



Baker Cove Watershed Committee (Bacwac)

Meeting Notes

August 4, 2021

10:00 – 11:30 am

ZOOM online meeting

Attendees:

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
Eric Thomas, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)
Heidi Comeau, Public Works, City of Groton
Paul Norris, Groton City Councilor, resident of Jupiter Pt.
Leslie Creane, Planner, City of Groton
Sidney Van Zandt, Vice President, GOSA
Karen Scopino, Town of Groton, Conservation Commission liaison
Dan Mullins, Executive Director, ECCD

Additional Invitees:

Ben Roccapriore, 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
Kate Blacker, Watershed patrol, Groton Utilities
Aundré Bumgardner, Groton Town Councilor
Judy Rondeau, Assistant Director, Eastern CT Conservation District (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
Dick Conant, Groton shellfish Commission
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
Tom Olson, Town of Groton Conservation Commission Member
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, Town of Groton watercolors raffle info.

MEETING NOTES

Introductions - **Welcomed new member Paul Norris, Groton City Councilor and resident of Jupiter Point. Restated Bacwac goals.**

1. WISC – 18 month simplified Work Plan review (Maura, Michelle, Heidi, Callie)
 - i. Update – #8 Ongoing Community Engagement (Jill)

Jill - #8. Ongoing community engagement. She added link to pre-ed survey to City E-newsletter (thank you to the Mayor & G.U), created by committee members & Bailey, ECCD intern - is emailed to all G.U. customers in City. She sent call for tabling events email to committee.

Callie - #2. School adoption of environmental stewardship projects. Is working with new K-5 schools through new BWET grant, one part is adding rain gardens on school grounds.

A 'Big' Thank you to all Leads!
 - ii. Project Leads

Still have a need for Project Leads – ideally, each member would pick a task to lead, please let Maura know if interested & need to know more about project you were recommended for! Ask you to be proactive in planning the task implementation.
2. Committee Member progress reports
 - #5. Conduct Rain Garden Initiative**

Pequot Village, GHA – We all met on-site in April to plan Rain gardens
Jamie & Tabitha are planning for rain garden installs in the fall.

Town – Michelle hopes for RG installs by students in BWET grant on town property. Reminded of LISFF grant ECCD applied for to install rain gardens & riparian buffers using Pollinator plants – will hear if received by fall.

City – 295 Meridian Rd – Heidi updated that paving projects have taken priority, but they hope for rain garden construction early-mid March 2022. Community Resiliency Group interested in stormwater retrofit at Lake George in Wash. Park.

#6. Conduct Rain Barrell Initiative

Heidi - Total of **132** rain barrels sold! POW called for 30 installed in watershed by period end (Thanks Heidi!). She ordered extra for public works to provide to residents and hopes to do it again in 2022.

Michelle - figure out which ones in watershed and put on a map where they are (Senior Ctr, G.U. – could Kate coordinate to put their 3 at schools?).

Sewer blockage, Avery Heights / Water quality data update

Report from 5/3: Avery Heights Sewer line bypass/grease blockage, between 1-5K gallons into BPC – remediation = Cleaned area up and put lime down & G.U. fecal coliform tests 5/5, 5/6 showed reduction.

Kate - Quarter water samples were collected and are being analyzed at the G.U. lab for parameters: Fecal coliform, TSS, temperature, DO and pH. G.U. will share results.

Discussion of FROG's (Fats, oils, grease, rags) mat's to educate high-turnover tenants. Tabitha/Jamie – can put up at housing areas, property mgrs. should put in rental practices info. factsheet example from Texas – in English & Spanish. CT DEEP has FOG pgm, Eric will ask internal staff for input.

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

a. Outreach & Ed. materials

Michelle – Town of Groton leftover dedicated MS4 funds used for educational outreach mat's (Thank you!). Received from Rita at Love & Pop and have used by Maura & Michelle at 2 summer Esker Pt. Beach concerts: thanks to Parks & Recreation, Jessica Patterson posted pics on their website & tagged ECCD who shared. Hope is folks start seeing our educational mat's in lots of places. Tabitha offered seed bombs in a bookmark to give away. Michelle has use of

Enviroscape – activity for kids, location stickers for public to put on our map.

