

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION
Communications and Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes
May 24, 2022

Attendance: Greg Futoma, Judy Preston, Marilyn Gleeson, Suzanne Thompson and J H Torrance Downes

Call to Order

This meeting was convened using the Zoom online platform at 9:05am. The agenda was formally posted in all eight Gateway member towns, with information directing interested members of the public to join the meeting online.

Boat Trip. After discussion three October dates for the annual boat trip, attendees decided on forward 10/13/22 as the chosen date for consideration of Commission members.

Thompson reminds that “partners” continue to get first priority over spouses or personal attendees. If such an event is desired, one could be planned separate from the annual boat trip. Desired attendees continue to be local architects, engineers ZEOs and planners. Futoma reported that the trip would cost \$1,200, which is what was charged for the 2021 trip. A \$250 deposit is required.

Communications Project Update. As for the land brochure portion of the project, Downes reported that he coordinated with Judy Anderson to include the Gateway-assisted purchase of the 7.2 acres above Pratt and Post Cove by the Deep River Land Trust. Downes used press releases and information from the information on file with Gateway that resulted from Gateway’s \$30,000 matching funds donation that allowed the DRLT to apply for a DEEP open space grant. Questions were raised with respect to how the Lynde Point (Fenwick) living shoreline project ended up in the “mix” for inclusion in the brochure. The project was removed when it was realized it was under consideration as Gateway had no involvement in the project in any way.

Preston offered ideas on key issues that should be included in any communications efforts with respect to land protection. Those ideas include sea level rise and changing climatic conditions. Local land trusts are protecting land that will be subject to such changes and impacts going forward.

Futoma reported that the planned June 1st deployment of the Gateway website would be slightly delayed as he has taken a slight “hiatus” from all of his efforts to move the website completion forward. A privacy policy is being considered and sent a long list of minor changes that haven’t been completed as of the time of this meeting.

Discussed next was the map depicting access points within the Conservation Zone. Gleeson reported that she has received four suggestions for access spots from four members. Futoma noted that there is a DEEP access map, but the access points don’t extend south of Gillette Castle in East Haddam. Gleeson states she has Old Lyme sites courtesy of Futoma, who will remind members to provide access points to Gleeson at the May 26, 2022 meeting.

Preston reminded members that she has a catalog of photos along the river going back 30 years but has been challenged trying to transfer them to the Gateway Dropbox account (Downes and Preston attempted to solve the problem but were unsuccessful). Downes will coordinate with Dorene Warner and Judy Preston to insure that those photos can be provided and used.

Futoma reports that Roberts has authored two more history articles for the website. Thompson indicated that the Commission will go over two draft grants documents from the Grants Committee and, afterward, she will author a summary pieced for the website that highlights the grants

process.

Futoma suggested possible writing of small pieces using institutional memories of Woody, Debrigard and other past members including past chair Evan Griswold. "Headshots" of the writers would be included to personalize.

Finally, members discussed transferring the website from HostGator servers to "Flywheel" as suggested by Dorene Warner. The costs will be fairly equal. Being Wordpress, JHTD successor will have to become familiar with the process of maintaining the website. Discussions regarding retaining Warner for more complicated tasks have been contemplated.

Thompson accepts draft minutes of March meeting of the communications committee with Gleeson agreeing. Thompson asked if there is any progress on RiverCOG hiring for JHTD successor, to which JHTD answered discussions have occurred but no progress otherwise.

Upon a motion by Gleeson, the meeting was adjourned at 9:59am.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J H Torrance Downes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

J H Torrance Downes, Staff