



**CT River Gateway Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – Hybrid
Meeting Thursday, September 26, 2024
7:00 PM RiverCOG
Conference Room and via Zoom**

Present: **Chester:** Misha Semënov-Leiva; **Deep River:** Jerry Roberts; **East Haddam:** Debbie Langdon
Essex: Peter Fleischer, Jim Hiller (Alternate); **Haddam:** Mike Farina (Secretary), Erin Ortega (Alternate);
Old Lyme: Suzanne Thompson (Chair), Greg Futoma (Alternate); **RiverCOG South:** Dr. Clayton Penniman;
Ex Officio: Melvin Woody; **CT DEEP:** Kathleen Perzanowski.

Absent: **Chester:** Tom Brelsford (Alternate); **East Haddam:** Crary Brownell; **Fenwick:** Newt Brainard;
Lyme: Susan Fox; **Old Saybrook:** Diane Stober (Treasurer), William Webb (Vice Chair); **RiverCOG North:**
Raul de Brigard; Alan Ponanski (Alternate).

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

I. Agenda

1. Call to Order: Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

2. Approval of the Agenda

A **motion** was made by J. Hiller, seconded by C. Penniman, to approve the September 26, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

3. Approval of the August 22, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes.

A **motion** was made by C. Penniman, seconded by J. Roberts, to approve the August 22, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following amendment pg.2 addition of Commissioner Langdon suggested that the cable run under the River. R.deBrigard sent an email noting that his name needed to be removed from roll call votes after Section 6 because he left the meeting immediately after the vote on 32 Hemlock Drive.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

5. Public Comment

None.

6. Review of Referrals & Preliminary Discussions

a. Deep River – Turnpike Industrial District (TID) Regulations Amendment

A **motion** was made by J. Roberts, seconded by G. Futoma, to schedule a public hearing for CRGC to hear public comment, review and adopt Deep River TID regulation amendments into Gateway Standards for October 24, 2024.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

b. Essex – 7 Riverview Rd. Variance

Applicant Margaret and Jonathan Morris were present and presented the application. The applicant proposed an 8'x8' pergola with an open roof. One of the posts for the structure will be in the 100' structural setback. The Commission asked the applicants not to extend the post more than 3' into the 100' structural setback.

A **motion** was made by P. Fleischer, seconded by M. Farina, to write a favorable letter to the Essex ZBA for 7 Riverview. With the recommendation that the pergola does not extend more than 3' into the 100' structural setback.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

c. Chester – 49 Parker's Point Rd. – Special Exception

Joe Wren P.E. presented for the applicant, owner Craig Morel was also present. The proposed addition is more than 100' from any wetland and 450' from the Coastal Jurisdiction Line (CJL).

Several Commissioners expressed concern with the size of the addition being inconsistent with the traditional river view scene and the bulk that it will add from the river view. Mr. Roberts expressed his concern that existing trees would be removed for an enhanced view. The applicant responded that no trees would be removed. The applicant will also plant native juniper of the embankment.

The Commission recommended that the applicant retain existing trees and note them on the site plan, use Dark Sky compliant lighting, plant native vegetation on the mowed embankment and to plant three or five native trees on the embankment of the hill, use glare resistant glass and keep to muted colors of grey.

A **motion** was made by M. Farina, seconded by C. Penniman, to send a favorable letter to the Chester ZC with the above recommendations.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed**, 5-3-0.

7. Correspondence/Staff Report

Ms. Beckman updated the CRGC on the appeal of 201 N. Cove Rd in Old Saybrook, Attorney Matt Willis advised that there were no new developments, and he would keep the Commission informed.

8. Chairman’s Report – Ms. Thompson updated the Commission on the Lynde Point Lighthouse. The Commission could be asked to support one or more applications that are still under consideration by General Services Administration and National Park Service. Commissioners expressed that if they are asked to support any applications that they be provided updated applications to review. The Chairman said materials would be sent and to anticipate discussion and a potential vote at the October meeting.

9. Old Business – Eversource – Any responses about the Eversource project along the River need to be made to the Siting Committee for their next meeting. Ms. Thompson asked the Commission to appoint her to form an Eversource Ad Hoc Committee to prepare comments for the Commission’s review and approval. With the following members: A. Ponanski, D. Langdon, M. Farina, R. de Brigard, S. Fox.

A **motion** was made by C. Penniman; seconded by J. Hiller, to form an Eversource Ad Hoc Committee.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

10. New Business – None

11. Committee Reports

a. Treasurer – Approve Bills

Ms. Thompson presented the most recent bills.

A **motion** was made by C. Penniman, seconded by J. Roberts, to pay the bills. The bills are as follows: RiverCOG: \$3511.01 for August services, Holloran & Sage: \$ 1593.67, Clerk: \$188.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

P. Fleischer updated the Commission on the status of accounts at Essex Financial. He stated that the accounts were in good shape and the previous information he had was not complete. There was a recommendation that a finance committee be established with at least three members.

Chairman Thompson reminded Commissioners that elections of officers, including Treasurer, would be at CRGC Annual Meeting on October 24. The Commission’s Rules of Procedure provide for a Finance Committee; Commissioners will be asked to recommit to CRGC committees after officer elections.

b. Communications – Update

Reminder the CT River boat trip will be on Friday October 4th. Mr. Futoma suggested that the Commission make a contribution to the CT Conservation Land Council Conference of \$1000.

A **motion** was made by G. Futoma; seconded by M. Semënov-Leiva, to pay the sponsorship fee of \$1000 to CCLC Conference.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

c. Rules of Procedures – None

d. Land Committee - Executive Session.

No updates. No Executive Session.

12. Adjournment

A **motion** was made by C. Penniman; seconded by J. Hiller, to adjourn the meeting.

Voting in favor: M. Semënov-Leiva, J. Roberts, D. Langdon, P. Fleischer, M. Farina, S. Thompson, C. Penniman, K. Perzanowski; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Makowicki, Clerk

The next regular meeting of the Gateway Commission is scheduled for Thursday, October 24, 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.