



Baker Cove Watershed Team Meeting Notes

February 5, 2020

10:00 – 11:30 am

City of Groton Municipal Building, 295 Meridian St.

Attendees:

Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton
Michelle Maitland, Project Mgmt. Specialist, Public Works, Town of Groton
Joan Smith, President, Groton Open Space Association (GOSA)
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA
Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD
Anne Roberts-Pierson, Board member, ECCD
Heidi Comeau, Public Works, City of Groton
Dennis Goderre, Planner, City of Groton
Ron Bata, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Rick Stevens, Manager, Water & Sewer, Groton Utilities
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Mike Sinko, Sr. Mgr of Environmental Resources, Electric Boat
Brae Rafferty, Chair-Town of Groton Conservation Commission & Sr. Instructor-Project O
Tom Olson, Town of Groton Conservation Commission Member
Rich Palmieri, City of Groton Conservation Commission

Additional Invitees:

Aundré Bumgardner, Councilor, Groton Town Council
Syma Ebbin, Professor/Research Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Judy Rondeau, Assistant Director, Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD)
Kurt Sendlein, Airport Manager, CAA Groton-New London Airport
Tim Umrysz, Public Works Director, City of Groton
John Burt, Town Manager, Town of Groton
Cierra Patrick, Economic Dvlpmt Specialist, City 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
Ben Roccapriore, Facilities operations & Building Services, UConn Avery Point
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
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish warden
Seven Groton shellfish commission members

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
Patrice Granatosky, Mayor, Town of Groton
Town & City Conservation / IWWA Commissions

Project Coordinator: Maura Robie, ECCD Conservation Technician & Watershed Coordinator

Handouts/emailed: Agenda, BaCWaC draft Plan of Work, Cover Letter & Baker Cove WBP Executive Summary, map design proposal & samples

MEETING NOTES

1) Introductions

Folks provided favorite places to visit in Groton area.

2) Review of committee purpose (for newcomers)

Maura reviewed Baker Cove Canada Goose Project and Watershed Based Plan and also reviewed watershed committee purpose:

- Continue to build on Baker Cove Canada Goose management project
- Improve water quality in Baker Cove and freshwater tributaries by implementing recommendations from the Baker Cove WBP
- Reduce or eliminate sources of pollution such as waterfowl, urban stormwater, marina/boating discharges, and pet waste, chemicals, car fluids, pesticides from residential districts
- Committee to include representatives of local government, non-profits, commerce, industry, neighborhood groups, school groups.
- Some activities: planning rain gardens & riparian buffers, conducting shoreline clean-ups, outreach & ed. such as workshops, continued efforts to control non-migratory Canada Geese populations

3) Baker Cove Watershed Work Plan Draft:

a. Finalize work plan

Discussion and questions about tasks. The Group agreed to leave the work plan as draft in order to make changes/updates. It was suggested we have detailed document of what tasks we are working on. Mayor Hedrick can put updates on public access tv. Maura has contact name and will help in that effort.

b. Groton Councils - resolution to endorse the Baker Cove WBP

Michelle M. – Add that the Baker Cove Canada goose project from 2017-2019 was a grant & mention that costs from Table 7 are from 2011.

Mayor Hedrick – Described resolution process for City: City Council Committee of the Whole meets 4th Monday of month (next meetings Feb. 24, March 23) Letter & Executive Summary is due 1 week in advance of meeting. Can submit 'Informing' documents and prefer draft resolution at that time, but not necessary. Maura can work with Jill Rusk, Executive Assistant to the Mayor on draft resolution format for 'Action' step. Looking for Council to approve the concept of the BC Watershed plan (no financial commitment). Group agreed there is no urgency, but will help if applying for grants and in having the City & Town support for public legitimacy. It is a task on the work plan under 'other'.

