



## **Baker Cove Watershed Committee (Bacwac)**

### **Meeting Notes**

**June 3, 2020**

**10:00 – 11:30 am**

**ZOOM online meeting**

#### **Attendees:**

Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton  
Michelle Maitland, Project Mgmt. Specialist, Public Works, Town of Groton  
Aundré Bumgardner, Councilor, Groton Town Council  
Kurt Sendlein, Airport Manager, CAA Groton-New London Airport  
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish warden  
Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)  
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD  
Judy Rondeau, Assistant Director, Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD)  
Heidi Comeau, Public Works, City of Groton  
Rick Stevens, Manager, Water & Sewer, Groton Utilities  
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities

#### **Additional Invitees:**

Mike Sinko, Sr. Mgr of Environmental Resources, Electric Boat  
Joan Smith, President, Groton Open Space Association (GOSA)  
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA  
Ron Bata, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities  
Syma Ebbin, Professor/Research Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant  
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  
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 Roccapiore, 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  
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

**Emailed:** Bacwac draft Plan of Work - May update

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## MEETING NOTES

- 1) Greeting
- 2) Review of committee purpose (not needed - no newcomers)
- 3) On behalf of Bacwac, Maura presented a brief on 4/27 to the City of Groton-Committee of the Whole, referring to the Baker Cove Executive Summary previously distributed to the Committee members. The Mayor and City Council passed a resolution on May 4, 2020 to support the 2011 Baker Cove Track Down Survey and Abbreviated Watershed-based Plan to achieve water quality standards, including restoring recreational shell fishing for residents of the City. This is good news to help validate and support the Bacwac's work, improve standing for grant applications and show the citizens of the city of Groton that the City officials support the recommendations for improving water quality.

Town of Groton Council member André B mentioned interest in resolution and possibility putting on June 9 Committee of the Whole agenda. He and Maura to work out details.

- 4) Maura mentioned ECCD's recent application for a Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) grant as having a dual purpose of meeting some of Bacwac's goals to install green infrastructure and educate/involve public using an innovative approach. Maura met with Mike S at Electric Boat's Parking Lot B on Poquonnock Road as a potential location for riparian buffers along Birch Plain Creek. Should know if selected by Oct/Nov. Grant application requests funding for:

- Create Pollinator Pathways <https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/about> along the tri-town multi-use recreational trail (Groton, Ledyard and Preston) & City to Stonington
- Install 5,000 sf vegetated buffers along streams and install 2,800 sf rain gardens using native (pollinator) plants
- Workshop in each town on pollinator pathways, rain gardens and riparian buffers
- Hold 1 workshop on organic lawn care, 1 on riparian buffers, 1 on septic system BMPs
- 6,000 brochures on rain gardens, riparian buffers, alternate lawn care practices, septic systems, pet waste, car maintenance

Michelle M: Town LISFF grant proposal submitted for resiliency study in Mystic.

Eric T: For public education, tie talking points to LISFF Theme ('Clean Waters, Healthy Watersheds').

- 5) Maura updated Baker Cove Watershed map outline to Include Poquonnock River Watershed drainage contribution into Baker Cove. This includes an identified western section of the Groton-New London Airport and that the Poquonnock River watershed on the eastern side of the Airport may be contributing to Baker Cove, but more research is needed. The question is, what area exactly defines 'Baker Cove'? Kurt S: should include all Airport sections. It was suggested to check with folks at CT Sea Grant such as Syma E et al. Dick C thought Kristin DB of CT DABA may be able to identify extent of Baker Cove. Michelle M: Find a name for 'Unnamed Stream' sub-watershed so it isn't considered unimportant and add this task to plan of work.

Maura updated Bacwac draft Plan of Work as of May with completed Activities and updated statuses. Added MS4 Activities - Town / City of Groton Public Works Departments to check for accuracy. Task - updates about Bacwac's work on Groton Public Access TV. Michelle M offered to help with posting format, 5-6 small updates with announcements/links to rotate over some specified number of weeks works well for her. Eric T: Put Maura's contact information for 2-way communication.

Also recommended to put in workplan to add 'views counter' on ECCD website/Bacwac page to track outreach success. Maura to check with co-workers on getting this done through Google analytics.

