



**Baker Cove Watershed Committee (Bacwac)**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**February 3, 2021**  
**10:00 – 11:30 am**  
**ZOOM online meeting**

**Attendees:**

Leslie Creane, Planner, City of Groton  
Jill Rusk, Administrative Assistant to Mayor, City of Groton  
Michelle Maitland, Project Mgmt. Specialist, Public Works, Town of Groton  
Kurt Sendlein, Airport Manager, CAA Groton-New London Airport  
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish Commission  
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities  
Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)  
Heidi Comeau, Public Works, City of Groton  
Aundré Bumgardner, Councilor, Groton Town Council  
Joan Smith, President, Groton Open Space Association (GOSA)  
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA  
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD  
Judy Rondeau, Assistant Director, Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD)  
**Guest Speaker & committee member:** Dr. Molly Jacobs, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Project Oceanology, Groton  
**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Jamie Vaudrey, Assistant Research Professor, Dept. Marine Sciences, UCONN Avery Point

**Additional Invitees:**

Joseph Summer, Building & Zoning Official, City of Groton  
Tabitha Harkin, Town of Groton Planner/CDBG  
Jamie Lee, Property Manager, Groton Housing Authority and Project Manager, GGRC  
Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton  
Syma Ebbin, Professor/Research Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant  
Rick Stevens, Manager, Water & Sewer, Groton Utilities  
Mike Sinko, Sr. Mgr of Environmental Resources, Electric Boat  
Ron Bata, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities  
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  
Cierra Patrick, Economic Dvlpmt Specialist, City of Groton  
Jonathan Reiner, Planning Director, Town of Groton  
Deb Jones, Assistant Director of Planning, Town of Groton  
Stacey Leitch, Public Works Admin Supervisor, 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  
Roger Sherman & Jay Kane, Co-chairs, Groton shellfish commission  
Groton shellfish commission members  
Alissa Dragan, Environmental Analyst II, CT Dept. Agric/Bureau of Aquaculture  
Kristin DeRosia-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:** Agenda; Groton WS map interior & Exterior, Final version

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## MEETING NOTES

1. Greeting – Welcomed new member Leslie Creane, City Planner and Jill Rusk, Administrative Assistant to Mayor, City of Groton & speakers.
2. Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) - Dr. Jamie Vaudrey, Assistant Research Professor, Dept. Marine Sciences, UCONN  
Jamie gave an update on NERR Steering Committee and showed map of reserve boundaries most likely to be chosen. Talked about 4 programs: Research & monitoring, Education, Coastal reserve and Stewardship – visitor access & nature center. Upcoming 10 public meetings with outcomes of writing environmental impact statement which describes habitats and writing draft management plan, which will be defined as a community. They want to make sure to work with other groups and not add competition. Except for 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, all meetings are interactive with workgroups and whiteboard. NERR can be described as a 'water park' with no additional management burden & no additional shellfish regulations. Talked about funding and how areas were or were not chosen to avoid interfering with current uses.
3. Implementation Subcommittee – rank plan of work tasks/pursue projects and funding
  - Maura gave update on Lake George 319 EPA NPS pollution grant administered by DEEP – submitted (deadline Jan. 14). Thanks to Mayor Hedrick, Leslie, Heidi & Mary Hill for planning meeting. The current ability

of 2.7 Ac. Lake George to act as a stormwater detention basin for 70 Ac. is compromised by vegetation overgrowth, erosion and sediment build-up. ECCD proposed to get an engineered design-build plan for a retrofit free water surface (FWS) wetland. (Extended Detention Shallow Wetland or Wet Extended Detention Pond) using a conceptual design from The Nature Conservancy. Improve stormwater infiltrating slowly into the ground and retain pollutants before discharge to BPC, pedestrian pathways, vegetative buffer, signs, outreach & ed. Included water quality monitoring pre and post install.

- Heidi, Michelle, Molly agreed to be on implementation subcommittee with Maura. Others welcome.
- Michelle – suggests rank the different proposed tasks in our work plan by their expected ‘bang for the buck’ on a simple 1-3 or 1-5 scale; meaning least effort to get highest result, i.e. could be people reached or biggest sources of non-point pollution addressed or most reduction in pollutants. Ex. Goal 1 – revise tasks priority of L-M-H to ranking #'s. Partners may need to be revised.
- Eric – suggestion to strike "Draft" off the Committee's work plan Recognizing nothing here is "Final", iterative over time with occasional reviews of priorities as need arises. Will be adding accomplishments to the last section as they occur. Updated title sends a stronger message through our Committee and to others (funding partners and other entities) interested in collaborating on certain work plan items. Discussion to add: most recently updated, amended, updated or ongoing or add ‘A living document’. Maura to update ‘completed’ Activities section for next meeting.

#### 4. Update on UCONN Climate Corps results for Town & City

The Climate Corps is a program of UCONN CLEAR - The Center for Land Use Education & Research led by NEMO Co-Directors Mike Dietz & Dave Dickson and CLEAR Director Chet Arnold. A team of 4 undergrads & a grad student looked at 7-8 sites analyzing opportunities for City/Town Groton to reduce DCIA through adding Green infrastructure. Types discussed include Rain Gardens and Bioretention -enlarged RG w/engineering for larger input, Pervious Pavement -costly & need maint., but good for flat areas, last longer than traditional, less salt & snow removal, Tree Box Filters -rain garden in a precast concrete box w/other engineering, Rainwater Harvesting -rain barrels or cisterns capture diversion of runoff from roofs, use for irrigation to reduce stress on private wells & municipal water supplies.