Maura asked that any other corrections be emailed later for the sake of time and getting all agenda items in.

c. Committee Member progress reports

- Create 'public-friendly' watershed map for handouts and social media posting

Michelle presented Rita Rivera ('Love & Pop'), Graphic Artist Proposal with costs and design samples. Town Public Works donating \$150, ECCD \$150, City of Groton Planning Dept. \$200 = \$500 for illustrated map file in JPEG & PDF. Details/input on map to be worked out by committee – Joan S., Michelle M., Heidi C., & Maura. ECCD to handle invoicing. Printing costs TBD – some in-house through Town / City? Maura to write purpose/amount letter request for funds from GOSA.

- Conduct or support stream and waterside clean-ups - Big Y Parking Lot

Joan S. – Working on getting permission from outfall property owner and disposal issues. Will have to be later than original plan for April.

- Work with Health District sanitarians to evaluate the residential septic systems in the priority areas as defined by the WBP

Rick S, Kate B, Ron B – Created list & map of 36 City of Groton buildings not connected to Municipal Sewer system. Danielle Holmes (contact going forward – Wendy ?) of Ledge Light Health District said they are authorized to look at septic if complaint only, otherwise talk to Shellfish Commission and DABA @ sanitary surveys. Eric T. raised comment, seen in other watersheds, of this “grey” area of high enough level of potential problematic onsite septic systems and triggering of HD action.

- Vegetative Surveys - Evaluate and identify priority areas for buffer establishment or invasive species removal

Rick S, Kate B, Ron B – Provided general information and scholarly article on Engineered Wetland benefits, phytoremediation, and plant list. Vegetative buffer locations can be prioritized based on results of water quality monitoring data, aka, sites with high levels of Nitrogen.

- Design water quality monitoring program

Rick S, Kate B, Ron B – Provided Water Quality Monitoring Plan binder with sample collection protocols and historical sample site locations.

- Compile list of events and attend Town/City and community organization events with educational materials table. (Currently have Groton City Day and Groton Fall Festival in mid-October on list)

Will discuss at next meeting.

4) City of Groton Community Resiliency Plan

Dennis G. - City developing a resiliency plan to respond to anticipated long range changes from climate change, sea level rise (SLR), and increased storm frequencies / intensities. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) Grant - provide aid in forming initial stages of the Community Resiliency Plan – Request for Proposal out now. Coast Guard Academy Cadets will be helping with plan. Mapping of floodplain limits may overlap with BaCWaC. Will inform group of Public workshops – to inform / educate, gauge knowledge on issues City faces and

impacts to health of Long Island Sound. City & Town are looking into hiring a FT Sustainability/Resiliency position.

Other

- Sidney V. – Would like map to reflect for the flow of Poquonnock River into Baker Cove to show larger watershed contribution than the original BC Watershed Plan focus. Cannot change watershed outline for this quickly within the existing plan. DEEP would entertain a proposal for a watershed plan addendum for nonpoint source management grant funding with focus on the Poquonnock River sub-watershed; Long Island Sound Futures Fund current grant round is another potential funding source for this watershed planning. Eric T. suggested for now to add a note on the BC watershed plan Executive Summary map of the Poquonnock River watershed outline. Rick S. can bring a map next meeting of the Poquonnock Cove at a closer scale.
- Michelle M. – General agreement to request for BaCWaC to be highlighted on new Groton public access tv show.
- There is a new vegetative management plan being done by the railroad with document notification going annually to the Groton City mayor. There was no real discussion on whether proposed vegetation treatments, including chemical, should be modified to lessen impact on local water quality or aquatic habitats.

To Do's for next meeting:

- ECCD-Baker Cove Watershed Committee webpage
<https://conservect.org/eastern/watershed-committees/>
- Link to City of Groton Baker Cove Projects info webpage
<http://cityofgroton.com/ped/projects-and-reports/baker-cove-watershed-and-birch-plain-creek/>
- Share links with 2 colleagues
- Pick activity to work on and report on progress

* Meeting dates for 2020: **April 1, June 3, August 5, October 7, December 2 (10-11:30)**