



SPECIAL MEETING – AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE AGENDA

**JANUARY 8, 2025, 6:30 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Katie O'Leary at koleary@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. Regular Meeting: November 13, 2024**
- V. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Presentation on composting given by Tim O'Connor, Executive Director, Park City Compost Initiative**
- VI. ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 13, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Johan Lopez, Chair; Joshua Goldstein; Margaret (Lisa) Shanahan;
Barbara Smyth

STAFF: Katie O’Leary

OTHER: Sarah Cruz, Arborist/Horticulturalist, Recreation and Parks

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lopez called the meeting to order at 6:03.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Lopez called the roll as reflected above.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present for public participation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Approve minutes of October 9, 2024 regular meeting.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE
OCTOBER 9TH MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BUSINESS

a) Presentation on Norwalk’s tree master plan, tree liaison and tree adoption program.

Sarah Cruz presented the draft of the Tree Master Plan. The presentation went as follows.

- An explanation indicating the plan was not just a vision but a comprehensive strategy and actionable plan.
- The purpose being:
 - Providing a clear plan for tree care.
 - Enhancing the community health and wellbeing.
 - Supporting resilience and environmental goals.
- What defines an urban forest and the definition of the tree canopy cover.
- A description of the methods used by their partner Planet Geo along with satellite images that show the current tree cover, possible planting areas and those unsuitable for planting.

- The on the ground approach, surveying every tree with the goal of increasing the inventory of trees.
- Looking at a tree's location, type, health and possible age.
- An explanation of the planting plan over the next thirty years with emphasis on where they should prioritize their efforts and budgets.
- The identification of historically underserved communities and ensure that the strategies will be applied equitably regardless of socioeconomic status.
- A timeline of the priority actions over the long term.
- Community education and outreach and what the plan should consider.
- An explanation of the Tree Liaison Program.
- The sustainability programs and the ability to quantify tree benefits and services.

Mr. Lopez noted that the Tree Master Plan had various alignments with the Climate Action Plan. He inquired about the ultimate canopy goals for the different parts of the city. Ms. Cruz stated they set a goal of 53% for the city over all within 30 years. Mr. Lopez wanted clarification on the tree equity score. Ms. Cruz indicated a higher score is a better score. She noted the score was environmentally weighted.

Ms. Smyth asked questions about the handling of invasive species like the tree of heaven. Ms. Cruz noted that in certain areas the trees could be removed and the area replanted. She pointed out that on a larger scale when diseases and pests are involved the master plan gives recommendations for reaction scenarios.

Mr. Lopez asked about funding sources for the planting program. Ms. Cruz responded stating the funding was through ARPA, grants and Capital Budget. Mr. Lopez expressed concern about acquiring necessary funding for green projects. Ms. Cruz listed the various sources they were using and didn't seem concerned about getting necessary funds. She stated they weren't relying solely on grants and the Capital Budget citing seedling giveaways and people donating trees.

Mr. Goldstein reiterated Mr. Lopez's concern about challenges getting federal grants over the next four years. He felt they should explore state and private funding. He felt a public/private partnership will be crucial. He also brought up lantern flies and wondered if there were resources people could turn to deal with these types of issues. Mr. Goldstein asked about adding trees to state roads. Ms. Cruz said that would be addressed in the plan. She felt it was a good place to start for community outreach.

Mr. Lopez was curious about lessons learned from other municipalities on public engagement and formalizing actual structure. Ms. Cruz noted programs like the Green Thumb program in NYC that involved engagement, a solid schedule and keeping things relevant. She also suggested a solid marketing strategy to brand the tree program. She spoke about the Arbor Day project where they plant a tree at a specific school and the students participate in the planting.

Mr. Lopez suggested that in addition to neighborhood volunteers to form a volunteer group, as Sarah stated, the committee can form district-level volunteer groups. In addition, Johan mentioned there are several local neighborhood organizations that can be contacted to participate.

Ms. Cruz responded to Mr. Lopez stating the plan was in a draft phase. Mr. Lopez said the committee would help in any capacity.

Ms. Smyth said the elementary school Arbor Day Celebration is beautiful and perhaps the program could be extended to middle school.

Mr. Lopez thanked Ms. Cruz for her presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting ended at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services