## Town

**In ws:** Town of Groton Public Housing Authority (11 Village Lane) - permeable pavers in parking lot). **NOT in ws:** Groton Senior Center/Public Library - Rink rain gardens. Poquonnock Plains Park - Speed Bump, Grass Swale, gravel grid, rain garden. Town Hall Annex/Police station (134 Groton Long Point Rd) – bioretention basins.

## City

**In ws:** BPC wildlife area (25 Thomas Rd) – Bioretention of small drainage area Police Dept. (295 Meridian Rd) – Rain gardens, more tree filters. **NOT in ws:** Groton City Fire Dept (140 Broad St) – Bioretention. Eastern Point Beach – repaving to change flow, Bioretention strip (in place of a few parking spaces).

Michelle reported ‘Save the Sound’ sent a notice from their lawyer to the NEMO MS4 Listserv that they would audit towns’ Annual Reports to track the Directly Connected Impervious Area (DCIA) Retrofit work. These projects are required to meet the mandate that towns ‘disconnect’ 2% of their land from storm-sewers before the permit’s conclusion in June 2022. Most towns are behind the benchmarks, being that the work is complex and unfunded. Michelle would also like to be involved in a shared assets program.

Heidi informed us of Parks and Recs looking to possibly put in next budget a project to install ‘Turfstone’ pavers on 300 feet of dirt driveway in Washington Park to reduce erosion. Eric mentioned to research if any restrictions on subsoils or slopes, recommends UCONN CLEAR. Can try LID Atlas of Green infrastructure ([lidmap.uconn.edu](http://lidmap.uconn.edu)) for ideas, but not up to date.

## 5. Committee Member progress reports

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

Final version of map brochure is complete! Need to pay Graphic Artist, Rita R. Town Public Works donating \$150, ECCD \$150, Heidi offered for City of Groton Public Works to pay remaining \$200 = \$500 for illustrated map file in JPEG & PDF. Heidi, also can print some in-house (albeit losing some picture quality) for putting at trail entrance to Birch Plain Creek. Maura to write purpose/amount letter request for funds from GOSA – need to figure out how many to print/cost. Stakeholder mailing = @30. Joan suggested a minimum quantity in the 100’s to get a better price. Aundre suggested trying to disseminate by digital means utilizing QR codes.

Update on draft Letter to property Manager stakeholders listed on brochure

Jamie Lee, Groton Housing Authority is nearly done with mailing list that Michelle started. Maura sent letter to Jamie to proof for understandability. Michelle suggested by email to apply behavior change campaign by treating this current mailing to residential complexes as a phase I 'pilot' to use as basis of data for grant – we can apply for a 'phase II' follow up to the residential facilities plus expansion of effort featuring a 'phase I' community-wide engagement and add similar intro to School / orgs, Marinas, Small Businesses, Individual homeowners.

**Future grants - Dr. Molly Jacobs, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Project O**

Molly informed group about 'Thames River Water Resilience Project' (NOAA BeWet grant) to educate K-12 on climate change topics. She can write into grant to partner with us as relates to the kids 'Stewardship Action Project' and our Plan of work (stencils, RG's, educ. campaigns, water quality pgm). She has met with Thames River Magnet School principal, Susan Austin, Asst. Superintendent, and Stem coordinator at middle school. All are supportive and excited about interdisciplinary work. Mentioned Magnet Elementary topics for various grades to meet science education standards. Talking about next year for implementation, but maybe could start this year. Molly asked for City, Town & ECCD staff to talk to classrooms (when allowed again). Dan agreed that ECCD can offer that support. Jill mentioned the King-Kolnaski Trails committee is working on connector from EB's 'M' Parking Lot to Groton Estates and schools to Birch Plain Creek. Would like Bacwac to give input on trails. Michelle asked about MS4 connection at schools – and if Molly can be point person.

**Update on ppt educational slides for submittal to GMTV**

Maura updated on addition of Bacwac intro slide to be first before additional slides - emailed to Shawn, GMTV on 1/7

**Update on City Coastal Resiliency kickoff meeting**

Heidi gave update on Coastal Vulnerability working group supporting the Community Resiliency Plan. The City was awarded a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) to cover the majority of costs of the plan. The group is awaiting approval of the Quality Assurance Project Plan from the LISFF to continue its work. At the kick off meeting there was discussion of assessing projects - the City Highway garage and Municipal Building had previously been identified as critical facilities. Leslie asked for Bacwac input on ideas of what to include in the resiliency plan.

6. Other: MS4 annual reports 2020 – Michelle & Heidi  
30-day mandatory notice of public comment period is open now. See Town & City websites. If you comment, you will be first ever...may indicate a need for additional outreach to the public.

To Do's for next meeting:

- ▶ Suggested: Attend CT NERR meetings
  - Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) meeting series to gather public feedback on developing priorities and goals  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YHfthMssomGxUX4AI8MvW/PtXFWt3BtItF4\\_MJvaV9kU/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YHfthMssomGxUX4AI8MvW/PtXFWt3BtItF4_MJvaV9kU/edit)
- ▶ Plan of Work:
  - Meeting of implementation subcommittee to rank Plan of Work tasks
  - Maura to update Plan of Work
  - Work on printing copies of final public map brochure
  - Finalize stakeholder (@ 30 Property Mgrs.) Letter and mail with finalized public map
  - Maura - follow up on educational slides for GMTV to run for a month to 6 weeks in between GMTV programming

ECCD-Baker Cove Watershed Committee webpage  
<https://conservect.org/eastern/watershed-committees/>

\* Meeting dates for 2021: **April 7, June 2, August 4, October 6, December 1 (10-11:30)**