



Baker Cove Watershed Committee (Bacwac)

Meeting Notes

December 1, 2021

10:00 – 11:30 am

ZOOM online meeting

Attendees:

Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)
Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton
Joan Smith, President, Groton Open Space Association (GOSA)
Tabitha Harkin, Town of Groton Planner/CDBG
Jill Rusk, Administrative Assistant to Mayor, City of Groton
Michelle Maitland, Project Mgmt. Specialist, Public Works, Town of Groton
Callie Scheetz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Project Oceanology, Groton
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish Commission
Tom Olson, Town of Groton, Conservation Commission Member
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA
Heidi Comeau, Public Works Services Coordinator, City of Groton
Noah Slovin, Associate Resiliency Planner, SLR Consulting

Additional Invitees:

Karen Scopino, Town of Groton, Conservation Commission Member
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Paul Norris, Groton City Councilor, resident of Jupiter Pt.
Leslie Creane, Planner, City of Groton
Ben Roccapiore, Facilities operations & Building Services, UConn Avery Point
Syma Ebbin, Professor/Research Coordinator, UConn/CT Sea Grant
Jamie Lee, Property Manager, Groton Housing Authority and Project Manager, GGRC
Aundré Bumgardner, Groton Town Councilor
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD
Joseph Summer, Building & Zoning Official, City of Groton
Shawn McComiskey, Airport Manager, CAA Groton-New London Airport
Rick Stevens, Manager, Water & Sewer, Groton Utilities
Henry Jorsz, Elks Club
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
Rich Palmieri, City of Groton Conservation Commission
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
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
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 Natural Resources Specialist & Watershed Coordinator

Emailed: Agenda

MEETING NOTES

1. Introductions **Noah Slovin, Associate Resiliency Planner, SLR Consulting**
Restated Bacwac goals
2. WISC – 18 month simplified Work Plan review (Maura, Michelle, Heidi)
 1. Changes/fixes
Shared Changes from Oct. meeting: eliminating #9 – Develop Riparian buffer plan & #10 – Develop Impact Tracking – no Leads. Add ‘Implement on-going water quality monitoring program’. Discussion about how to track accomplishments – Michelle suggested to add % completed column.
 2. Grants to fund recommendations in Watershed based plan - status updates (Maura)
Exciting news! LISFF has approved @ \$136K for the “From Rain Gardens to Riparian Buffers: Pollinator Pathways for Healthy Watersheds”, pending successful completion of review process. This award is provided on the condition that these funds will be matched by @\$90K in matching contributions.
We want to highlight the connection between pollinator habitat, movement and migration of pollinators from one habitat to another, in concert w/movement and migration of pollutants through the landscape and a watershed.
Pollinator pathways on 5 municipal, residential, business and open space properties along the Tri-town multi-use recreational trail that is in

development (**City and Town of Groton, Ledyard, and Preston**) and a second pathway from the City of Groton to the Town of **Stonington**.

- Install restore 5,000 ft² of riparian buffer along riparian areas & 20 rain gardens (4 in each municipality) will be installed at 140 ft² each
- Towns/City Staff & Conservation commission members - strong support to provide services including signing up for the Pollinator Pathways Project, mapping pollinator pathway, co-hosting workshops, assisting in outreach and location ID & helping to install riparian buffers and rain gardens. volunteers to meet match - residents will help installing RG's and promote by encouraging neighbors (CBSM), TOG & COG support, New London Master Gardener Pgm, Wild Ones, CUSH, seasonal intern, UCONN AP students, CT College, Coast Guard Academy, Ella Grasso HS
- Workshops on Pollinator Pathways initiative, RG & RB Workshop/workdays – ECCD, Riparian Buffers - Juliana Barrett, CT SeaGrant, Alternative landscapes- Judy Preston, Septic sys BMP's – Danielle Holmes, LLHD
- Using native plants will reduce stormwater runoff, provide flood control, filter or trap pollutants and provide food and shelter for critical pollinator species & sustainable and resilient communities
- invite people from a diverse mix of ethnic backgrounds to workshops, provide educational brochures and riparian buffer / rain garden installation opportunities to all
- Supposed to be starting Feb. 2022 for 18-months

REMINDER – Do not share beyond this group until after Dec. 6 when LISFF publicly shares announcement.

Maura & Michelle working on 2022 319 grant application looking to do some green infrastructure projects in Town and possible bacteria sampling in BPC & tributaries. (All recommendations at some level in BC WBP) Will be reaching out to some of you in next few weeks.

Eric mentioned to tie back to WBP.

