

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 24, 2014

Present/Absent: [Excused absence (E); Unexcused absence (U)]

<i>Chester:</i>	Margaret (Peggy) Wilson, Martha Wallace
<i>Deep River:</i>	Nancy Fischbach , Vacancy
East Haddam:	Harvey Thomas, Emmett Lyman
Essex:	<i>Claire Matthew (U)</i>
<i>Fenwick:</i>	<i>Ethel Davies, Borough Warden (E)</i>
Haddam:	Susan Bement, Derek Turner (E)
Lyme:	J. Melvin Woody, Lisa Niccolai (E)
Old Lyme:	Peter Cable , <i>Suzanne Thompson(E)</i>
Old Saybrook:	Madge Fish, Belinda Ahern (E)
Former MRPA:	<i>Raul Debrigard (E)</i>
Former CRERPA:	Vacancy
<i>DEEP:</i>	David Blatt
Staff:	Nancy Fischbach
Guests:	Attorney Campbell Hudson

Call to Order

Chairman **Woody** called the regular meeting of the Connecticut River Gateway Commission to order at RiverCOG offices located at 145 Dennison Road, Essex at 7:30p.

Approval of 6/26/14 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve by **Fischbach** as amended, seconded by **Wilson**, passed unanimously.

Discussion

Campbell Hudson summarized history of scenic easement actions with initial DEEP position of need for planted tree buffer to obtain DEEP support. GWC concurred and had previously voted to require tree buffer. Current DEEP position is tree buffer not needed and, if proposed, may require FAA approval for safety concerns. Timothy Mellon's view is that FAA approval may not be obtainable, so that, currently, scenic easement is at impasse.

Fischbach moved that GWC adopt position that tree buffer not required for Commission support of scenic easement. **Wilson** seconded motion. Considerable discussion of safety and aesthetic issues. Un-amended motion passed with 8 votes in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention. **Fischbach** asked that staff send a letter stating GWC support of scenic easement without additional tree buffer.

Treasurer's Report

Wilson reported as follows:

- a) Currently two accounts at Essex Financial; too early to assess performance as current return reflects mixed history.
- b) Essex Financial in process of converting cash to better yield investments.
- c) Finance Committee approved a monthly draw of \$5k to checking account for operating expenses.
- d) Essex Financial advised the manager of one of the funds in which GW is invested has changed firms and recommended that GW funds be moved to his new fund at his new firm..

- e. **Wilson** reviewed expenses: \$1,000 to CRWC “Source-to-Sea” support; \$50 for Hamburg Fair registration; staffing expenses: \$1706

Bement moved, **Fischbach** seconded, to approve Treasurer’s report and the payment of bills. Passed unanimously.

Correspondence and Staff Report

1. CRWC “Source-to-Sea” donation check approved last month in the amount of \$1,000 to be signed at meeting. The period for volunteering for clean-up is now upon us.
2. Summer Fairs. Applications have been prepared (Hamburg Fair) and sent (Chester Fair). Staff contacted the organizer of the Haddam Neck Fair (Dianne McHutchison) to let them know of Gateway’s intent to return. They were informed that the entry form links were inoperable. When fixed, an entry form will be completed and sent. Fees: Hamburg Fair - \$50 (check to be signed at meeting); Chester Fair – to be determined; Haddam Neck Fair – no fee.
3. Stanley Kolber. Old Lyme resident and Inland Wetland Commission member has asked the Old Lyme Zoning Commission and Chair Jane Cable if he could take a crack at writing a document that summarizes the authority and mission of the Gateway Commission in Old Lyme. His feeling is that not enough people are aware of Gateway as should be. Downes sat down with Mr. Kolber on Tuesday, July 22, 2014 to talk about Gateway’s public outreach efforts and to share information. Mr. Kolber was encouraged to prepare such a document and develop ideas regarding how to better publicize Gateway and its mission. Downes offered to be a resource for his work. He made suggestions about better utilization of the press, especially local papers which residents tend to read in his opinion (Lyme Line, Shoreline Times, Harbor News, Haddam Bulletin). He will stay in touch. Mr. Kolber is a retired NYC attorney who lives on the Lieutenant River and is a wildlife/nature photographer (www.stanleykolber.com)
4. Jill Cartagna, Essex. Ms. Cartagna, a resident of the Ivoryton section of Essex, contacted Downes via email and expressed interest in serving on the Gateway Commission. Jill most recently worked for Point One Architects in Old Lyme and is therefore quite familiar with the Gateway mission and operation. Point One Architects have been employed on numerous projects that have come through the Gateway Commission including the marina redevelopment project on the Old Saybrook waterfront known as “Marina Village”. Members will recall that, with the resignation of Wally Schieferdecker, there is an opening for an Essex member. In addition to presenting this to Gateway, she was told to contact First Selectman Norm Needleman to express interest.
5. Sams Gabion Wall, 9 Rivers Edge Road, Old Saybrook. **Blatt** reported on a letter sent to David & Betsy Sams by the DEEP requiring the completion of the gabion wall removal and restoration by September 30, 2014.

Commission Referrals

None.

Commission Referrals Handled by Staff

Variance Application, Old Saybrook. 27 Bridge Street, Saybrook Point Hotel. An “after-the-fact” variance application to raise a small residential structure 5.7 feet to meet FEMA requirements. In Old Saybrook, elevation of structures solely to meet FEMA has been classified as not requiring variances even if the structure is nonconforming. If the structure is being *enlarged* in any way, however, the project is *not* exempted from the need for variances. In this case, a new front porch and new back deck are proposed that will enlarge the structure’s footprint. The porch and deck will not extend laterally beyond the sides of the existing structure, so the only increase in visual “bulk” will be the amount that the structure has been raised. The total height, with the 5.7 foot lift, is 27.4 foot, well under the 35 foot height maximum. The structure will be used to house hotel interns and other employees and is located two lots south of the two new hotel structures recently reviewed by GW. It’s across the street from the Harbor One Marina parking lot and is set as far back from the river as the recently reviewed structures. A letter of “no opposition” was sent to the Old Saybrook ZBA on Tuesday, July 22, 2014.

Committee Reports

- a. Outreach.

Thomas reported that GW will have tables at the Hamburg, Chester and Haddam Neck Fairs as well as the Eight Mile River Fest. Sign-up sheets were circulated for GW members to volunteer at the tables during the fairs,

which take place the weekend of August 15th (Hamburg), August 22nd (Chester) and August 29th (Haddam Neck).

On the issue of GW visiting the Planning & Zoning Commissions in the Gateway towns, **Thomas** reported that the August schedule includes a visit to the Haddam P&Z on Thursday, August 7th, and a visit to the East Haddam P&Z on Tuesday, August 26th. Town representatives from Haddam and East Haddam are advised of these dates.

b. Land.

Members of the Commission received a map (originally produced by **Debrigard** and enhanced by Downes) showing the conserved properties in the Haddam Neck area and in the area of the Sogge property. The map highlights the extensive conservation that has and may occur in that area of the Gateway Conservation Zone.

New Business.

None reported.

Old Business.

Woody described the moving celebration memorial service for Linda B. Krause.

Adjournment

Upon motion by **Fischbach**, seconded by **Wilson**, and passed unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.