Calendar Updates – 2/26/25 W - Human & Community Svcs Cttee (New ECC), Rm 314 or WHCi; 4/22/25 Tu - Earth Day; 4/26/25 W - Film & Discussion: Cooked: Survival by Zip Code; 6/7 & 6/8/25 Sa & Su - Celebrate! West Hartford
9. Agenda for Next Meeting – 3/31/25
 - BOE/Schools Engagement
10. Adjournment

Anyone requiring auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact Suzanne Oslander, ADA Coordinator, at suzanneo@westhartfordct.gov or (860) 561-7580, as soon as possible, preferably seven days beforehand.

Cool West Hartford Working Group Report – to Sust WH Commission Mtg 2/24/25

Met 2/20/25, 6 pm, virtually

Attendees: Catherine, Kelly, Katherine, Dave, Johnathan, Pat

1. Discussed and agreed on general purpose for WG

The purpose of this Cool West Hartford Working Group of the Sustainable West Hartford Commission is to launch a collaborative community (residential/business?) climate ACTION-based campaign by June 7, 2025, in conjunction with Celebrate! West Hartford.

- The primary goal is to mobilize the West Hartford community to get involved and act on their own to address climate change.
- To accomplish this, we need to connect with people and drive them to information and resources/partners to act. We also want to provide a participatory campaign or gamification element to encourage/track/highlight action.
e.g., Provide a platform to: Learn. Collaborate. Act. Share.
- For now, this initiative will reside within Town's organizational structure with some level of oversight/approval by appropriate staff – website, newsletter, etc.

2. Discussed logistics, realistic expectations and limitations for initiative and working with Town.

- Topics included expertise/skills, limited volunteer and staff hours, WG meetings, WG shared drive, using Town technology (security/privacy), using content from other websites
- Was noted that Town has never done anything like this before, no complete set of guidelines, some things will evolve and need be addressed as we go.
- Was noted that this fills need, as many residents want to act and contact Town or Commission for info/help.

3. Gave overview of existing systems and processes that could be used

- Town Finals site website (IT)
- Town Constant Contact (PR) – there is ability to create subaccount for newsletter (e.g., Econ Dev)
- Town Calendar (PR) – for town events
- Social Media – Sust WH FB/IG, West Hartford Recycles, Town FB, IG, X
- Was noted that keeping track of logins and access will be important, especially if volunteers involved.

4. Talked about Next Steps

- Potentially use focus group to confirm “Cool West Hartford” name
- Set up conference call with Town IT & PR staff for additional questions on website & Constant Contact

- Create repository on WG shared drive for gathering/brainstorming lists
 - local resources/partners and contact info
 - priority topic areas/actions
 - good resources/content websites – e.g., Cool Boulder, Sustainable Westport, UN/ActNow, Project DrawDown
 - participatory “campaign” ideas – e.g., commitment videos/statements (Sust Westport), checklist or “scorecard” for residents (like Sust CT), Count to track total # actions (web/google form)
- Assignments for Commissioners and WGs
 - Weigh in on name “Cool West Hartford”
 - Send us your top priority areas and/or actions
 - Gather the names and correct contact information for your top partners/resources
 - Can send to sustainableweha@westhartfordct.gov
- Next mtg (tentative) 3/20/25

Catherine Diviney

Nature-based Solutions Working Group Report
Sustainable West Hartford Commission
Meeting date: 24 Feb, 2025

1. Cool West Hartford: Discussion of need to devote resources to creating content for Cool West Hartford and identify potential partners local, state and national.

Seeking a Calendar of Events where we can share information hosting by SWC or partners. This could also be a place where anyone who manages grounds could post pesticide spray times so people know to avoid.

2. Signage for Wolcott pollinator project and Planting Policy submitted to Leisure Serves (and Public Works for Planting Policy). Awaiting feedback.
3. Preparing for first Workshop - incorporating themes around Spring activities in outdoor spaces and how to take care of land spaces without synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.
 - a. Action: need to set a date
 - b. Connect with WHCi through Bernie
4. Next projects
 - a. How can we connect schools and town efforts around nature-based solutions?

Subject: Waste Working Group Report

The Waste Working Group met on February 20th to discuss four topics related to waste reduction:

1. Outreach to residents via WHCi. The WWG will be responsible for two or three one-hour sessions in 2025. A proposed first session would be a Q&A with Katherine Bruns and John Phillips on the topics such as:

- Why do we have a waste crisis in CT? And how can recycling help?
- What can and can't be recycled in the blue bin, and where can I find more info?
- Did you know that a lot of your plastic bags can be recycled?
- What's going on with textiles? We used to be able to recycle them....
- What about food scraps recycling?
- What is the WH Recycling Center, and what does it offer residents?

