CONSERVATION, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES: THURSDAY, JULY 8, 2022

Members Present: Paula Jones, David Hager, Valerie Rossetti

Members Absent: Zellene Sandler, Seth Pitts, Daniel White

Guests present: Jose Giner (Director of Planning and Economic Development), Donald Weight, Stephanie Bahramian (Environmental Planner), Ellen Castaldini, Davida Crabtree, Laura Pallandre, Robert Dickinson

1. Call to order @ 4:35 PM and Roll call (see above)

2. Approval of Agenda: no changes.

3. Approval of May 13, 2021 and June 10, 2021 Minutes: could not be officially approved due to the lack of a quorum

4. Environmental Planner: Update from Stephanie Bahramian:
   - Bloomfield EV car show happened in mid-June followed closely by the West Hartford EV car show. Turn-out was low and other towns are coupling their shows with other events to draw participants. Do we want to repeat the car show in the fall?
   - Improving publicity of CEEC and town events is important. Perhaps collaborating with other towns or with the schools might help. Laura Pallandre mentioned a grant being pursued by New Haven that funds high school students doing climate education projects.
   - Could some of the POCD funds be used to fund an energy planner? A sample scope of work by one such planner was received by Stephanie. It will be sent to the committee for review, with the potential for a presentation to the CEEC in September. It is important to have buy-in from town and Board of Education staff from facilities management. Robert Dickinson reported that several energy projects were completed successfully in South Windsor when the energy committee there demonstrated the financial savings.
   - As a result of the Brownfield inventory done (3 sites), Stephanie has been in touch with a contractor developing the old nursing home site across from Geissler’s. Apartments are planned. The developer is open to considering bird-friendly windows, zero emission paint, EV vehicle charging and other energy upgrades. She encourages anyone with knowledge of new or re-developments to be in touch with her.

5. Old Business:

   (a) Improving the Urban Tree Canopy Subcommittee: the subcommittee met on July 6th. A photo contest is ongoing through Sept. 30th and a display will be done during the tree lighting in December. An effort is underway to encourage student participation. On July 14th there will be webinar with Prosser Library on climate change and the urban canopy by Danica Dorosky, State Urban Forestry Coordinator at DEEP and a Yale PhD student in Urban Forestry. Davida Crabtree recommended a movie called “Kiss the Ground”, focusing on the value of trees, soil regeneration, carbon sequestration, and more. “Trees for Bloomfield”, a fund managed by the
Hartford Foundation, will hopefully be accumulating reserves via private donations to plant and maintain trees. Sept. 25th there is a guided tree walk.

(b) Environmental Justice and Community Resilience: No update on the idea of a Basketball Tournament/Community clean-up at the Rockwell courts due to Daniel White’s absence. The cause of trash at the courts is not clear: trash receptacle type, poor habits, or other? Laura Pallandre suggested a survey, which has been discussed in past by the CEEC as a possibility. She is interested in collaborating on the event.

(c) Resolution for Library Building Committee: was revised to include bird safe glass; the resolution will not be officially voted on due to lack of a quorum at this meeting. See the attached resolution. One of the pin oaks which was at risk of being removed was evaluated by an arborist and found to be healthy. The chair and co-chair of the Library Building Committee were receptive to issues cited in the resolution and the revised resolution will be sent to them.

(d) Climate Emergency Resolution: the next step is for an RFP to be developed. Stephanie is willing to become engaged in that process and will meet with Paula. Past Chair Charlie Horn has information on details of an RFP. Paula will connect with Charlie Horn and Ellen Castaldini will also contact Roger Kuhns. David Hager mentioned that the plan for the CER needs to be meshed into the updated POCD and that CEEC should be represented during the POCD updating process.

(e) Shred Day and Electronics Recycling: will occur on Oct 2nd from 9AM-1PM at Town Hall. Carmela Garofalo and Paula Jones will coordinate with town staff. The TREX program is now running again and may be re-incorporated into Shred Day.

(f) Recycling/Composting/Solid Waste Management: An update is still pending from the DPW and town manager over negotiations for the town’s waste management contract, which were due to be finalized by June 30th. There has been no response from the town to a proposal by Blue Earth to run a pilot program in a section of Bloomfield. The impending waste management crisis in the state due to the looming shut-down of MIRA’s trash incinerator in Hartford makes improving the town’s handling of trash, compost, and recycling crucial. Nancy Bowden and Stephanie have been in touch with Auer Farm over a proposal to develop a composting program for food waste at the farm.

(g) Solar Panels on Human Services Building: David Hager corresponded with town manager Schenck, who detailed a 2 yr process for evaluating the solar roof proposal. It would be funded as a capital project. Members of the committee were quite confused, as a long process of obtaining an array through a Power Purchase Agreement at no cost to the town has been underway for over a year. Initially, the Green Bank surveyed all town buildings, and offered a latch-key program to install solar arrays on several of them at no cost to the town. They would put out an RFP, select an installer, oversee the installation, cover maintenance, and obtain financing. A 20-year contract for fixed electricity costs, with savings to the town would be in place. The town staff felt they might obtain a better financial deal through their own efforts and elected to draft their own RFP for a PPA. However, there was no follow-through on this decision and none was developed. In prior years, the town council and the Human Service Building Committee have rejected purchasing solar panels during the building’s construction or thereafter due to lack of town funds. Once the appointment of a new town manager is completed, CEEC hopes to meet and understand current reasoning. Bloomfield currently lacks
any solar arrays on any of its town buildings (unlike the schools), other than a small array on Faith McMahon Library earned by the CEEC.

6. New Business:

(a) **Discussion of Bicycle Friendly Community Program**: Paula will speak with Steve Mitchell and report further details on the requirements of the program. They are robust. Though very supportive of a bicycle friendly community, the detailed technical application and its supporting details may not be appropriate for the CEEC. Past Chair Charlie Horn had suggested a presentation to the town council.

(b) **August Meeting Cancellation**: a pot luck will be held in lieu of the August meeting, a past tradition of the CEEC.

7. Updates on Legislative Initiatives: none

8. Announcements/Updates/Upcoming Events: none

9. Public Comments: incorporated into the body of the meeting

10. Adjourn @ 6:02 PM

Next meeting: September 9, 2021