

**Conservation, Energy, & Environment Committee (CEEC) Report
Public Health, Safety & Environment Subcommittee, January 14, 2026
Submitted by Paula Jones, Chair, CEEC**

Highlights since last report (on December 11, 2025):

1. Tree City USA Application for Calendar Year 2025: The application for recertification was submitted on January 5th.

2. Bloomfield featured in Simsbury Dec 2025/Jan 2026 Sustainability Newsletter

The Simsbury Sustainability Committee contacted the CEEC to request information about the Community Solar installation behind the BOE building. The installation was subsequently featured on page 3 of that Committee's most recent newsletter which focused on solar power. A copy is attached.

3. Invitation to participate in Simsbury Sustainability Fair (May 2nd)

The Simsbury Sustainability Committee invited the CEEC to collaborate on their 3rd Sustainability Fair on Saturday, May 2, 2026. The Simsbury committee is particularly interested in Bloomfield's ("pioneering") work on solar initiatives, as well as on our Trees for Bloomfield Initiative. We also suggested the Pollinator Pathway program, which is being sponsored by the BBC and will be formally launched on February 4th.

4. Resident inquiry - deer crossing signs

A resident on Maple Avenue recently contacted the CEEC about how to go about obtaining deer crossing signage. There is an area where deer are reportedly crossing the road multiple times daily. Since deer collisions are a public safety consideration, the CEEC consensus was that the Police Department and DPW would have data regarding deer collisions/crossing "hot spots" and that we should refer the inquiry to the Police Department and DPW.

Upcoming Events:

CEEC Walk & Learn (Saturday, February 14, 10 – noon, 200 Seabury Drive): CEEC members Brenda Watson and Bob Dickinson worked with Rev. Dr. Davida Foy-Crabtree to schedule a tour of Seabury to learn about their geothermal and solar installations. A flyer with additional details about the tour and a registration link is attached.

BBC Sponsored Pollinator Pathway Community Kick Off Event (Feb 4, 5:30 pm, Room 131, 330 Park Ave): Free educational workshop about pollinators, why they matter and need a "pathway." The workshop will focus on how residents can create pollinator-safe habitat and add to the community "pathway."

The CEEC meets the second Thursday of each month from 4:30pm – 6pm via a hybrid meeting format (in person at Town Hall, Wintonbury Room). Next scheduled meeting – February 12, 2026

No upfront costs. Reduced prices on electricity. Clean, renewable energy.

Our Town Selectmen endorsed a Sustainability Plan in October, 2025. A key goal in that Plan is generating 50% of the electricity used by our town and schools with solar by the year 2030

The Sustainability Committee, in this issue, has researched case studies from our State where towns have installed solar projects that have no upfront costs and reduce the town's electricity bill. Increasingly, solar energy is the path to fiscal responsibility. We hope to learn from these examples as we figure out the best path for Simsbury.

SOLAR ON SCHOOL ROOFTOPS

What is a Solar Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA)?

"A solar power purchase agreement (PPA) is a financial agreement where a developer arranges for the design, permitting, financing and installation of a solar energy system on a customer's property at little to no cost. The developer sells the power generated to the host customer at a fixed rate that is typically lower than the local utility's retail rate."

-Solar Energy Industries Association

In 2022, Manchester installed solar panels on six schools and its town Water Treatment Facility. The town expects to save \$100,000 per year on its electric bill.

The solar installations, arranged by the CT Green Bank's solar municipal assistance program (Solar MAP), feature no upfront costs and a 20-year power purchase agreement with the Green Bank. "I would highly recommend the SolarMap program from CT Green Bank," said Steve Stephanou, Manchester Town Manager.



Verplank Elementary School, Manchester, CT

SOLAR CARPORTS AT SCHOOLS

Madison installed two solar carport arrays in the parking lots of its middle and high schools in 2022. Each is a 129-kilowatt (kW) system.

Madison and the solar developer Greenskies entered into a 20-year power purchasing agreement (PPA) that is estimated to save the town \$558,000 over that span. In fiscal year 2025, the PPA price per kWh is \$0.0819, as opposed to the Eversource price of \$0.111, according to Ben Whittaker, Madison's Director of Construction and Planning.



Walter C. Polson Middle School, Madison, CT



Simsbury Solar Savings

Constructed with a PPA, the solar array at the Simsbury Farms skating rink, installed in 2019, is estimated to save the town between \$184,000 and \$394,000 over the 20-year agreement in electricity costs.



