



**CT River Gateway Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Monday, February 13 2023, 7:00 PM via Zoom**

**DRAFT**

**I. Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM**

**Present:** **Chester:** Tom Brelsford; **Deep River:** Jerry Roberts; **Essex:** Claire Matthews (Treasurer); **Haddam:** Susan Bement; **Lyme:** Melvin Woody (Vice Chair); **Old Lyme:** Greg Futoma (Alternate); **Old Saybrook:** William Webb (Secretary), Diane Stober (Alternate); **CT DEEP:** Kathleen Perzanowski; **RiverCOG North:** Raul de Brigard

**Absent:** **East Haddam:** Crary Brownell; **Fenwick:** Newt Brainerd.; **Chester:** Jenny Kitsen, (Alternate); **Deep River:** Kathy David (Alternate); **East Haddam:** Debbie Langdon (Alternate); **Essex:** Misha Semenov-Leiva (Alternate) **Haddam:** Mike Farina (Alternate); **Old Lyme:** Suzanne Thompson (Chair) (arrived late); **RiverCOG North:** Alan Ponanski (Alternate); **RiverCOG South:** Judy Preston.

**Public:** Bob Doane, Richard Lemieux

**Staff support present:** Sam Gold (RiverCOG)

**II. Agenda**

1. Call to Order at 7:05 PM by Acting Chair Melvin Woody.
2. 108 River Rd, Deep River Special Permit

Mr. Bob Doane, Architect, representing the applicant, Rich Lemieux, presented the updated site plan and structure design to the Commission members. Mr. Doane noted elements that had been changed at the request of the CT River Gateway Commission at the January 26, 2023 Regular Meeting. After their review and discussion, Mr. Webb suggested the Committee's letter to Deep River Zoning Commission be either in support or against the updated design and include the comment that the original grade on front and side of house is the bottom of the house. He noted it is important to state the front and side are at the natural grade.

Ms. Matthews noted there is an enormous amount of excavating on this site because the site does not accept a house on the natural landscape; a platform must be built. She asked if the proposed design preserves or enhances significant natural features and maintains or restores the natural traditional character of the CT River scene. Ms. Matthews noted that the Commission needs to decide whether that criterion in the Gateway Zone Standards has been addressed by the proposed design.

Mr. De de Brigard stated that the Commission's letter to Deep River should include the a statement that the Commission is very concerned about the overall effect in that area on River Road of large houses that have substantially altered the traditional river view scene entirely, and that the Commission regrets seeing houses of these sizes in the Gateway Zone.

Standard B of the Gateway Standards was read: "Structures are to be adapted to the existing terrain, rather than altering the earth form to create a platformed development sight."

A motion was made by R. de Brigard, seconded by C. Matthews, to send a letter to Deep River Zoning Commission stating that the CT River Gateway Commission has viewed the property and believes the

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owner has done the best he could do to make it an acceptable house for this size; however, the Commission notes that a house of the proposed size on the designated property cannot meet all of the Gateway Conservation Zone Standards.

**Voting in favor:** T. Brelsford, J. Roberts, C. Matthews, M. Woody, G. Futoma, W. Webb, R. de Brigard;  
**Opposed:** none; **Abstaining:** none. The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0-0.

3. Updates on towns' reviews of Gateway Standards and planned April CRGC public hearing.

**Essex:** Ms. Matthews said she filed a text amendment to the Essex Zoning Commission that was submitted at the Essex January meeting and the Gateway Standards will be on the Essex April Zoning Commission meeting agenda.

**Lyme:** Mr. Woody said Lyme Commissioners met with Lyme last summer, he was told Gateway Standards were incorporated in Lyme's Zoning Standards, but he needs to confirm with Lyme staff.

**Old Lyme:** Ms. Thompson stated the Old Lyme Zoning Commission voted at its meeting tonight to hold its public hearing and review of the Gateway Standards at its April meeting and the ZC voted to waive its administrative fee for Gateway Zone Standards updates in its standards.

**Haddam:** Ms. Bement said she had submitted the standards to the Haddam Town Planner. Ms. Matthews and Ms. Thompson suggested Ms. Bement contact the town and ask if Haddam had a formal application process similar to Essex and Old Lyme to accept Gateway Zone Standards.

**Deep River:** Mr. Roberts said Deep River will hold a preliminary discussion on February 16 to review the paperwork submitted. Gateway Standards are now on the agenda for public discussion in Deep River.

**Old Saybrook:** Bill Webb said Old Saybrook had already adopted its own night light pollution standards, which he will send to Commissioners.

There were no reports on **Chester** or **East Haddam** Zoning Commission actions on the standards.

Mr. Brelsford noted that member towns are legally required to include the Gateway Standards in their zoning regulations. Mr. de Brigard expressed concern about the Commission's ability to receive feedback from the towns before the Commission's planned April public hearing. Mr. de Brigard suggested to postpone the CRGC hearing on this subject until May, 2023.

A Motion was made by R. de Brigard, seconded by C. Matthews, to **MOVE** the Gateway Standards public hearing to the **May 25, 2023** CRGC Regular Meeting.

**Voting in favor:** T. Brelsford, J. Roberts, C. Matthews, M. Woody, G. Futoma, W. Webb, R. de Brigard;  
**Opposed:** none; **Abstaining:** none. The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0-0.

4. Adjournment - A Motion was made by S. Thompson, seconded by C. Matthews, to **Adjourn** the meeting.

**Voting in favor:** T. Brelsford, J. Roberts, C. Matthews, M. Woody, G. Futoma, W. Webb, R. de Brigard; S. Thomson. **Opposed:** none; **Abstaining:** none. The motion **passed** unanimously, 8-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Amy Huot, Clerk

**PLEASE NOTE Connecticut River Gateway Commission's new email: [contact@ctrivergateway.org](mailto:contact@ctrivergateway.org)**

**The next regular meeting of the Gateway Commission is scheduled for Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Please see the agenda posted at <https://ctrivergateway.org> for the link.**