A second session would be a similar Q&A, but on the topic of "source reduction" – how to not create waste decisions in the first place (textiles, packaging, food, etc.), and examples of what residents can do.

2. Outreach to WH public schools

- Katherine visited a middle school to see if they can apply what they learned in elementary school around food scrap recycling. What can the Commission help this happen more often?
- Next year there is a CT requirement for large schools to divert their food scraps. Which schools will this apply to? Even if just a few (or none), does it make sense to apply it to all schools?

3. Waste reduction info, opportunities and services to be recommended to a working group that will be creating a Cool West Hartford website hosting these and other sustainability related resources. Ideas include information related to:

- Blue Earth (for food scraps pickup)
- Hartsprings (for clothes pickup)
- Journey Home (for furniture pickup)
- New restaurant excess food delivery service
- Short video segments from our WHCi sessions
- Solicit ideas from other SWH commissioners

4. Initiatives to propose to the town on to help drive sustainability.

- Break out waste disposal costs separately on tax bill. People need to have a financial relationship with their trash.
- Expanded curbside pickup of waste: What materials would the town get the most bang for the buck to remove from waste stream? What materials would be easiest to pick up from the curb once or twice a year? Can these be married together to create a pickup program that minimizes net cost to town?
- Curbside food scraps pickup. Is co-collection more likely (as Paine's purchases more trucks) since Covanta and ReWorld are so close to each other?

Our next meeting is planned for March 20 at 10:00. All interested parties are welcome. In the meantime, Ted will work with Katherine to flesh out the first WHCi segment.

Respectfully submitted, Ted Newton

Subject: Energy Working Group Report = February 2025

The energy group did not meet in February.

Stephen Sack and Bernard Pelletier hosted Christina D'Amato of Energy Resources USA to brief the Elmwood Business Association on the SBEA (small business energy advantage) program. She outline what the program does and how interested businesses can apply.

See here:

<https://energizect.com/energy-assessments/small-business>



The meeting was well attended (not all people are in the photo).

We plan to have a WCRI interview with Christina on the program to go on the YouTube channel for WCRI.

Building Check list:

- Michael Cocca found that Greenwich has a building checklist (per their SustainableCT certification). Catherine Diviney located their submission (attached).
- David Sagers - Catherine Diviney - and Bernard Pelletier spoke to Sustainable Westport and shared some of our checklist. This was town to town communication.
- A sample of our proposed checklist for developers is below:

Project Sunbridge has been stalled by federal executive orders. We are pausing outreach as we await more clarity.

Likewise work on federal HER - HEAR - CPRG programs are paused as we await more clarity.

We will meet in March.

Bernie Pelletier

1800 Asylum Avenue

On February 11th, the The Town Council held a public hearing to consider rezoning and creating a Special Development District for the development of Heritage Park on the western portion of the former UConn West Hartford campus (1800 Asylum Avenue).

WeHa Development Group, LLC, owner of 1800 Asylum Avenue, is requesting a change of zone of approximately 33.5 acres of the site from a R-10 single-family zone to a BS shopping center zone with Special Development District Designation (SDD) overlay for the redevelopment of the site into a new mixed-use development of commercial and residential uses along with associated parking and site amenities.

From my perspective, the developer's lawyer and consultants did an excellent job in presenting the revised scope of the overall development. The majority of public comments were supportive of the plan and focused on the need for additional affordable housing.

After the Town Council concluded a three-and-a-half-hour public hearing, they postponed a vote on the application for redevelopment until its meeting on February 25th.

Jim Fishman

Energy Related RegulationAmendment to Section 6-14 Procedure for Applications for Site Plan Review

This requirement applies to the following under Sec-13 Site Plan Approval Required by Planning & Zoning Commission:

- (1) A residential use involving the housing of three (3) or more families on one lot.
- (2) Any non-residential use, or group of uses in excess of 3,000 square feet
- (5) Except as provided in Section 6-98(a)(2), construction, or alteration of the exterior of any multi-family structure or group of structures with five or more dwelling units or any non-residential structure or any structure containing a mix of residential and non-residential uses. Exterior alterations shall include but not be limited to replacement of doors or windows or signs involving a substantial change in design, material or color as well as to removal or alterations of roof top mechanical structures and other integral parts of the structure. (6/1/2017)
- (7) Any use requiring a Special Permit. Site Plan Approval for any use requiring Special Permit shall be initiated as part of special permit procedure. (6/17/83)
- (8) Municipal Improvements submitted for Commission approval.