Solar energy has become the cheapest source of electricity in history.

*-International Energy Agency
(2020)*

NEW ROOF AND SOLAR COMBINATION ON SCHOOLS

According to Gary Hale of Advanced Energy Efficiencies, when working with Naugatuck, he approached the project with three principles: no upfront costs for the town, savings on the energy bill, and a transition from dirty to clean energy.

Naugatuck will pair roof replacement and solar installation at four of its schools in 2026. The \$19 million project will be paid for entirely by state and federal grants and participation in Eversource Energy's Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions program.

Naugatuck expects to save \$850,000 annually in reduced fuel costs and a fixed electricity rate.

SOLAR ON A CAPPED LANDFILL

Working with the solar developer Verogy, Middletown installed a solar array on 2.5 acres of a capped landfill in 2024. Making use of a degraded space, the solar array will produce 1,114 megawatt hours of clean energy, enough to power about 105 homes.

With no upfront cost, the city of Middletown will receive lease payments for the land from Verogy over the lifetime of the project.

Community Solar

In 2018, the Town of Bloomfield approved what became the state of Connecticut's first operational solar panel array in the state's Shared Clean Energy Facility (SCEF) Pilot Program.

As noted by the Department of Energy and Environmental protection:

"Subscription to a shared clean energy facility (SCEF) provides an option that can be used to overcome such barriers (like unsuitable roofs or renting instead of owning), thereby expanding access to renewable energy to more households and businesses in the state. A SCEF enables multiple customers to benefit directly from that facility's energy production."

In Bloomfield, the town's Board of Education advocated for participation in the State's SCEF program. Following approval by the town, a 1.6-megawatt, ground-mounted solar farm was installed on Board of Education property off Blue Hills Avenue by CTEC Solar, a Bloomfield-based company. No funding was required from the town as part of the pilot program.

Following project commissioning in 2019, the array provides 60% of its electricity generation to the Board of Education, with 20% available to low-income residents and 20% to general subscribers as part of a subscription program where customers can receive a credit on their electric bill.

The array is owned by Ameresco and electricity is marketed by the Clean Energy Collective, which advertises a guaranteed saving of 10% on electricity (a yearly savings of \$150 for the



Last year [2024], ninety-six per cent of the global demand for new electricity was met by renewables, and in the United States ninety-three per cent of new generating capacity came from solar, wind, and an ever-increasing variety of batteries to store that power.

-Bill McKibben, "4.6 Billion Years On, the Sun Is Having a Moment"

average household (average household and nearly \$2,800 over a 20-year term). The school district has a twenty-year lease for the land with Ameresco, which pays Bloomfield schools \$14,000 per year. The district applies that money to its electricity costs and also receives a 10 percent discount from Eversource on the cost of electricity for participating in the program. All told, the project is anticipated to save the district \$1 million in electricity costs over the twenty-year project life.



CEEC WALK AND LEARN

Where curiosity meets community



Please join us for a **tour of Seabury** to learn about their **geothermal and solar installation!** Seabury offers valuable insights into how Bloomfield can expand the deployment of clean and renewable energy technology to improve health and economic outcomes for all Bloomfield residents.

Seabury's **geothermal system currently handles 100% of their 360-ton heating and cooling load** and operates completely self-sufficiently. Since 2018, their **solar panels have generated 10.54 GWh of power.**

10.54 GWh of solar energy generated could power **annual electricity consumption of about 1,000 homes with an annual utility savings of \$1,710 per home!**ⁱ On average, **Bloomfield** residents spend about **\$318 per month** on electricity. That adds up to **\$3,816 per year.**ⁱⁱ

Town-Wide Potential: If adopted, Bloomfield could see a measurable drop in community-wide fossil fuel demand, enhancing its climate resilience. A shift from combustion-based heating to clean electric systems delivers direct and indirect health benefits, particularly for vulnerable populations and creates job opportunities.

Saturday Feb 14th | 10am-12pm
200 Seabury Drive | Bloomfield CT 06002

Please register no later than Monday Feb 9th to:
Lynn Weisel at lweisel@bloomfieldct.gov

ⁱ EIA.org

ⁱⁱ <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/electricity-cost/ct/hartford-county/bloomfield/>