

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION
Communications and Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2022

Attendance: Greg Futoma, Mike Farina, Judy Preston, Jerry Roberts, Marilyn Gleeson, Melvin Woody and J H Torrance Downes

Call to Order

This meeting was convened using the Zoom online platform. The agenda was formally posted in all eight Gateway member towns, with information directing interested members of the public to join the meeting online. Chairman Futoma called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

The committee discussed the website project with Futoma looking to have the site go “live” by around June 1, 2022. Consultant Dorene Warner would need the final content by May 1, 2022 to be able to achieve that time schedule. Once live, the site will be updated on an ongoing basis. For members to access the draft website, go to: <https://ctrivergateway.flywheelsites.com>

Members then discussed a Mission Statement to use going forward. Roberts reminded that the statement should reference cultural and historic resources. Roberts and Gleeson will work together on mission statements. Matthews will join them. The entire subcommittee will be Gleeson, Roberts, Matthews and Thompson.

Members then discussed questions about how to present maps on the new website. The three maps that had previously been discussed include the map of the Gateway boundary with parcels, a river access map and a map showing the locations of various vistas that can be seen by the public. Thompson opined that her preference would be to highlight the maps of other organizations to show “partnership” and so as not to “reinvent the wheel”. A short discussion of “open space” within the context of what should be shown on maps took place, including the need to define just what open space is for the purpose of including on any Gateway maps.

A short discussion occurred on access points in the lower river valley and whether or not members of the public are aware of them. Futoma indicated that he will put together thoughts on access points and provide to Gleeson.

Futoma reported that the social media campaign has begun with Downes posting (in most cases) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on both Facebook and Instagram.

Futoma reported that he is going to pursue design of an e-Newsletter using, for instance, the DEEP’s “Sound Outlook” newsletter as a model. He reported that a request was made of the consultants to provide a template. There will be a signup available on the new website. Newsletters will be designed based on the intended audience (the public, P&Zs, ZBAs, real estate agents, etc). Two brochures are still being contemplated, (1) land partnerships and (2) a general introduction to Gateway brochure. A suggestion for the three properties on the land partnership brochure might be the Brainerd Quarry Preserve, Watch Rock and the donation of the Klar property to the DEEP to double the size of the Machimoodus State Park.

A short discussion about the grants committee work occurred. Roberts to resend the previously distributed documents as some seemed to have not received them. The context of the discussion surrounded what events like the Tour de Lyme bicycle tour was considered. Is it a “grant” overseen by the Grants Committee, or for publicity purposes where the Communications Committee would oversee the provision of funds. It was decided that the Tour de Lyme and similar events were donations,

sponsorships, and advertisements with spin-off benefits and partnership building. This would be the “domain” of the Communications Committee.

Upon a motion by Thompson, seconded by Gleeson, the Committee voted to recommend that the Commission support the Tour de Lyme at a level of \$500, consistent with the donation from last year.

Futoma indicated that the upcoming CLCC workshop will be conducted out-of-doors with follow up in virtual sessions. Gateway has provided \$1,000 in the past. Upon a motion by Woody, which was seconded by Roberts, the committee voted unanimously to recommend making a donation of \$1,000 to the CLCC in support of this May 14,2022 event.

Roberts reported that he received permission from the Connecticut River Museum to use relevant museum information for Gateway efforts. Futoma noted that the recent Dick Shriver presentation on the river included a list of “partners” at the end, and Gateway was not included in that list.

Upon a motion by Woody, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J H Torrance Downes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

J H Torrance Downes, Staff