Excluded from this requirement are:

- (2) Any non-residential use, or group of uses of less than 3,000 square feet
- (3) Any building constructed or altered in such a manner as to require additional off-street parking or access from the street to the premises.
- (4) Any change from residential to non-residential use.
- (6) Any building or portion of a building housing an athletic facility that occupies more than 1,200 square feet of floor area.
- (9) An increase in non-residential usable floor area as a result of enlargement of a building, or conversion of accessory storage space, or interior alterations.
- (10) Any construction or alteration of structure(s) within an HO zone

Purpose: To support the goals of sustainability, energy efficiency, and the use of renewable energy to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases as well as energy costs.

A brief written statement addressing

- 1) Energy efficiency including overall energy efficiency performance, as well as how a development project's features and systems will contribute to minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2) The potential and use of renewable energy systems, as well as highly energy efficient equipment such as air and ground source heat pumps, hot water heat pumps and fuel cells. Renewable energy systems generate energy from wind, solar radiation, geothermal steam, and biogas. Such information shall include a description of the site's relevant features (including but not limited to: site slope, ground composition, shading), as well as the proposed building's potential for renewable energy generation (including but not limited to: orientation, scale, roofing, and systems.)
- 3) Any available energy efficiency modeling and metrics that outline a project's energy profile. Examples of such information would include an Energy Use Index (EUI), and greenhouse gas emissions in terms of carbon equivalents, as well as the heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and hot water equipments' efficiency, calculated as a Coefficient of Performance (COP). Residential projects (including multi family homes) of 10,000 sf or larger in size could highlight their energy efficiency by providing a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) index rating on an as designed basis. Commercial and Industrial projects of 10,000 sf or larger in size could highlight their energy efficiency and renewables use by providing a source ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM) score, also on an as designed basis.

Town of Greenwich
Energy Management Advisory Committee
101 Field Point Road
Greenwich, CT 06830

MEMORANDUM
EMAC P&Z Subgroup Review Comments
Energy/Renewables Narrative

TO: P & Z staff
FROM: EMAC P&Z Subgroup, [Reviewer Name]
DATE: [Month Day], 2024
RE: Project Name and address, PLPZ 2024 [File #]
Narrative by: Firm Name, Inc., dated Month XX, 2024

The Sub-Group has reviewed the above-referenced narrative. The following template and narrative prompts are meant as a guide for building applicants, and our review of the Energy Narrative cited above is provided here:

Energy Efficiency Modeling & Metrics	Existing	Proposed¹	Recommended “Good”	Recommended “Better”
Site Energy Usage Intensity (Site EUI – annual kBtu/ft ²) ²			Residential <45, Non-res <35	Residential <35, Non-res <25
Home Energy Rating System Score (HERS) (residential)			<52	<42
ENERGY STAR score ³ (any building)			>80	>90
Air Leakage (Blower door test)			<0.3cfm/ft ² @50PA	< 0.1cfm/ft ² @50PA
Energy Source			HVAC All Electric	All Electric – no fossil fuels
Use of Renewables			Yes	Yes + battery storage
Level 2 or higher EV Charging Station ⁴			Greater of 1 or 20% of spaces	Greater of 1 or ≥30% of spaces

I. Project Description

Brief project description

II. Energy efficiency and overall performance

Subgroup Comments

Text from narrative in italics with page #'s (copy/paste text)

¹ As a reminder, all applicants must comply with the CT 2022 Building Code and the incorporated IECC 2021. For a summary of *Key Changes in the 2021 IECC for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic* please see link [here](#).

² Site EUI is equal to the annual energy equivalent of all electricity, natural gas, fuel oil or propane consumed on site, divided by building square footage (gross floor area).

³ A building's Energy Star score is derived from modeling using Energy Star Portfolio Manager, a free, easy to use software program from the Department of Energy. Learn more [here](#).

⁴ Please refer to the Greenwich Municipal Code, new Section 162.1, ELECTRIC VEHICLE OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS, an amendment to Sec. 6-5(a) which can be found [here](#).

III. Project features and systems driving energy efficiency, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions

Subgroup Comments

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IV. Potential and proposed use of renewable energy systems

Subgroup Comments

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