MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY TEAM MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
7:00PM
MEETING ROOM 3

1. Call to Order 7:07PM
    a. In person: Amalia Shaltiel, Tanya Bourgoin, Amber McDonnell and guest Jay Fortner. Via Zoom: David Oakes, Jesse Scott, Nora Myers
2. Approval of Agenda
    a. David made a motion to accept, Amalia seconded. All in favor, no opposed. Agenda approved.
3. Approval of July 15th meeting minutes. Amalia motioned, David second. All in favor, no opposed.
4. Team membership – 3 vacancies.
    a. Introduction: Jay Fortner recently moved to East Haddam, is a retired veterinarian, worked for Pfizer. Met us at the Heritage Market in June, found us again in September and signed up to be a member of the team. Personally composts, recycles, minimizes things in the waste stream, has energy efficient appliances, etc. He is also on the Board of Trustees at Denison Pequotsepos Museum in Mystic. Excited for collaboration. Amber made a motion to vote him in, Tanya seconded. Unanimously accepted. Mr. Fortner received a hard copy of the application to complete and submit to the town.
    b. Ms. Shaltiel mentioned Caitlin McDonald from Franklin Academy may be interested in joining, introduced to us by Wade Tomlinson. She is not available to attend our meetings as she is occupied every Tuesday evening. Keep this in mind when creating meeting schedule for 2026. Ms. Shaltiel mentioned Petra, a recent college graduate who studied environmental studies may also be interested in joining.
5. Co-Chair Reports
    a. Ms. Bourgoin – Clean Transportation CT gave a presentation to SustainableCT and would like to present to us at our October 2025 meeting.
    b. Ms. Shaltiel –we have 160 responses to our communications survey; Ms. Shaltiel will send links to team members to review and discuss at the upcoming October meeting. Discussed possible new dates for 2026 Sustainability Team meetings - each person to send Ms. McDonnell a list of dates they cannot make it to the meeting so we can find a date that works for everyone. The Sustainability Team webpage is updated annually, looking forward to the new year, requested input from team members. Ms. Shaltiel to email a link to team members for review. Ms. Shaltiel said Mr. Ponanski (not present) has mentioned dividing it into 12 different categories/ideas. Ms. Shaltiel suggests we compile a presentation of everything the Sustainability Team has done this year to present to the BOS during the 2nd meeting in December. Mr. Fortner shared that his wife was the chair of the beautification committee in Groton, a similar presentation was very impactful. Mr. Scott shared that we promised the town we would circle back with them to provide an update on how the grant funds are being used, this would be a good opportunity to do so. Ms. Bourgoin and Ms. Shaltiel agree that if there is a better understanding of what we do, it may be a way to get additional funding. Ms. Shaltiel suggests getting funding from the nip bottles.
6. Old Business
        i. Heritage Market and Summer Palooza (Amber McDonnell, Amalia Shaltiel) – Ms. McDonnell will total the signatures we received on the composting petition for submission to the town (though this is a moot point until after the November election). Per Ms. Shaltiel, someone at Summer Palooza suggested that during the Repair Café we

repair and donate items. Also suggested consolidating clothing bank, food bank, repaired and donated items, tool library

ii. Heat Smart Campaign (Jesse Scott) – last year we had 32 HES projects, already at 86 this year. Last year 10 Income Eligible, now we are at almost 20. Highest participation since 2010 at the initial program kickoff. $0 copay promotion had a big impact. Mr. Scott to give a 10-15min presentation at the BOS meeting on 10/1 to discuss the success of the letter to residents. We have $10K left in grant funding. Consider doing another letter in the spring. Devan Willemson mentioned they will start pushing the Small Business program.

iii. Pollinator Pathways (Amalia Shaltiel) – blurb in progress. Waiting on Jacqui for pictures of Elementary School garden and maybe picture of the bridge.

iv. Gold Certification (Amalia Shaltiel) – ceremony will be at the Goodspeed on 10/28. Mr. Oakes thanks Ms. Shaltiel for taking this on, he knows how much work it is. Round of applause!

