

MINUTES – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

January 8, 2026 7:00 PM

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Participants

Members Present: Christina Christodoulopoulos (Co-Chair), Eric Balles (Co-Chair), Mac Hisey, Alan Gilden, Kyra Prats, Keith Therrien

Members Absent: Alex Cardoos (Associate Member)

Call to Order

Co-Chair Christina Christodoulopoulos called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Public Input

No public comment was offered.

Committee Housekeeping

The minutes of the November 6, 2025, ESC meeting were reviewed. Approval of the minutes as amended was moved by Mac, seconded by Eric, and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The Committee deferred review of the 12/18/2025 meeting minutes.

Co-Chair's Update:

ESC Annual Report reviewed and inputs discussed – the ESC is aligned with the comments and inputs discussed.

Eric Balles presented and reviewed a document titled “Refreshers and Reminders” covering Open Meeting Law requirements and best practices for minute-taking.

Treasurer's report:

Alan Gilden presented the Treasurer's Report. The FY26 budget allocation is \$12,500. Expenditures to date total \$869.06, leaving \$11,630.94 remaining to spend. \$1383.24 was committed with \$1116.76 to commit. A \$500 award from the Cultural Council to support RTSD was announced.

Governance

No updates were provided by the Land Use and Sustainability Coordinator

Leading Cities – no updates

Liaison Reports – no updates on the Planning Board or MVP.

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Natural Environment

Christina discussed enforcement of the municipal landscaping policy with Ryan the town Administrator. Ryan will remind the entities affected (police station, fire station, etc...) and also advised the ESC to promote the policy through ESC liaisons.

Wildlife Corridors Project. The Committee discussed the Wildlife Corridors Project and mapping proposal. The ESC agreed to support the concept and are all aligned with the approach. Key points made:

- Proposal presented at the CPC meeting – it was well received
- Will be a collaboration with LSC – approach needs to be determined (overlapping and separate objectives).
- Summary of the project due to CPC January 16.
- Formal Application for funding will be made February 2
 - Funding from the CPC under the Community Preservation Act
 - LSC leads (Alex Perra and Judy Asterkoff) are putting together the joint application (which will come back to ESC for approval)
 - Extension to the application deadline requested by LSC.
- Next steps after this - CPC approval, Select Board approval, will be presented under the Town Warrant for final approval during the Town Meeting. Once approved, Proposals will go out for bid for final selection and contract award.
- Project details
 - ESC reached out to Consultants for Support – to get preliminary scope and budget for the application.
 - Northeast Conservation – direct experience in mapping corridors
 - Conservation Works – who have worked with Cons Com and LSC and who are eager to participate in the project - provided a proposal.
 - Recommended approach
 - preliminary take on a wildlife corridor map – to get something early to be considered during new and ongoing town development
 - validate results – field work
 - final report including
 - planning for preserving or creating fragmented habitat connections
 - habitat management recommendations – reducing conflicts with wildlife and humans
 - Other recommendations
 - Refined wildlife corridor maps

Trail Signage. Reviewed trail signage options. Close collaboration with Land Stewardship and Trails committees recommended as they are the ones responsible for procuring and installing trails signs now. The committee agreed to continue gathering information.

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Liaison Reports

- Conservation Commission
 - Discussion about ECS taking a position on Dam#1 at the cranberry bog – whether to allow the dam to breach and let the beavers do their work. Or to ask for time on the Cons Com agenda to evaluate other options like installing a boardwalk versus repairing the dam. The ESC agreed to ask for time on the Cons Com agenda to participate in the discussion.
- Cranberry Bog House
 - Bog house conversion to affordable housing is prompting a waiver versus land swap discussion (Bog House is on Conservation Land). Mac, Kyra, and Eric agreed to draft a position paper on this for the ESC to discuss. Issues:
 - Swap – more than just acreage but the environmental value of the land swap must be considered
 - Waiver – objective is to increase the conservation land, not deplete it
 - Precedence – concern about the next time this is requested
- Agricultural Commission – no update
- Board of Health – next meeting is on January 14.

