



CEEJAC Land Subcommittee

Chair: Yaw Darko, CT Land Conservation Council | December 1, 2023

Agenda

- Welcome & Roll Call - Yaw Darko
- CEEJAC Meeting Ground Rules
- Update on Urban Forestry Grant Program Process - Danica Doroski, CT DEEP
- Presentation on Urban Green and Community Garden Program + Q&A - Lindsay Suhr, CT DEEP
- Goals for Land Subcommittee – Yaw Darko
- Subcommittee Work Plan – Yaw Darko
- Closing & Announcements – Yaw Darko

Public comments will be accepted throughout the meeting



CEEJAC Meeting Ground Rules

- During the discussion, all members should:
 - Listen respectfully, without interrupting
 - Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views
 - Only have one conversation at a time
 - Be mindful to give others the opportunity to speak
 - Focus on the task at hand rather than the position
 - Avoid off-topic conversations
 - Criticize ideas, not people
 - Commit to learning, not debating
 - Avoid blame, speculation and inflammatory language
 - Avoid assumptions about any member of the group
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Introductions

- Welcome – Yaw Darko, CT Land Conservation Council, Chair
- Roll Call – Yaw Darko
 - Leticia Colon de Mejias
 - Sharon Lewis
 - Alex Rodriguez
 - Terry Adams
 - Reginald Saint Fortcolin
 - Gustavo Requena Santos
 - Heather Dionne
 - Anna Pickett
 - Kathy Czepiel

Update on Urban Forestry Grant Program Process

Danica Doroski, CT DEEP

Presentation on Urban Green and Community Garden Program + Q&A

Lindsay Suhr, CT DEEP



URBAN GREEN AND COMMUNITY GARDEN GRANT PROGRAM

Presented by: Lindsay Suhr, Office Director
Land Acquisition and Management, CT DEEP

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Defined under narrow section of CGS Sec. 7-131d(b)**
 - “...for restoration or protection of natural features or habitats on open space already owned by the municipality...”
- **Projects must take place on municipally–owned land**
- **Eligibility:**
 - **Must be “distressed municipality” or “targeted investment community”***
(CGS §32-9p)
 - **May have co-sponsor project manager (non-profit)**



POTENTIAL USES

- Community gardens
- Pollinator gardens
- Plantings – trees, shrubs, etc.
- Green Infrastructure Improvements – rain gardens, bioswales, etc.
- Passive recreational trails
- Any of the above that is a portion of a larger park improvement project

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Municipal Ownership – current property deed
- If Co-sponsor Project Manager – current agreement b/t municipality & co-sponsor
- Project Description – narrative, community need, ADA accessibility
- Site Plan Designs – Drawings showing parcel and project proposal
- Plan for project operation & maintenance
- Funding Mechanism – total cost & required match share sources
- Budget Table – item, unit and cost; grant vs. match source
- Consistency w/ current Local Plan of Conservation & Development
- Local Support Letters
- Past Grant Compliance

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Materials – lumber, hardware, soil, mulch, fencing, signage, edible plants, perennial plants or trees not on CT invasives list
- Water irrigation, watering tanks, rain gardens
- ADA accessible pathways
- Food growing hoop houses, row crop covers, trellises
- Hand Tools – shovels, hoes, rakes
- Professional Services – designers, landscape architects, engineers
- Minimal Outdoor Structures – small tool sheds, seating benches, shade structures



REQUIRED MATCH SHARE

- Grant funds cannot exceed 50% of a total project cost
- Flexible with match expenses
- Eligible Sources of Match:
 - Staff Labor
 - In-kind / Donated Materials
 - In-kind / Donated Professional Services
 - Volunteer Labor (current value as per independentsector.org)
 - Municipal Funds and/or other Source Contributions

KNOWN BARRIERS

- Funds cannot be for intensive uses like splash pads, swimming pools, athletic fields, playgrounds, etc.
- Environmental Justice Communities are not eligible
- Projects must be on municipal land
- Only municipalities can apply



WHAT IS DEEP PLANNING TO DO?

- **Push for Statute Changes**

- Allowing Environmental Justice Communities to qualify
- Allowing Non-profit Organizations to apply directly

- **Policy Changes**

- Liberal interpretation of uses
- Match outside eligible expenses

- **Increased Outreach**

- Events within communities
- Advertising outside typical places
- Gain understanding of barriers/funding that is needed



HOW CAN CEEJAC HELP?

• Identify additional barriers

- What funding do communities want/need in this realm?
- Can we work within existing programs or do we need something completely new?

• Outreach

- spread word about program
- help initiate presentations within communities
- ideas for improved outreach/advertising

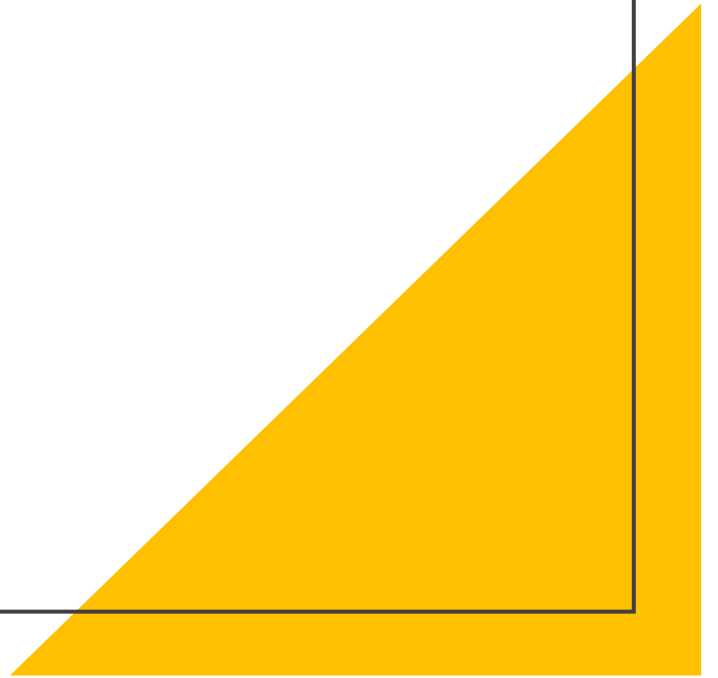
Goals for Land Subcommittee

Identify a public participation process that includes community stakeholders in the development of grant funding programs

Identify strategies for conserving and revitalizing/remediating land in urban environments

Identify opportunities to reduce barriers to accessing open space beyond urban parks

Subcommittee Work Plan



Closing & Announcements

- **Scheduling Survey** - <https://forms.office.com/g/r7SrAg6xR1>
- **Announcements from Subcommittee Members**
- **Announcements from Public & DEEP**
 - **Batterson Park Public Study Public Input Sessions**
 - Pursuant to Section 143 of Public Act 23-204, DEEP is required to “study the feasibility of, and recommend options for the provision of, public recreational access to the Batterson Park property located in the city of New Britain and the town of Farmington” in consultation with the city of Hartford and other interested municipalities. DEEP has posted a Draft Batterson Park Study online to receive public comments on the Draft Study in Farmington, Hartford, and New Britain through hybrid meetings accommodating both in-person attendance and joining remotely via Zoom. View the [Notice and Registration for Public Input Sessions](#) and [Draft Batterson Park Study](#).

***CEEJAC Quarterly Meeting
Monday, Dec 11 6-8pm**