v. Recycling and composting (Tanya Bourgoin) – composting is a moot point for the next 2 months. Recycling news: lots of interest from RiverCOG to go to foamcycle in Barkhamsted. Not feasible for East Haddam to do ourselves but RiverCOG wants to explore doing this regionally. Ms. Shaltiel offered RiverCOG contact list to Ms. Bourgoin. Plastic film recycling: Ms. Bourgoin thanks Mr. Oakes for connecting her with Lindsay, she was very helpful. The libraries are willing to host a container and we can put one at town hall (Shagbark has too much of their own). Someone will have to empty and take the film to the 3 closest places: Big Y, Stop & Shop and Job Lot. Ms. Shaltiel suggests getting it set up, then get a group of people in town who are willing to help. Post about it on FB, looking for people to empty it once a week. Ms. Bourgoin suggests reaching out to scouts, lions, etc. first. Ms. Myers suggested it to the American Legion. No appointment necessary at those stores, it just needs to be weighed first so we can report it to NexTrex. Ms. Bourgoin will work up a detailed plan for the next meeting. Main goal is to keep plastic out of the waste stream. If we get 1,000lbs in a year, they will donate a bench to the community.

a) Coming Initiatives (Tanya Bourgoin, Amalia Shaltiel, Amber McDonnell)
   i) September Community Conversation, **September 28** – "*What Next? How can we further the community initiatives we talked about this year?"*
   ii) October Repair Cafe, **October 4** (Amalia Shaltiel)
   iii) Riverfest, **October 18** (Amalia Shaltiel) – 8 Mile River biannual event that brings together most of the nonprofits from town, food, music, no selling, just education and fun. Location: Devil's Hopyard from 11-4PM. Ms. Bourgoin will be there with Machimoodus, Ms. Shaltiel will be there for the Sustainability Team. Looking for additional members.
   iv) East Haddam's Halloween in the Village **Saturday 10/18** & scarecrow contest (Amber McDonnell) – will need 2 people, Ms. McDonnell cannot do it alone, Ms. Bourgoin and Ms. Shaltiel will be at Riverfest
   v) Project Safe Halloween **Friday 10/31 –** Youth & Family Services provide the candy, we provide the table and décor. Looking for volunteers, need to know by next meeting.
   vi) Harvest House, **November 23** (Nora Myers) – we are confirmed for this date at St. Stephens. We can start as early as 12PM. Serving ends around 5:30PM, dessert and coffee to follow. Need a minimum of 4 people the whole time. Need to decide whether we will cook the meals and bring them or cook in the church's kitchen. Need to feed 20-30 guests. Can use all serveware and utensils in the kitchen. More details to come. Ms. Shaltiel cannot attend, Ms. Bourgoin is tentative, Ms. McDonnell and Ms. Myers are committed.
   vii) Other Team Member Reports - none

7. New Business
   a. Planning Next year's events (Alan Ponanski) – not discussed

8. Volunteers and Liaison reports – not discussed
9. Audience of Citizens – no emails
10. Announcements – Ms. Bourgoin: recent national events have made an impact here in town. Message to everyone: all people should be treated with dignity and respect. Violence is not a way to solve disagreements. Be very careful about what you post on social media. This can be a tool of distraction and weaponization. Good things in the community are being overshadowed. If it is on a public page, use caution. We don't need this sort of disruption in our community where most people have good intentions.
11. Next meeting **10/21/25 7:00PM**
12. Adjournment. Amalia moved to adjourn, Tanya second. Meeting adjourned 8:26PM.

Public participants may come to the meeting or view the meeting on YouTube Live at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLZq-CmatoKY6FW829c6mBA?view_as=subscriber

You may also access the YouTube Live link from the Town's website: www.easthaddam.org

Questions/comments may be sent to sustainability.team@easthaddam.org prior to and during the meeting.

Questions/comments will be read aloud during the "Audience of Citizens" section of the meeting.

Questions/comments and responses will be included in the minutes and posted on the town website.

Every effort will be made to provide responses during the meeting.