Built Environment

Liaison Reports

- Municipal Facilities Committee – no update
- Fire Station Building Renovation Committee
 - Committee launched – meeting weekly
 - Design must be finalized for bid and proposals
- DPW Building Committee – committee is just being formed and Keith will be the ESC voting member

HomeWorks reached out to ESC to see if they can solicit Carlisle Residents again to perform free Energy Assessments. ESC is in agreement that HomeWorks can send out a letter, like they did in the past, for this activity. Eric will contact Sarah Wasserman with ESC support for this activity.

Transportation and Mobility

Liaison Reports

- Safety Committee – nothing new
- EV Charger Working Group – nothing new to report

Outreach

Website updates – Eric and Alan to work on an approach:

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- Dead Links
- Similar Topics referencing different Sources
- Sources cited ESC may want to replace

Current outreach plans/events - ESC Hour Event

- The committee discussed plans for the ESC Hour event scheduled for January 27. Sarah Wasserman, Eric and Christina will be in attendance. Approval of the ESC Hour as presented was moved by Eric, seconded by Kyra, and passed unanimously by roll call vote.
- A motion to approve up to \$50 for refreshments for the ESC Hour was made by Mac, seconded by Eric, and passed unanimously by roll call vote. (Alan mentioned that this may be up to 600\$ if the ESC Hour is conducted Monthly)
- A motion to approve up to \$175 Mosquito advertisement for this event was made by Mac, seconded by Kyra, and passed unanimously by roll call vote.
- A motion to approve up to \$15 printing costs for this event was made by Eric, seconded by Keith, and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Newsletter Articles – Keith is working on a snow removal article.

RTSD

- Letters have gone out to invite last year's participants, and many yesses have been received.
- Local vendors may be approved to sell sustainable products while maintaining the event's educational focus.
- The Committee approved Grow Native Mass to host a small pop-up market with a few local nurseries to sell native plants
- Policies were discussed on participation criteria (benchmarking with Old Home Days). Inclusion versus exclusions (particularly with perceived partisan activity) was the primary issue. Should have a 3rd party like the town staff decide on any inclusion issues versus ESC committee.

Liaison Reports

- Schools – Meeting with Brad Cranston tomorrow.

New Business

Additional discussion included potential donor-advised fund creation.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:56 pm.

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by Alan Gilden

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Minutes approved on January 29, 2026

Next Steps

Summary of New Action Items

1. Eric: Format and finalize the annual report/town report using agreed-upon substance and suggestions and circulate for final review and vote at the next meeting (due end of month).
2. Mac, Eric, Kyra: Draft a statement regarding the bog house land swap/conservation land waiver issue for committee review at the next meeting.
3. Keith: Investigate more cost-efficient options for trail signs, including contacting Trails Committee (Steve Tobin) and Alpha Graphics, and report back to the committee.
4. Keith: Research and prepare 2-3 paragraphs on snow removal for the town newsletter and submit for approval at the next meeting.
5. Eric and Alan: Review and update the ESC website content, focusing on dead links and reference cleanup, and report progress at the next meeting.
6. Christina: Book the Clark Room (or alternative if unavailable) for the January 27th ESC office hours event.
7. Christina: Inform Sarah Wasserman that ESC supports another Homeworks energy audit outreach letter to residents.
8. Alan: Meet with Brad (schools) to discuss next engagement (climate leaders, underground water cycle, waste/TSAC), and coordinate with Jim O'Shea as needed.
9. Christina: Coordinate with Keith to collect/display sustainable alternative construction materials for a possible RTSD display table.
10. Alan: Ask Kelly to re-approach Town Council regarding donor-advised funds for ESC and ensure relevant Select Board minutes reflect the conversation.

Chat Log: No chat inputs requiring inclusion.