TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

Conservation, Energy & Environment Committee (CEEC)

There was a meeting for the above referenced committee held on February 12, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person meeting location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Wintonbury Room/Conference Room 5, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT, and the virtual location was via Zoom.

Committee Members present were: *In-Person*: Paula Jones, Chair; Nancy Bowden; David Hager; *and via Zoom*: Robert Dickinson; Brenda Watson (left at 5:06 p.m.)

Committee Members absent were: Claudia Gwardyak; Charlie Nevers; Zellene Sandler; Jessica White

Also present were:
In-person: Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; Kevin Gough; Councilor Joseph Merritt; Val Rossetti; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary

via Zoom: Jon Colman, Director of Building & Land Use; Lorenzo Jones, Chicks Ahoy Farm (left at 5:01 p.m.); Diana Martinez, Chicks Ahoy Farm (left at 5:01 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Bowden, seconded by Ms. Watson, and approved unanimously to move New Business item A, "Letter of Support for Chicks Ahoy Farm," to the top of the agenda.

New Business

CEEC Letter of Support for Chicks Ahoy Farm

Ms. Diana Martinez and Mr. Lorenzo Jones of Chicks Ahoy Farm provided an overview of their organization. Chicks Ahoy Farm is a Bloomfield-based nonprofit focused on teaching people how to become farmers, with a focus on marginalized groups. They own 16 acres of land on Hoskins Road, and discussed potential site and programming designs for the space, with a focus on opportunity for all and listening to community feedback. Ideas mentioned included trails; training and educational agricultural space; conservation; recreation; and collaborations with other organizations.

The CEEC letter of support would be for Chick Ahoy Farm's Sustainable Agriculture Regional Education Grant application. They are applying for $25,000 to support the building of farming communities.

It was moved by Ms. Bowden, seconded by Mr. Hager, and approved unanimously to approve the letter of support for Chicks Ahoy Farm.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Hager and seconded by Ms. Watson to approve the 1/8/26 meeting minutes. Mr. Gabuzda recommended the following changes after reviewing the draft minutes with Wetlands Agent Peter Castaldi:

- Add the word "vegetation" after wetlands on the bottom of the page three, to read, "wetland vegetation removal".
- Change the word "but" to "and" at the top of page four to read, "not a formal violation, and".

- Change the sentence "There is a current remediation plan in place," to "Vegetation replanting is scheduled for spring of 2026."

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes with the suggested changes.

Town Planner & Environmental Planner Report/s

Environmental Planner, Mr. Gabuzda, noted that the items from his report would be covered through the agenda items. He referenced the Building & Land Use Monthly Development report (attached), and noted:

- *529 Cottage Grove*: Town staff had a pre-construction meeting with the developers who inquired about the process for tree and vegetation removal. They were informed of current regulations, with the caveat that the regulations are currently being reviewed.

- *18, 22, 34, & 38 Crystal Lane*: Town staff had a preliminary investigation meeting regarding potential housing developments on Crystal Lane to discuss the feasibility of revising the lot lines to make them more suitable for single-family housing.

- *141 Wintonbury Ave*: CTECH filed wetlands applications, which were accepted by IWWC in January 2026, with a public hearing scheduled for 3/16/26.

Town Planner, Mr. Colman, provided the committee with updates that included:

- TPZ will be hearing a series of zone text amendment proposals at their 2/19/26 meeting, including related to cannabis. They will also be reviewing proposed revisions to some chapters of the POCD. It is hoped that the TPZ will vote at their March meeting to send the POCD to the Town Council for review, with a final TPZ approval at their April meeting.

- Building permit revenue is up, and the amount of revenue in the first six months of FY26 has exceeded that of the entire FY25.

There was a question on the status of a complaint of digging at a property on Blue Hills Ave. Mr. Colman noted that a cease-and-desist order has been issued and that the case is processing through the judicial system.

There was a question about tree removal at Wintonbury Golf Course. Mr. Colman stated that trees were being removed for two reasons: 1) tree roots were compromising a fairway and cart path; and 2) dead trees along bridges were creating a safety hazard. He noted that the tree removal along the fairways was reviewed by the wetlands agent, and that there will be an upcoming IWWC hearing for the proposed tree removal along the bridges. Mr. Colman highlighted that the lumber along the bridges would not be removed to avoid putting any machinery into the wetlands. Ms. Jones spoke about the environmental benefits of dead trees, and suggested that trees not be removed all the way to the ground for this reason. Mr. Colman encouraged these comments be submitted to the wetlands agent or IWWC.