#### 6) Committee Member progress reports

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

Michelle M: Rita R., Graphic Artist has created very preliminary map with selected main streets and neighborhoods. Committee has worked on Excel spreadsheet - map asset inventory. All are encouraged to make suggestions. Some questions that need to be answered are: With limited map space, how should we decide which features to include? Should we include recreation? Should we include businesses? Suggested content be directed at the comprehension level of 4-5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Kurt S: Put arrows on streams to indicate which direction they flow.

Can put written information where airport is, i.e. nice big space!

Mayor Hedrick: Would like to see shellfishing areas/info.

Judy R: Include 'What is a Watershed?' in introduction language.

Update PDF of map every year to keep it up to date for the public.

Rick S: volunteered to write small paragraph 'What is a Watershed' geared toward 4-5<sup>th</sup> grade comprehension. A scalable size of 8.5 X 11 was recommended by Rita R for easiest printing.

- Conduct or support stream and waterside clean-ups - Groton Regency nursing home (mostly) / Big Y

Michelle M update: Site visit done on March 5 (Bruce Lofgren, Town OPDS; Joan S, Sidney & Marie, GOSA; Anne, ECCD; Mary Jo, Avalonia) at northern fenced perimeter (beside Big Y & behind/beside Poquonnock Village Apts.). Issues: litter, a few deeply-embedded larger grocery carts/junk items, brush/tree dumping, and parking/road run-off. Consensus was clean-up should be paired with long-range planning for site and would be best with leaf-off, i.e. late Fall or early Spring 2021 depending on social gathering limitations for volunteers. With adjacent "O South St" property to east (gullied lake system on

GIS) being town owned property, possibility of town purchasing fenced in area for dedicated open space? Bruce Lofgren has offered to take the lead on clean-up and possible open space acquisition with Conservation commission assisting. UCONN climate corps, does assessments of LID sites, offered 'informal comment'. Development of Land Management Plan as student multi-year project?  
Eric T: possibility through ECU Sustainability Program.

- Design water quality monitoring program  
Rick S, Kate B, Ron B – At February meeting, provided Water Quality Monitoring Plan binder with sample collection protocols and historical sample site locations. Verify with Rick & Kate if map stars are historical sample locations? (map source: UCONN ECO map viewer). Rick offered previously to do some sampling through Groton Utilities.
- Attend Town/City events with educational materials table - Alternative ideas during pandemic:  
Judy R: Anguilla Brook water quality webinar series for all coastal SE CT towns; will pass along details. Other ideas discussion: Contact Jim Butler from SECCOG to see about joint outreach opportunities to coordinate with other groups doing same types of education. Look for funding to develop a campaign based on 'Think Blue' campaign in Mass.
- Fertilizer usage study – UCONN students  
Update from Syma E: - In 2015, students conducted a survey of fertilizer use in CT (local area, not statistically valid), article in Wrack Lines newsletter:  
<http://media.ctseagrant.uconn.edu/publications/magazines/wracklines/sprsummer15/grass.pdf> Can talk to the committee about the research in the future; gave talk a few years ago at CCNR conference.  
Right now there is a watershed wide survey lead by R. Johnston from Clark University exploring this issue funded by Long Island Sound Study.

## 7) Other

Michelle M: Town has put a new anti-dumping sign at Sparkle Lake.

Mayor Hedrick: City is hoping to hire new Planner soon.

### To Do's for next meeting:

- Eric T: Discussion of local committee review of the current BC WBP, document accomplishments, offer insight on lessons learned, and consideration of a revision or update for the next 10 year period.
- Syma E: Talk on 2015 student conducted survey of fertilizer use in CT.

### Links:

ECCD-Baker Cove Watershed Committee webpage

<https://conservect.org/eastern/watershed-committees/>

2011 Baker Cove watershed-based plan

<https://portal.ct.gov/->

[/media/DEEP/water/watershed\\_management/wm\\_plans/bakercovewbpdf.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/watershed_management/wm_plans/bakercovewbpdf.pdf)

\* Meeting dates for 2020: **August 5, October 7, December 2 (10-11:30)**