TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

Conservation, Energy & Environment Committee (CEEC)

There was a meeting for the above referenced committee held on March 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; Robert Dickinson; Claudia Gwardyak David Hager; *and via Zoom*: Jessica White

Committee Members absent were: Nancy Bowden; Charlie Nevers; Zellene Sandler; Brenda Watson

Also present were:
In-person: Jon Colman, Director of Building & Land Use (left at 5:00 p.m.); Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; Laura Pallandre, Bloomfield Farmer's Market; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary

via Zoom: Lorenzo Jones; Cori Presutti

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Hager, seconded by Ms. Gwardyak, and voted unanimously to approve the agenda as written.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Ms. Gwardyak, seconded by Mr. Hager, and voted unanimously to approve the 2/12/26 meeting minutes as written.

Mr. Hager requested a copy of the old solar policy noted in the 2/12/26 minutes. There was also clarification as to what the Sustainable CT equity toolkit referenced in the minutes entailed.

Presentation by Laura Pallandre – Bloomfield Farmers Market & Composting Updates

Ms. Pallandre of the Bloomfield Farmers Market gave a presentation on current composting efforts as well as an update on the Farmers Market. The composting program takes place at Bloomfield High School (BHS), with students helping lead and monitor the program. Ms. Pallandre detailed the process for turning food scraps to compost which occurs on-site through the BHS vocational agriculture program. She also outlined the fiscal benefits of composting as well as potential funding sources and resources.

Ms. Pallandre highlighted that the Farmers Market takes place year-round. She is hoping to start an intergenerational sourdough bread making club, with the bread being sold through the Market.

Town Planner & Environmental Planner Report/s

Mr. Colman, Director of Building & Land Use, provided the following updates:

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- The Town did not receive the Community Investment Fund grant applied for to support the Town Center. Other avenues of funding are being pursued.

- The proposed development at the corner of Cottage Grove Road and Bloomfield Avenue converting the office park to a residential development is undergoing a pro forma review of the tax agreement request.

- The developer for the proposed Aldi development on Cottage Grove Road is making a neighborhood public presentation this evening. A re-application to TPZ for the development has not yet occurred.

- First Cathedral has downsized their proposed first phase of development, which will now include three phases. The first phase will be two buildings at four stories each.

- The POCD is still in progress. There was some discussion around the POCD, and Ms. Jones noted that she will add POCD review to next month's agenda.

Mr. Gabuzda, Environmental Planner, provided the following updates:

- Oil contamination occurred at 152 School Street in February. DEEP performed soil clean-up, but the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District deemed the house as unsuitable for occupancy.

- The Town was notified by DEEP of the release of trichloroethylene (TCE) at 85 Granby Street. Building ventilation was increased, and DEEP is monitoring. The committee expressed concern, and inquired if abutters were notified.

- There was a fire at the solar array behind the Board of Education building in February, likely caused by rodents living in the system, with the fire mostly localized in one cell. Ms. Jones noted that rodent control is included in the solar regulations draft, and included her concern with using rodenticide. A variety of ways to keep rodents at bay was discussed.

- The Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (HMCAP) compliance report has been completed. Copies can be provided to anyone interested.

Old Business

2026 Priorities Discussion – Approval of Final Draft

It was moved by Mr. Hager, seconded by Ms. Gwardyak, and voted unanimously to approve the final draft of the CEEC 2026 Priorities as presented.

Solar Regulations – Update

Mr. Gabuzda distributed tentative changes to the solar regulations draft based on feedback from TPZ and CEEC. He noted the most frequent suggested changes included having large scale systems to be restricted to industrial zones and wanting more specifics regarding maintenance and decommissioning. The updated regulations will get additional review from TPZ before there is a vote.

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Mr. Gabuzda highlighted that an ordinance to encourage solar on large developments is on his to-do list.

Ms. Jones reported that she intends to submit comment to IWWC regarding the CTECH permit request for a solar installation, and in the comment will highlight CEEC's concerns discussed during CTECH's presentation to CEEC in 2025.

Landscape Zoning Regulations & Ordinances (revising Tree Ordinance) - Update

Mr. Gabuzda reported that this ordinance is in progress.

Sustainable CT Recertification – Update

Mr. Gabuzda reported that based on his calculations the Town has enough points for certification. He is working on two required pieces before submission—the equity toolkit and before and after pictures of the complete streets project. The Sustainable CT application will be publicly available once complete. Mr. Gabuzda reported that, if possible, the recertification application will be submitted in April, as applications deadlines are in April and August. The committee commended Mr. Gabuzda for his efforts.

Extreme Heat – Update

Mr. Gabuzda reported that he is working on an inventory of cooling centers in Town that will be posted on the Town website.

New Business

CEEC remaining fund 2026 Fiscal Year balance

Ms. Jones briefly reviewed the remaining CEEC budget.

It was moved by Mr. Hager, seconded by Ms. Gwardyak, and voted unanimously to approve use of the remaining CEEC funds, up to $324, for printed materials and supplies needed for the upcoming Simsbury Sustainability Fair.

Ms. Gwardyak reported that she did not submit expenses for SunDay events, and likely will not. Ms. Jones asked her to keep the receipts in case there is extra money left in the budget.

Agricultural Zone - Discussion

Ms. Jones asked if the committee would be interested in pursuing the creation of an agricultural zone. She noted that an agricultural zone had been discussed at previous meetings, most recently during solar regulation conversations, with the idea that solar could be a permitted use in an agricultural zone. All members were in favor of further discussion on the pursuit of an agricultural zone. Ms. Jones reported that without an agricultural zone, farming is a right of use, but is not protected.

Mr. Gabuzda requested further clarification from the committee on their vision for the zone.

Legislative Session - Bills of interest Discussion

Ms. Jones reported that she sent out an email with links to legislative watch lists. She requested that the committee review and comment, and asked that members highlight any bills that they may want to comment on as a committee.

Bloomfield segment of East Coast Greenway proposed naming - Discussion

Ms. Jones provided a brief background on the potential proposed naming effort of the Bloomfield segment of the East Coast Greenway in honor of Joseph Merritt. The effort is being led by Sharon Mann.

It was moved by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Ms. Gwardyak, and voted unanimously for CEEC to support efforts to rename the Bloomfield segment of the East Coast Greenway in honor of Joseph Merritt.

Other

There were no other items at this time.

Announcements/Updates/Upcoming Events from the Committee

Bloomfield Spring Cleanup – April 18

Ms. Jones highlighted the upcoming townwide spring cleanup day.

Tree City USA & Trees for Bloomfield: Arbor Day Event – April 24, 11 – 12:30

Ms. Jones reported that Bloomfield has been recertified as a Tree City USA.

Simsbury Sustainability Fair - Saturday, May 2

There was no discussion on this item.

Shred Day & Small Electronics Recycling – Saturday, May 9, 9 – 12:00

There was no discussion on this item.

Other

There were no other items at this time.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

It was moved by Ms. Gwardyak, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Addendum: List of Frequently Used Acronyms

- BBC: Bloomfield Beautification Committee
- BOE: Board of Education
- BPS: Bloomfield Public Schools
- CIF: Community Investment Fund

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- 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

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