Minutes not yet approved.
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes.

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TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

Conservation, Energy & Environment Committee (CEEC)

There was a special meeting for the above referenced committee held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person meeting location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Wintonbury Room, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT, and the virtual location was via Zoom.

Committee Members present were: *In-Person*: Paula Jones, Chair; Robert Dickinson; David Hager; *and via Zoom*: Nancy Bowden; Jessica White

Committee Members absent were: Claudia Gwardyak; Charlie Nevers; Zellene Sandler; Brenda Watson

Also present were: *In-person*—Jon Colman, Director of Building & Land Use; Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Hager, and voted unanimously to approve the 10/8/26 meeting minutes as written.

Approval of 2027 Meeting Schedule

It was moved by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Ms. White, and voted unanimously to approve the 2027 meeting schedule as proposed.

Town Planner & Environmental Planner Report/s

Town Planner Report

Highlights from Mr. Colman's report included:

- Popeyes is now open & the Geissler's parking lot has been repaved.
- POCD is out for review, with a public hearing to be held at TPZ on the fourth Thursday in January 2027. The POCD can be found on the Town website.
- Town Center news: staff is considering whether or not to apply for the CIF grant in December; developer selection is underway; site acquisition conversations are ongoing.
- Three properties will be asking Town Council for tax agreements: First Cathedral; Woodside Circle/Dorothy Drive; and Tellus Four.
- Budget time is coming. Staff is working on a ten-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that will be reviewed by TPZ, likely in January 2027.

Mr. Hager requested that the POCD cover image be changed.

Ms. Jones requested that Town staff provide a POCD overview at the next CEEC meeting.

Ms. Bowden suggested that it might be helpful for CEEC to review and comment on the CIP. She gave the example of the shade structures proposed for summer camp in Town and its connection to mitigating extreme heat. Mr. Colman will send the CIP to CEEC when it is available.

Environmental Planner Report

Mr. Gabuzda reported on Sustainable CT, noting that the updated plaque is in Town Hally lobby. He highlighted marketing materials about Bloomfield received by Sustainable CT. Bloomfield is working towards silver status, with 425 points out of 500 needed. Deadline for submission happens twice yearly—in April and August.

There was a discussion on what CEEC projects count for Sustainable CT points, including Shred Day and extreme heat programming. Mr. Gabuzda outlined Sustainable CT's community match fund. Projects in Town that have applied for and received the match include the Farmer's Market coupon program; invasive plant management at Barber Pond; and the mural at 330 Park Ave.

Other updates:

- Mr. Gabuzda worked with the Board of Education to apply for a CT Grown for Kids grant to support a composting pilot at Carmen Arace Middle Schol. They anticipate hearing back by the end of the year. Ms. Jones noted that CEEC provided a letter of support.

- The "train the trainers" program at Farmington River Park went well. Mr. Gabuzda reporting feeling positive about the long-term maintenance of management of the property.

- As part of the Agricultural Action Plan, Mr. Gabuzda is working with the Director of Operations to host a farmer roundtable in early 2027 to discuss the future of farming in Bloomfield.

- Mr. Gabuzda has researched wildlife feeding ordinances in towns with high rates of bear activity, and reached out to the Bloomfield animal control officer (ACO). He reported the ACO seemed in support of doing something to improve the wildlife feeding concerns.

Ms. Jones noted that bears can switch to garbage can feeding if wildlife feeding/bird feeders are not available, and spoke about bear-proof trash cans.

Old Business

Landscape Zoning Regulations & Ordinance (Tree Ordinance & Regulations) – Possible Action: Motions to recommend Ordinance Revisions to Town Council and Regulation Revisions to TPZ

Ms. Jones reminded the committee that they reviewed the red-lined landscape zoning regulations and ordinance several times. There was not a quorum at the July meeting, but all members present were in favor of the updated version.

It was moved by Mr. Hager, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, and voted unanimously that CEEC approve the updated landscape zoning regulations and ordinance, and forward to Town Council and TPZ.

There was discussion on the action the tree warden would take if they see a hazardous tree. It was noted that if the tree is in a right-of-way it is the jurisdiction of the tree warden, but if the tree is on private land, the tree warden does not have the authority to act.

There was discussion about the tree account. The account will receive money from violations to the ordinance or violations from the proposed zoning regulations related to trees. There was a question as to if the money could be used for Tree City USA.

Ms. Jones outlined the Tree City USA application, currently in progress, requires that towns spend $2 per capita. She noted that some of these funds are built into the DPW budget for items such as hazardous tree removal and training, and that volunteer hours also count toward the amount per capita.

New Business

Landscape Ordinance Updates – Mowing

Mr. Gabuzda reported that he is working on a possible amendment to the landscape ordinance, which currently limits grass or weeds to less than a foot. The idea is to allow for items that are values of the Town, such as pollinator pathways, while avoiding blighted conditions.

Additional education by the committee, and possibly by the pollinator group, was suggested.

Announcements/Updates/Upcoming Events from the Committee

Shred Day & Electronics Recycling Debrief

Ms. Jones noted there was great participation from the committee, staff, and youth. The shred truck can fit six tons of paper, and filled up. Ms. Jones will pass along the exact numbers, including for electronics, when she receives them, and will send prior report numbers to Mr. Gabuzda.

Trees for Bloomfield/Tree City USA – Participation in Urban and Community Forestry Peer Learning Exchange (Nov 4); Photo Contest Update; Tree City Application 2026 in process

Ms. Jones highlighted that the Tree USA application process is currently underway.

She noted that she, Mr. Gabuzda, and Ms. Mann participated in a peer learning exchange hosted by the Nature Conservancy. It was good for networking and learning about the good things other communities are doing.

Ms. Jones and Ms. Mann also went to Windsor's Drinking Liberally to talk about Trees for Bloomfield, as Windsor is considering starting their own program.

The Trees for Bloomfield photo contest received 30 entries. It was noted that extending the deadline worked well.

Public Comment

Ms. Bowden highlighted an upcoming Connecticut Green Bank conference on December 8 at the Aqua Turf, with a focus on municipalities and conservation groups. PACE and Sustainable CT will be present. There will be another conference in early 2027 with a focus on nonprofits.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Hager, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

The complete meeting recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJpQu3PVLNw