



Sustainable Durham

Agenda: August 4, 2026 7:00 PM 3rd Floor Conference Room

Meeting called to order at 7:06 PM.

1. Attendance
 - a. Present: Susan Michael, Tonya Buddie, Carli Koebel, Krista Bauchman, Ron Capozzi (alternate)
 - b. Absent: Liz Conroy, Laura Francis, Katie Hughes, Trish Dynia
 - c. Erica Fisher resigned from Sustainable Durham in early July.
 - i. Brief discussion of open seat.
2. Approve [June 2, 2026 minutes](#) ([July 23rd Minutes](#) were unofficial due to lack of quorum)
 - a. Approval of June minutes was tabled since only two of the people in attendance were present at that meeting. Susan Michael, Carli Koebel, and Ron Capozzi abstained.
3. Update on progress in Action items 1 and 2
 - a. Review [Action 1.1](#) -Durham Optimize for Equity - Feedback: Laura (via email) says it looks good. Tonya said it looks really good. Carli and Krista agreed.
 - b. Action 1.2 the Equity Trainings could be addressed next year in the first half of the year when the workshops are offered. Krista and Susan may consider training next year.
 - c. Action 2:
 - i. 2.3.1 Getting all of the Durham businesses list onto the town website. Katie Hughes worked on the list. It is in the Google Docs. Next step is to get it posted onto the Economic Development Committee (EDC) page.
 - ii. 2.3.2 Check with the EDC to get evidence of a buy local campaign.
 - d. Action 7: Energy Star Portfolio - Data needs to be entered into the portfolio. Ron shared the data spreadsheet with Krista.
 1. Krista needs to request all of the electric and oil bills for each building for each month of the last year.
 2. She will try to enter the data into the spreadsheet.
 - e. Review [Actions 8.1](#)

- i. Carli and Susan are going to update the worksheet to 20 events.
 - ii. Sue had added two items in early July: Mosquito Bucket Challenge and Hazardous Waste Collection Days.
- f. Review [Action 8.2.1a](#),b and the [8.2.1a Durham Municipal Communication Inventory](#)
 - i. Krista said we should ask if the school district would be willing to send out a municipal invitation about newsletter signups.
 - ii. DMYFS is working on a community calendar with grant money they received.
 - iii. Feedback was positive on the two documents..
 - iv. Sue will send the two documents to the First Selectman and Sustainable CT - Summer Mitchell, the Durham Summer Intern, and Sustainable CT director.
- g. Action 9.1.1 - Tonya worked with Summer Mitchell and analyzed data on Municipal Solid Waste. In the previous cycle we would have earned 100 points with all of the projects that we did but the data wasn't submitted. We reduced our MSW by 4% in the present cycle. It is more challenging for a small town to reach the goals set by Sustainable CT (10% is a massive amount of reduction).
 - i. Ron commented that RSD13 has its own waste hauling contractor and data. All private haulers don't go through DMIAAB anymore.
 - ii. Tonya is waiting to hear from Sustainable CT about what the standard is that we will be held to.
- h. 9.3.1 Recycle Additional Materials
 - i. Check with Erica and Rachel about ECO projects to create infrastructure for recycling more items. Do they have the programs running through TerraCycle?
- i. 9.4.1 Reduce and Compost Organic Waste - DMIAAB compost project, DMIAAB Backyard Composters, and Durham Fair Composting Project.
- j. 9.5 Promote Waste Reduction and Reuse - (Sue and Carli will analyze this one).
 - i. Waste Fabric Wreath - COEC (Sue will write up if it applies)
 - ii. Composting Presentation for Durham Fair could be written up if it has happened since 2024.
 - iii. Swap Shop or Repair Cafe could be a great program to consider
- 4. Update - Home composters discussion -
 - a. DMIAAB reported to Carole Buffithis that they have a plan and are all set to build the shed for storing the compost collection containers to prevent animals from getting into it.
 - b. Strategies for marketing composters - Susan reached out to Janet Morganti about opportunity to have a table at the summer concert series to promote the household

composter program and to help increase awareness of community newsletters and “Week-at-a-glance”. She was approved.

- i. Durham stores their extra composters in Town Hall
- ii. Middlefield stores their extras composters in the Middlefield Community Center.

5. Roundtable

- a. Carli said people should encourage bats in their yard. They eat thousands of insects a night. Ron mentioned encouraging birds to use our yards as habitat also helps reduce insect populations.
 - b. “Switch Together” program through the Connecticut Green Bank -
 - i. General feeling was to table this for now. There may be better programs to consider.
 - ii. Battery drawdown programs- Ron said there are 526 homes participating in Connecticut.
 - c. Category 5.6.1 Streamline Solar Permitting -
 - i. Matt Meeker is going to complete solar pv inspector training authorized through Solarize CT
 - ii. Tonya is working with Robin, the town planner, to develop language to add to the regulations to simplify solar permitting. Then put it on the town website once adopted..
 - iii. 3 goals are completed in this action and have 3 to go.
 - iv. Once language is determined to add sustainability it has to be pitched to Planning and Zoning for approval and implementation.
 - d. Removal of Burning bushes - Carli mentioned that Erica had mentioned the bushes are in Allyn Brook Park and there should be an effort to remove them. Carli asked if any action was taken? She will check in with Erica.
 - e. 5.5.1 - Historic district - Colleen Darnell is reviewing documents to verify the list.
 - i. Historic Homes Walks for Durham 250 celebration could be documented for points
 - ii. Cemetary Walk is coming up also which could be possible points earning event.
 - f. Tonya developed a Cool Roof information document and posted it on our website. Action item is done and uploaded.
 - g. Sue updated items in #4 related to Poet Laureate and Arts and Culture programs.
6. Public Comment - no public in attendance.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM

Next meeting dates: September 1, October 6, November 3, December 1 2026