

Baker Cove Watershed Team
Meeting Notes
September 19, 2019
10:00 – 11:30 am
City of Groton Municipal Building, 295 Meridian St.

Attendees:

Heidi Comeau, Public Works, City of Groton
Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton
Michelle Maitland, Project Mgmt. Specialist, Public Works, Town of Groton
Kurt Sendlein, Airport Manager, CAA Groton-New London Airport
Joan Smith, President, Groton Open Space Association (GOSA)
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA
Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)
Judy Rondeau, Assistant Director, Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD)
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD

Additional Invitees:

Tim Umrysz, Public Works Director, City of Groton
Dennis Godere, Planner, City of Groton
Jeff Dziedzic, Harbormaster, City of Groton
John Burt, Town Manager, Town of Groton
Jonathan Reiner, Planning Director, Town of Groton
Deb Jones, Assistant Director of Planning, Town of Groton
Gary Schneider, Public Works Director, Town of Groton
Eric Morrison, Shennecossett Golf Course manager, Town of Groton
Aundré Bumgardner, Councilor, Groton Town Council
Ben Roccapiore, Facilities operations & Building Services, UConn Avery Point
Syma Ebbin, Professor/Research Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Tessa Getchis, Extension Educator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Judy Preston, LIS Outreach Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Judy Benson, Communications Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Joellen Anderson, Member, Avalonia Land Conservancy
Stephen Mansfield, Director of Health, Ledge Light Health Department
Danielle Holmes, Sanitarian II, Ledge Light Health Department
Ed Machinski, Elks Club
Joan Smith, President, GOSA
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA
Anne Roberts-Pierson, Boardmember, GOSA
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish warden
Alissa Dragan, Environmental Analyst II, CT Dept. Agric/Bureau of Aquaculture
Kristin Derosier Banick, Environmental Analyst III, CT Dept. Agric/Bureau of Aquaculture
Eugenia Villagra/Liz Raisbeck, Groton Conservation Advocates
George Vassallo, Manager, EHS Compliance / Regulated Waste Lead, Pfizer
Nicholas Spera, Principal, Marine Science Magnet High School

Rick Stevens, General Mgr, Groton Utilities Water Filtration Plant
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Ron Beta, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Tracey McKenzie, Environmental Dept., US Naval subbase, New London

Project Coordinator: Maura Robie, ECCD Conservation Technician

Handouts: Non-Migratory Canada Goose Management Matrix

Maura R. opened meeting at approximately 10:00, welcomed attendees and did introductions. Reviewed previous Baker Cove Non-migratory Canada Goose Project and Baker Cove Watershed Based Plan (WBP) Recommendations & Best Management Practices. ECCD wrapped up this project (grant funded by CT DEEP through the US EPA Clean Water Act §319 NPS grant program) on 9/30/19. In lieu of implementing a management practice at a selected site, ECCD is currently implementing a broad recommendation from the management matrix; establishment and facilitation of a Baker Cove watershed committee. The committee's purpose will be to assist in improving water quality in Baker Cove by implementing recommendations from the Baker Cove WBP to reduce or eliminate non-point sources of pollution. Maps of the Baker Cove watershed, shellfish classifications and tables from CT DEEP's Integrated Water Quality Report (IWQR) & Bacteria TMDL reports for Baker Cove were presented to show Baker Cove impairments. Went over Best Management Practice (BMP) recommendations for Canada Geese such as flock reduction (egg addling, depredation permits, Goose round-ups), habitat modification (vegetative buffers next to water, grass type & length, public educational signs), and hazing (noisemakers, dogs, visual deterrents). Watershed Best Management Practices and recommendations for other sources identified in the WBP were reviewed. Partner Roles & Contributions were discussed and valuable input was provided by all members.

Baker Cove Canada Goose Project Partner management updates provided from Kurt S. – Wildlife fence pre-construction meeting slated for later today with work to begin on Monday. (Hopefully others who couldn't make this meeting will update the group at the next meeting.)

