



**CT River Gateway Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – Hybrid
Meeting Thursday, June 27,
2024, 7:00 PM RiverCOG
Conference Room and via Zoom**

Present: **Chester:** Misha Semënov-Leiva; **Deep River:** Jerry Roberts; **Essex:** Peter Fleischer, Jim Hiller (Alternate); **Haddam:** Mike Farina (Secretary), Erin Ortega (Alternate) (Arrived at 7:30); **Lyme:** Susan Fox; **Old Lyme:** Suzanne Thompson (Chair), Greg Futoma (Alternate); **Old Saybrook:** William Webb (Vice Chair); **RiverCOG North:** Raul de Brigard (Arrived 7:15, seated after A. Ponanski left), Alan Ponanski (Alternate)(left at 8:15); **RiverCOG South:** Dr. Clayton Penniman; **CT DEEP:** Kathleen Perzanowski

Absent: **Chester:** Tom Brelsford (Alternate); **East Haddam:** Crary Brownell, Debbie Langdon; **Fenwick:** Newt Brainard; **Old Saybrook:** Diane Stober (Treasurer); **Ex Officio:** Melvin Woody

Staff support present: Susie Beckman (RiverCOG), Sarah Makowicki (Clerk)

I. Agenda

1. Call to Order: Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Approval of the Agenda

A **motion** was made by A. Ponanski, seconded by C. Penniman, to approve the June 27, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

3. Approval of the May 23, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

A **motion** was made by A. Ponanski, seconded by G. Futoma, to approve the May 23, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

4. Guest Speaker

Denise Savigeau Chairman CT River Coastal Conservation District

Ms. Savigeau informed the Commission about the Conservation District, which consists of 26 towns from New Britain to Old Lyme and Hebron to Madison. In CT there are five soil and water conservation districts with 3,000 Nationally. The Districts focus is to help farmers with best management practices, including sustainable practices and management of agricultural waste. The District also provides technical services to assist municipalities and other organizations.

5. Public Comment

Nina Regan from the Old Saybrook Conservation Commission joined CRGC at their meeting to bring back and report on information gained at the meeting.

6. Review of Referrals & Preliminary Discussions

a. Deep River- Gateway Exemption Overlay Zone Text & Map Amendment

CRGC representatives met with the Deep River Planning and Zoning Commission, Mr. Ponanski reported that the meeting was successful. Mr. Webb stated that the DR P&Z will change the language of the regulations to eliminate the review process for projects within the Turnpike Industrial Zone. The changes that were agreed upon accomplished the goals of the DR P&Z and the CRGC without compromising the Standards of CRGC. The regulations changes will now follow the regular process and the Commission will be notified when the final draft is being sent to the DR P&Z. When the final language is adopted the CRGC will then adopt Deep Rivers regulations as Gateway Standards in Deep River.

Commission members also discussed where these exemption zones should live within the Gateway Standards. Mr. Semënov-Leiva suggested that exemption zones be listed in an appendix.

A **motion** was made by W. Webb, seconded by A. Ponanski, that the letter presented at the June 27th meeting be sent to the Deep River P & Z Commission with minor word changes, stating that CRGC is in support of the Deep River Regulation and Maps change.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

b. Old Saybrook – 201 North Cove Rd

Joe Bergin and Joe Wren presented for the applicant. The Commission previously heard an application from these applicants at the February 2024 meeting. The applicants have resubmitted a revised variance application to the Old Saybrook ZBA which has been referred to the CRGC. Two changes have been made from the February application. One, four flowering dogwood trees are proposed along the eastern side of the lot. Two, the proposed pool has been reduced in size to 12'x26' (originally 15'x28'). This reduction also includes the patio being reduced in height that it is no longer a structure and the retaining wall previously proposed will not be needed. The proposed pool is still within the 100' Riparian Buffer and Structural setback.

The Commission discussed the changes made to the application. From CRGC perspective the changes are not significant and feel that the same application was presented. The only difference is four Dogwood trees. The applicant is still proposing a new structure in the 100' Riparian setback.

A **motion** was made by S. Thompson, seconded by W. Webb, to write a letter stating that the Commission’s previous position still stands.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

c. Lyme – Regulations Amendment – Conservation Commission IWWC Forestry Regulations
Ross Byrne, Lyme Zoning Enforcement Officer presented Lyme’s regulation changes on forestry. Per CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Lyme will transfer jurisdiction of commercial forestry regulations from the Planning and Zoning Commission to the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Webb asked that CRGC be explicitly added to the regulations. Mr. de Brigard asked that the Commission will be added to the entities notified when activity is being done.

A **motion** was made by R. de Brigard, seconded by C. Penniman, to send a letter that states that the Commission asks to be added to the entities being notified when forestry activity is being done within the Gateway Conservation Zone.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

7. Correspondence/Staff Report

Ms. Beckman reported that there will be a preliminary meeting for a project at 1 Merriwold Ln in Deep River on June 28th at 1pm. A Lyme resident requested a meeting regarding removal of vegetation that will be done in July. There was a discussion with North Cove Construction regarding Church Street in Old Saybrook.

Ms. Beckman received a thank you note from CT River Conservancy for the Commissions support of the Source to Sea Clean Up. There was also a letter from Essex Financial which will be shared with the Chairman.

8. Chairman’s Report -None

9. Old Business – None

10. New Business – None

11. Committee Reports

a. Treasurer – Approve Bills

Ms. Thompson presented the most recent bills.

A **motion** was made by J. Roberts, seconded by M. Farina, to pay the bills. The bills are as follows:
RiverCOG: \$5626 for May services, Holloran & Sage: \$100, W Design: \$67.50, Clerk Fees: \$373.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

Mr. Futoma presented the budget for FY 24/25, commenting that the proposed budget in within 4-5% of the spending limit.

A **motion** was made by C. Penniman, seconded by G. Futoma, to approve the FY 24/25 budget.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

b. Communications – Update

Mr. Futoma discussed the Fall Boat Cruise. A deposit has been made. Mr. Futoma asked for volunteers to help plan the trip, including picking a date, coming up with an agenda and planning refreshments. Mr. Hiller and Mr. Roberts volunteered to help.

c. Rules of Procedures – None

d. Land Committee - Executive Session.

No updates.

12. Adjournment

A **motion** was made by M. Farina seconded by C. Penniman to adjourn the meeting.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Fox, S. Thompson, W. Webb, A. Ponanski, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 10-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Makowicki, Clerk

The next regular meeting of the Gateway Commission is scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 7:00 PM.

Minutes are posted in compliance with Connecticut’s Freedom of Information Act. Please note that edits may be made to these minutes prior to their acceptance by the Commission at its next meeting. Any changes will be included within the next meeting’s minutes.