3. Committee Member progress reports

- i. #2: Public School adoption of environmental stewardship projects via classrooms, grade-level, or internships i.e. storm drain stenciling, rain gardens, monitoring (Callie)

Schoolyard assessments at Thames R. Magnet school (TRMS) leaning toward rain gardens and stormdrain stenciling. She's requested to share the pre-survey link with the staff and families at TRMS. The request is pending approval from the superintendent.

- ii. #3: Stream & waterside clean-ups (Tom)

- a. BPC Stewardship plan

Tom, Town CC – Reviewed Town concomm work - Stewardship Mgmt Plan for Birch Plain Creek (4 parcels). Includes doing surveys, trails, clean-ups with core group of volunteers. Sharing plan via email.

Karen emailed - Some members of the Groton Conservation Commission attended a workshop that featured a 5 step process for addressing the impact of climate change on conservation goals and strategies. Larry (Chair) asked the committee to review Birch Creek Goals with and use the workbook strategies to consider revisions.

Tom also mentioned Town of Groton Trails Task Force submitted Nominations for 2 greenways for official designation to CT Greenways Council: Groton Cross Town Greenway & Tri Town Trail Greenway. Listed on Town POCD. Jill added that city is looking to connect Blueberry Hill (new name) Open space to Kolnaski School by trail.

- iii. #8: Ongoing community engagement (Jill, Michelle)

- b. Outreach to businesses and residents of Baker Cove – next steps

Michelle still working on

- c. Host map/brochure on town & city websites

Michelle & Jill working on links to map

- iv. #9: Implement ongoing water quality program (Kate)

Kate not able to make meeting

v. Other updates

a. Town Greater Groton website – request ARPA funds (Tabitha, Jamie)

Review of ARPA - Green infrastructure investments and projects that address the impacts of climate change or improve resilience to climate change, such as stormwater management and outfall retrofits, measures to conserve and reuse water or reduce the energy consumption of public water treatment facilities. For Bacwac, addresses stormwater runoff and pollutants.

ECCD met w/MM & Jamie - Groton housing authority plans to submit an ARPA funds RFP (still TBD – water, sewer, infrastructure?) with ECCD providing Technical Assistance if needed.

Tabitha – Long term recovery committee didn't meet due to elections. Will be meeting in Dec. Can submit proposals on **GreaterGroton.com**. In future it would be good to add Bacwac info on site. There will be two payouts of 4 million each and RFP's will be sought beginning of year.

b. **Cierra Patrick, Economic Dvlpmt Spec, COG** – introduced me to Noah Slovin, SLR consultant working with the City to complete the **Community Resiliency Plan**. Maura has plans to talk with Noah to share what Bacwac doing to help with Climate resilience in Baker Cove. Good way to link our common goals & hope to connect with Town on common goals as well.

c. **Mike Sinko, Mgr. Env. Resources at EB** - update on Lot M

In summer / early fall this year the EB "M" lot was repaved (regraded) to ensure that all water flowed either to SE retention basin or to only catch basin that also drains to retention basin. The southernmost swale was cleaned and maintained back to original conditions and a maintenance plan has been initiated to ensure it's in working order.

The SE retention basin (with oil water separator) was cleaned and reconstructed (weir boards replaced, etc) back to original design configuration. The area has been inspected by a professional engineer and verified to be in accordance with the design.

As discharges are direct to Birch Plain Creek, these were all recommendations in the BC WBP for enhanced water quality treatment, so great news!

d. Providence Stormwater Innovation Center workshop (Michelle)

Town provided bus and Heidi, Joan, Tabitha, Bruce and a CC member attended. Low-cost for tour. Eric mentioned that Mike Dietz at UCONN may give personal tour of green infrastructure there as well.

e. Other

Michelle is in talks with Amtrak contact, more to come.

Eric asked for two upcoming 319 projects to be put on next agenda.

Heidi applied for Urban Green/community garden grant partnering with EB Management Assoc. at Gateway to City, based on green infrastructure recommended by UCONN stormwater corps report.

Joan informed us of GOSA's planning for Walt's Walls (Drozdyk Dr.) – adding ornamental garden & restore/remove invasives. At Beebe Cove Vista, Avery Farm North – working with Audubon to add bird friendly shrubs.

Dick – Groton Shellfish Commission, Palmer Cove shutdown to shellfishing due to fecal coliform concerns. Looking at Eccleston Brook upstream. Would like to convene a working group to meet @ shellfish regulations in Baker Cove including Alissa Dragan (DABA), Mayor and others.

To Do's for next meeting:

- ▶ Let Maura know if you're willing to be Project Lead on Work Plan items or can assist on tasks.
- ▶ check out the 'Rethink Runoff' website and see 'What Can You Do?' - ideas of the types of actions we are looking to promote. Email Maura thoughts.

* Meeting dates for 2022: February 2, April 6, June 1, August 3, October 5, December 7