Keith H. informed the team of economic development project on Thames St., Eagle Scout Birch Plain Creek Project of added walking paths and flower garden, and Groton Estates land swap to extend Birch Plain Creek Trail from Branford Manor through EB to Konalsky School.

Discussion of Baker Cove WBP completed implementations: Goose Management Matrix, City Hall Tree filters, conservation of open space by GOSA & City & Town, pending Groton Estates CT DEEP Clean Water Action Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management (NPS) grant to install stormdrain retrofit, tree filters, and rain gardens. These successes should be highlighted. The proposed Lake George wetland retrofit was not selected by CT DEEP for 319 NPS grant funding this year, but can resubmit next year. DEEP encourages the watershed team to fine tune this proposal, and if agreed, provide an endorsement prior to a resubmittal in the next 319 NPS grant round. There may be other funding opportunities for this proposal that watershed team members are encouraged to consider and discuss.

Discussion of shellfish sampling by CT Dept. of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture (DA/BA) – staff used to sample at 3 sites in Baker Cove, but due to underfunding, now only 059-02.5 Sawyers Dock, Jupiter Point. Dick Conant, Groton Shellfish Warden, Shellfish Commission, and DA/BA Environmental Analysts unable to attend this meeting, but important to include in future discussions about feasibility of re-opening Baker Cove shellfish beds to recreational shellfishing. A question was brought up about if DA/BA sanitary survey being done this year. Kurt S. mentioned the Airport's concern with gulls dropping shells on airport runways to break open.

Discussion about who else should be sought for input included Town Shellfish Commission, P&Z, IWWC, CT SeaGrant, DA/BA, UConn Avery Point campus faculty, UConn Extension Master Gardener program, US Navy Subbase, Connecticut College, Mitchell College, Harbor Management Commission – Carlton Smith, City Staff Rep., and CT Marine Trades Association who took over DEEP's Clean Marina's Program. Initial discussion was raised about developing a neighborhood-based engagement outreach program.

Heidi C. - Public Works Stormwater Management Plan includes monitoring/screening outfalls of tributaries & BMP's are being looked at as part of the City's stormwater MS4 general permit requirements.

The City has a bond for WPCA replacement of sewer pipes? Shellfish commission is testing Poquonnock River outfall?

Keith H. – Offered for the Council to work on a resolution to endorse the Baker Cove WBP. Talk with regulatory commissions. Eric T/DEEP Watershed Manager – this watershed team can vet and endorse the 2011 Baker Cove WBP to continue to build local support; document is online [here](#).

Sidney V. – Founder of GOSA, informed us that nearly 2000 acres saved in Groton and stretching into Ledyard. Bluff Point and Haley Farm = 1,000 acres plus Candlewood Hills Wildlife Management Area of over 200 acres plus over 600 acres saved by GOSA. In the Town P&Z reg's, any proposals for development have to consider the environmental impact to Long Island Sound. Also promotes Groton Utilities Water filtration plant site adding vegetative buffers along canal downstream of the Poquonnock Reservoir off Filter Plant Road, currently barren and eroding.

Kurt S. – other updates from the Airport are Ann Marie Dragonis is the new CAA Environmental Manager, in-ground fuel tanks are being removed, heavy mat drain covers are being installed to protect any chemical runoff into stormdrains.

Joan S. – GOSA has lots of volunteers to help with public outreach projects.

The consensus is that quarterly meetings in the Council Chambers room at the City Municipal Bldg. at the same time will work. The Watershed Team appreciates the City of Groton hosting these meetings.

For December meeting: SAVE THE DATE OF 12/4/19

The group is asked to document current related projects being worked on and be prepared to create a work Plan based on the Baker Cove Watershed Based Plan (WBP) recommendations and steps to implement (See Table 7 – Recommended Management strategies for specific areas of concern).

Submitted by

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