Mr. Hager noted the high quality of the updated POCD revisions.

Old Business

2026 Priorities Discussion

Ms. Jones reported that she incorporated the feedback from last month's meeting into the updated CEEC priorities document. Noting that CEEC was identified in the new POCD, she added language in the priorities document to reflect this. Ms. Bowden suggested that the language be updated to, "CEEC will serve as the lead or partner entity for the implementation of strategies and actions as indicated in the Plan of Conservation and Development."

Solar in Bloomfield / Solar Regulations – Update

Mr. Colman reported that TPZ will have an internal conversation on the revised solar regulations at their meeting on 2/19/26, followed by a public hearing on 3/26/26.

Mr. Gabuzda noted that the revised solar regulations are geared toward those already pursuing solar, and that CEEC's request to encourage solar on new developments would be part of a separate ordinance. Committee members emphasized how long they had been working on a solar ordinance, and asked that it be pursued, particularly in light of the amount of current development in town.

Ms. Jones encouraged the committee to send any feedback on the revised regulations directly to Mr. Gabuzda and cc her. She will send the committee the solar policy that CEEC drafted several years ago as a reference point.

Mr. Gabuzda stated that in preparing the regulations he reviewed past Town drafts of solar regulations dating back to 2020, and also consulted existing regulations in western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut, with a focus on Enfield.

Ms. Rosetti expressed concern that the proposed regulations were not restrictive enough, and opened the entire Town to solar if a special permit was granted.

Ms. Rosetti inquired if the 15-foot buffer zone of vegetation requirement was only for residential solar. Mr. Gabuzda will follow up on this and find out.

Landscape Regulations (Tree Ordinance) Revision – Update

Mr. Gabuzda reported that after reviewing the draft landscape regulations, Town staff recommended splitting up portions of the regulations between zoning and an ordinance to ensure proper enforcement, and to remain in line with Connecticut zoning regulations. Mr. Gabuzda will continue working to finalize both.

Sustainable CT Recertification – Update

Mr. Gabuzda stated that the Town is more than halfway to Bronze Sustainable CT certification. He reported that after meeting with Sustainable CT staff, the role of the sustainability team was clarified as guidance to encourage collaboration. As such, no specific team list is needed, but it is an open team, and reflects how the group is already currently operating.

Mr. Gabuzda has two potential projects for the Equity Toolkit—the Town Center Master Plan and Bloomfield Public Library's strategic plan. He will be speaking about Sustainable CT at BPL's strategic plan unveiling.

Extreme Heat – Update

Ms. Bowden reported that there was no update at this time.

Simsbury Sustainability Fair (Saturday, May 2)

CEEC will participate in the Simsbury Sustainability Fair on Saturday, May 2. Ms. Jones reported that the Simsbury group is putting together a map of solar installations in Simsbury, Avon and Bloomfield.

Shred Day & Small Electronics Spring Event (Saturday, May 9)

Ms. Jones reported that she is waiting for confirmation of the date and financial resources from the Town for Shred Day.

Renewable Energy - Educational Opportunities/Field Trips (Tour of Seabury, Feb 14, 10AM - Noon)

Ms. Jones shared that 15 people have signed up for the tour, including three people from Simsbury. Bloomfield Messenger will run a piece about the tour after the event.

New Business (Continued)

Black History Month Reflection – BHC Request for Participation – Discussion

Ms. Jones reported that Bloomfield Humanities Committee asked for reflections from Town Boards & Commissions on how they reflect the diversity of the Town. She shared feedback she received from Mr. Hager and Ms. White that highlighted the CEEC's inclusive processes, as seen in Trees for Bloomfield, and openness to all ideas. Ms. Jones highlighted CEEC's open meetings and partnerships with other groups. Ms. Bowden noted CEEC's public education with Buckets of Doom and Extreme Heat, and efforts to reach all sectors of the community.

