

# CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 25, 2022

### Present/Absent:

<b>Chester:</b>	<b>Tom Brelsford, Jenny Kitsen</b>
<b>Deep River:</b>	<b>Jerry Roberts, (vacancy)</b>
<b>East Haddam:</b>	<b>Crary Brownell, (vacancy)</b>
<b>Essex:</b>	<b>Claire Mathews, Misha Semenov</b>
<b>Fenwick:</b>	<b>Newton Brainerd, Borough Warden</b>
<b>Haddam:</b>	<b>Susan Bement, Mike Farina</b>
<b>Lyme:</b>	<b>J. Melvin Woody, Wendy Hill</b>
<b>Old Lyme:</b>	<b>Suzanne Thompson (arrive late), Greg Futoma</b>
<b>Old Saybrook:</b>	<b>Bill Webb, Diane Stober</b>
<b>Regional Reps:</b>	<b>Raul Debrigard (N), Marilyn Gleeson (N), Judy Preston (S)</b>
<b>DEEP:</b>	<b>Katie Perzanowski</b>
<b>Staff:</b>	<b>J H Torrance Downes</b>
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Ben Lovejoy, Jim Sipperly, Gina Kolb</b>

### Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Woody on the virtual meeting platform Zoom at 7:04pm. Woody introduced Ben Lovejoy who will succeed Torrance Downes as support staff to the Gateway Commission.

### Approval of Regular Minutes

A motion was made by Bement to approve the July 28, 2022 meeting minutes as with a small grammatical error correction. The motion was seconded by Preston and was unanimously approved by the members of the Commission.

### Variance Application, 5 Lighthouse Lane.

Jim Sipperly presented the application on behalf of property owner Gina Kolb who was also present. The Gateway Commission had reviewed this application at its meeting on July 28, 2022 when it determined that a recommendation would be made to the ZBA requesting denial of the application. The Gateway Commission was contacted by the applicant and requested to reconsider the initial recommendation. The proposal includes the construction of a 437 square foot in-ground pool and the retention and finishing of an 80 square foot second story balcony that was constructed without a zoning permit. The site includes substantial encroachment into the 100-foot Gateway "buffer" and 100 foot required vegetative buffer. Members of the Commission and the applicant discussed elements of the plan including the use of a glass fencing around the proposed pool, the possible location of the pool in the northwest corner of the lot, the potential removal of hardscape on the South Cove side of the house to balance the increase in coverage caused by the pool and the potential for the applicant to plant additional tidal wetlands vegetation near South Cove to enhance the riparian buffer. The members of the Gateway Commission determined that they would table the discussion until its September 22, 2022 meeting at which time the applicant would present additional information that it was unable to produce at this meeting. A motion to table a determination on the application until further information could be presented at Gateway's 9/22/22 meeting was put forth by Webb and seconded by Debrigard. The motion passed unanimously.

### Zoning Regulations Concerning Signage, Old Saybrook.

The members of the Gateway Commission reviewed the petition to modify Section 64, Signs, of the Old Saybrook Zoning Regulations and determined that adoption would have no adverse impacts on the preservation and protection of the properties in the Gateway Conservation Zone. Upon a motion by Debrigard which was seconded by Preston, the Commission requested that a preliminary approval be sent to the Old

Saybrook Zoning Commission stating that, if the regulation is substantially unchanged when approved the Zoning Commission, the Gateway Commission would approve the regulations as required by Section 25-102g of the CT General Statutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Regulation Proposal Concerning Separation of Fueling Stations, Old Saybrook

Big Y Markets/Max's Place LLC proposed to allow a fueling station within 1,000 feet of another existing fueling station where existing regulations prohibit such second fueling station. The proposal includes four differing scenarios for the Old Saybrook Zoning Commission – and the Gateway Commission – to consider. All but one proposal would contain language that would impact properties in the Gateway Conservation. A motion was put forth by Debrigard and seconded by Webb requesting that a letter be sent by staff to the Zoning Commission indicating that it would support the scenario that includes no impacts to properties in the Conservation Zone. The motion was passed unanimously.

Zoning Regulations Concerning Short Term Rentals, Lyme.

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission submitted regulations concerning short term rental of residential properties in town. Members of the Gateway Commission recognized that the Commission doesn't regulate "uses", per se, but the buildings in which those uses occur. Any building housing a short-term rental would have to comply with all Gateway standards. Upon a motion by Woody, which was seconded by Kitsen, the Commission requested that staff prepare and send a letter preliminarily approving the petition and stating that if the language of the petition doesn't substantially change, the Commission would approve the regulation as requested in Section 25-102g CGS. The motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence/Staff Report

Staff summarized report items as requested, noting that several local enforcement actions are still ongoing in Chester and Lyme.

DEEP Commissioner's Representative Katie Perzanowski briefed members on the status of an ongoing enforcement action taking place at property located at 1242 Saybrook Road in Haddam. It was reported that a hearing on the enforcement action would be conducted by the DEEP on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. Testimony would not be accepted at this hearing. Staff will work with Perzanowski to determine if the Gateway Commission could present testimony or a letter supporting the enforcement action. A motion was put forth by Woody, which was seconded by Webb, to authorize staff to work on a letter to present to the DEEP if the opportunity arises. Preston will act in a review capacity. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report

Thompson announced that Mr. Ben Lovejoy will be succeeding Torrance Downes as staff to the Gateway Commission. Mr. Lovejoy presented his background and credentials to members.

Land Committee. A discussion was held regarding Gateway assistance in the acquisition of a parcel of land located at the corner of Essex Road and Ayers Point Road in Old Saybrook. The purchaser would be the Old Saybrook Land Trust. After discussion of the property and other details, and upon a motion by Debrigard and seconded by Bement, the Commission voted to support the purchase of the property by providing up to \$60,000 as a matching grant to match funds raised in the community. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee. Upon a motion by Matthews, which was seconded by Bement, the Commission voted to approve the payment of bills totaling \$3,339.74 (RiverCOG staffing services) and \$166.50 (legal services rendered by Halloran & Sage). The motion passed unanimously.

Communications Committee. Futoma reported on the status of the new Gateway website, the need for a planning meeting for the boat trip, a request for a Salmon River photo for the “tributaries” page, the Labor Day Weekend Haddam Neck Fair, and the notice that there will be a future discussion on the issue of sponsoring events.

Rules of Procedure Committee. No report (Chairman Webb had left the meeting).

Grants Committee. No report (Acting Chair Roberts had left the meeting).

Old Business. None.

New Business. Add Ben Lovejoy’s email address to all communications. [blovejoy@rivercog.org](mailto:blovejoy@rivercog.org)

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:26pm by Bement. The motion seconded by Woody and was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
J H Torrance Downes