
Coventry seeks sustainability status

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COVENTRY — The town council has recently demonstrated its commitment to municipal sustainability by approving an application to Sustainable CT.

Sustainable CT is a statewide, action-oriented volunteer certification program through the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University.

It is designed to boost local economies, help municipal operations become more efficient, reduce operating costs and provide grants and additional support to municipalities.

Councilmen voted 7-0 to apply to the program Feb. 5.

Coventry Town Manager John Elsesser said a preliminary application has to be in by May 1 to be considered this year.

According to the Sustainable CT website, final applications are due by Sept. 7.

The website indicates final decisions are expected on certification levels by Oct. 26 and there will be an awards ceremony in November at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Annual Convention.

According to the Sustainable CT website, there are 13 communities registered for the program, none of which are certified.

The Mansfield Town Council recently approved an application to participate in the program, but Mansfield is not included in the list of registered communities yet.

Municipalities must complete at least one

action in each of the nine action categories and successfully complete actions totaling 200 or more points for bronze certification.

To achieve silver certification, municipalities must complete at least one action in each category and successfully complete actions totaling 400 or more points.

The nine categories are: thriving local economies; well-stewarded land and natural resources; vibrant and creative cultural ecosystems; dynamic and resilient planning; clean and diverse transportation systems and choices; efficient physical infrastructure and operations; strategic and inclusive public services; healthy, efficient and diverse housing; and inclusive and equitable community impacts.

According to Coventry's resolution, the first meeting of a Sustainability Team will be held within 30 days of the resolution passing and will meet as frequently as needed, but no less than quarterly.

That team is comprised of the: director of planning and development, director of parks and recreation, public works director, town engineer, director of library services and the town manager.

The team will work with and update several town and land-use boards and commissions.

The resolution also indicates the team will work with citizen volunteers on tasks.

"That was a way of, instead of having to have a bunch of other people appointed, they could just come and help," said Elsesser.