Asked for help to promote and share raffle fundraiser for educ. signs at waterfront points TBD. Partnership - Groton Public Works, Parks & Rec, Public Library & Parks Foundation.

- b. Letters to property mgr, business stakeholders & Baker Cove abutting residents – assistance from volunteer

Heidi - City of Groton using leftover dedicated MS4 funds for mailings (Thank you!).

Dissemination at begin of July: 37 prop managers & businesses listed on map&guide in Baker Cove (for lobbies or reprint as partner & invite to meetings).

Heidi - created list of 193 residents abutting the Baker Cove WS in the City (Jupiter Pt, Twin Hills) & Bailey is working on mailing (same idea as prop mgrs.-invited to Bacwac meetings, also suggestions of steps to reduce runoff & pollt'n & call Maura if need more guidance.

Eric – suggests peer property mgrs. on committee assist respondents (possibly Jamie). Maura to send resident letter to committee members.

Stream & waterside clean-ups

Town conservation commission - Stewardship Mgmt Plan for Birch Plain Creek. Karen to check with Tom Olsen for updates.

Stormwater Pond Retrofit Workshop in Groton on 7/26 (Michelle, Heidi, Maura)

Put on by UCONN CLEAR/NEMO/William Hunt, PhD, NC State U, Dept. Biological & Ag Engineering & CT DEEP funded support for CT MS4 permit outreach. Diff. types of Bioretention ponds - Wet-dry pond, dry-dry pond, retrofitting can save \$\$\$ - adding elbow to overflow piping or media amendments or mycofiltration (mushrooms!). Important considerations and financial incentives (nutrient banking)

Other updates

- a. Geese mgmt., riparian buffer site meeting at G.U. Poquonnock River
Kate - construction project is still underway at the Water Treatment Plant. There have been holdups and impacts to the schedule. The site work and landscaping phases of the project are still in the future.

- b. Update on pavement project at Groton-New London Airport

Maura emailed Barry & Shawn for update. Received email while in meeting from Robert Bruno, CAA – Airport Ramp project is scheduled for completion at end of Oct. 2021.

3. Other Outreach & Ed

TRBP Floating Workshop recap

June 18 Paddle on Poquonnock river (Bluff Point state park to Bushy Point Beach) had 19 participants. Project Oceanology - 2 staff members lead hands on activities including water quality monitoring and fish seining. CT DEEP - 2 staff (Eric T.) taught about eel grass (canary in the coalmine of coastal embayments) and efforts to address water quality issues in coastal embayments using an Integrated Water Resource Management approach.

Maura - Baker Cover Watershed Committee and efforts to work collaboratively to address water quality concerns in Baker Cove, focusing on bacteria and shellfish quality.

Other updates

Joan – GOSA protected Drozdyk Drive parcel. Headwaters of unnamed stream in watershed (GOSA rocks!)

Tabitha – Towns are receiving funds for coronavirus recovery (ARPA) and allows funds to be used for “necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.” Bacwac can send letter to new Long Term Recovery Committee for Town in support of funding our goals (wishlist). GOSA, Concomm, other town dept’s can submit letters as well. All were in favor of doing this. Docs forthcoming.

Paul – would like to talk more about his championing for Jupiter Pt. residents to participate in some way to reduce stormwater runoff.

Discussion of adding map online

Jill can have City host the map for community engagement.

To Do’s for next meeting:

- ▶ Let Maura, Michelle or Heidi know if you’re willing to be Project Lead on Work Plan items (or would like to add one) and to discuss what role means
- ▶ Let Jill Rusk know if you can table an event to get our message out
- ▶ Give input on ARPA letter

* Meeting dates for 2021: **October 6, December 1 (10-11:30)**