Announcements/Updates/Upcoming Events from the Committee

Ms. Jones reported on the following items:

Tree City USA & Trees for Bloomfield Update (Arbor Day Event – April 24)

DEEP recommended Bloomfield for Tree City USA recertification to the Arbor Day Foundation. An Arbor Day event is proposed for 4/24 at 4 p.m. at the Town Hall campus.

Public Landscapes Working Group Update (BBC lead)

Thoughtful budgeting is underway for how to maintain complex landscapes moving forward.

Pollinator Pathways Group Update

The Pollinator Pathways Group held a kickoff event sponsored by BBC with 60+ people in attendance. The group is led by Ms. Cori Presutti.

TRLC Nature Lecture: Bobolinks and Warblers (March 4, 6:30 via Zoom) by Z. Sandler

Ms. Zellene Sandler will be leading a Bobolinks and Warblers nature lecture.

Other

There were no other items at this time.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Hager and seconded by Mr. Dickinson to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Addendum: List of Frequently Used Acronyms

- BBC: Bloomfield Beautification Committee
- BOE: Board of Education
- BPS: Bloomfield Public Schools
- CIF: Community Investment Fund
- CRCOG: Capitol Region Council of Governments
- CTLCV: Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
- DEEP: Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
- DOT: Department of Transportation
- DPH: Department of Public Health
- EDC: Economic Development Commission
- HMCAP: Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan
- IWWC: Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission
- MDC: The Metropolitan District
- PFAS: per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances known as “forever” chemicals
- POCD: Plan of Conservation and Development
- PURA: Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
- P&Z: Plan & Zoning (also sometimes seen as TPZ for Town Plan & Zoning)
- RFP: Request for Proposals
- RFQ: Request for Quote
- TFB: Trees for Bloomfield
- TOB: Town of Bloomfield
- TPZ: Town Plan & Zoning
- ZEO: Zoning Enforcement Office

BUILDING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT

January 2026 Development Report

Prepared by: Jonathan Colman, Director

Town Center Plan (TCP)

- Town Center Master Plan Adopted in May 2025
- Amended CIF Grant Application for $19.8M submitted to DECD December 3, 2025. Decision expected in March 2026.



PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



- TPZ meeting scheduled February 19, 2026 to review re-write
- TPZ statutory referral to Town Council potentially March 26, 2026

POLICY/ORDINANCE/ZONING AMENDMENTS

ZONING REGULATIONS

- Various Amendments to Zoning Regulations scheduled for discussion only at TPZ February 19, 2026, Regular Meeting.
- Zoning Regulations amendments forthcoming to address Section 16 of latest housing legislation HB8002.

ORDINANCES

- Continued review of the Housing Trust Fund Policies and Application Forms
- Continued review of Collection efforts related to Code Enforcement Citiations

APPROVED DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Ryfield Hollow – 90 units of single-family completed
- Tellus II – 150 units apartments completed
- 200 Seabury –24-unit residential building addition is under construction
- Watkins/Simsbury/Overbrook 32-single-family dwellings under construction
- Abby Court, AKA 1120 Blue Hills Avenue 29 single-family dwellings under construction
- 57 Jolley Drive – 40 apartment units under construction
- Arbella AKA 871/885 Blue Hills Ave– 164 total units of apartments/town houses with 19 affordable housing units is under construction
- 40 Tunxis Avenue – "Popeye's" under construction, activity has resumed.
- 85 Granby Street – Redevelopment, Self-storage facility completed
- 90 &116 West Dudley Town Road 550,000 sq. ft. warehouse proposal withdrawn

APPROVED DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- 59-69 Douglas Street – New Self-storage facilities under construction.
- 9 Tunxis Avenue – New Tenant Occupant -New Physical Therapy Medical Office now opened.
- Copaco Center – Undergoing significant upgrades with new ownership
- Significant investments at Cigna and Kamatics

PRE-DEVELOPMENT

- 800 Cottage Grove Rd – 2nd Informal presentation held with staff for a proposed residential development of approximately 130 apartment units
- 51 Gabb Rd – informal meeting held with staff for possible uses

PRE-CONSTRUCTION

- 529 Cottage Grove Rd – 5-unit multi-tenant business/commercial strip mall to begin clearing land

BUILDING & LAND USE BY THE NUMBER

Month of January 2026

- 151 Building Permits
- $112,669M Permit Value
- $10,921,272 Construction Value