



**Connecticut Chapter**  
**P.O. Box 270595**  
**West Hartford, Connecticut 06127**  
connecticut.sierraclub.org

August 21, 2020

Catherine Diviney  
West Hartford Clean Energy Commission  
50 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

Re: West Hartford Clean Energy Plan

Dear Ms. Diviney and Members of the Clean Energy Commission,

On behalf of Sierra Club's more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for providing this opportunity to comment in support of the draft West Hartford Clean Energy Plan<sup>1</sup>.

West Hartford has a proven track record as a clean energy leader. We applaud the work of the Clean Energy Commission and yourself as Town Energy Specialist to reduce energy consumption and increase clean energy in West Hartford. In the last few years, the Town of West Hartford has saved money as well as reduced climate-destroying pollution through your careful planning and stewardship of energy efficiency measures and clean energy installations. Municipal electricity needs are very nearly 100% clean and renewable. The draft West Hartford Clean Energy Plan is a crucial next step to continue to make progress on the municipal level and so that all residents can participate in and benefit from a just and equitable transition to 100% clean and renewable energy.

In order to protect the health and well-being of the community as well as combat climate change, it is critical that West Hartford transition away from fossil fuels to clean, renewable forms of energy. Tropical Storm Isaias was a reminder that weather events driven by climate change are increasing.

Sierra Club Connecticut supports the goals of this Clean Energy Plan to achieve a just and equitable transition to 100% clean and renewable for West Hartford. This forward looking plan with its focus on energy efficiency and local generation of clean energy will set us on a path that will lead to greater resiliency and sustainability.

We support the Clean Energy Plan, and also offer some specific feedback for your consideration:

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<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1594998535/westhartfordctgov/cwbtkpzaoypp8lxmvkh7/Clean-Energy-Draft-Plan.pdf>

- Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) are a tool to achieve 100% clean and renewable energy, but should be used as little as possible so that the emphasis for West Hartford is the creation of new renewable energy generated locally. It could be helpful to define the scope of RECs including where RECs will be located, up to what percent will be used, and how long West Hartford intends to use RECs.
- Energy Efficiency: Energy efficiency is an incredibly important tool to lower energy bills and reduce energy consumption. Simple weatherization steps like sealing air leaks and adding insulation can reduce energy bills up to 30%<sup>2</sup>, and are available with deep discounts or even no fee at all through Connecticut's energy efficiency program, EnergizeCT. To assist West Hartford residents experiencing high energy burden, the Plan could specifically identify how the Town might go about targeting efficiency projects to residents in need of energy relief.
- Engaging at the State and Utility Level: The Plan could be more specific on the processes that West Hartford leadership might engage in; this could include PURA hearings, public hearings of the Connecticut General Assembly, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection proceedings, or others.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and we look forward to achieving a just and equitable transition to 100% clean and renewable energy in West Hartford.

Sincerely,



Samantha Dynowski, State Director  
Sierra Club Connecticut

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.energizect.com/events-resources/energy-basics/energy-efficiency>