

# CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 23, 2006

Present/Absent:	<b>CHESTER</b>	<b>Margaret Wilson, Christine Nelson</b>
	<b>DEEP RIVER</b>	<i>Vacancy, Nancy Fischbach</i>
	<b>EAST HADDAM</b>	<i>Robert Boulware, Logan Clarke</i>
	<i>ESSEX</i>	<i>Fred Vollono, Ed Marlowe</i>
	<b>FENWICK</b>	<b>Chuck Chadwick</b>
	<b>HADDAM</b>	<i>Scott Thompson, Susan Bement</i>
	<i>LYME</i>	<i>Kevin Mazer, J. Melvin Woody</i>
	<b>OLD LYME</b>	<b>Rudi Besier, Ted Crosby</b>
	<b>OLD SAYBROOK</b>	<b>Madge Fish, David LeMay</b>
	<i>CRERPA</i>	<i>Alan Bayreuther, Doris Sanstrom</i>
	<i>MIDSTATE RPA</i>	<i>Raul De Brigard, Stasia DeMichele</i>
	<b>DEP</b>	<b>David Blatt</b>
	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>Linda Krause, Dorothy Papp, JHT Downes</b>

### Call to Order

Treasurer Peggy Wilson called the regular meeting of the Gateway Commission to order at 7:38 pm in the CRERPA meeting room. Upon request **Logan Clarke moved to suspend the order of the agenda to accommodate representatives present to discuss a referral.** Nancy Fischbach seconded. All were in favor.

### Approval of Minutes

**Nancy Fischbach moved to approve the minutes of January 26, 2005.** Logan Clarke seconded. All were in favor.

### Guests/Referral

Dick Leighton, ZEO for the Borough of Fenwick, and property owner David Savin presented revised plans to place a swimming pool in the back yard of a house that is already fully in the 50 foot buffer set back from the river. Fenwick Borough has not passed the 50 foot buffer Gateway requirement but must go to the ZBA for a special permit in any case. Discussion centered around impingement on the surrounding marshland, erosion control, and visual impact from the water. Dick Leighton acknowledged that this plan revision would result in a visual tradeoff for less intrusion into the surrounding marsh. Rudi Bessier suggested that there was not strong enough reason to endorse further impingement into the 50 foot Gateway buffer as well a degradation of the visual scene and proposed a letter from the Gateway Commission encouraging Fenwick's ZBA not to further bend the Gateway regulations. There was a

general consensus of Commission members and Linda said staff would write the requisite letter to Fenwick's ZBA.

### Correspondence/Staff Report

Linda Krause opted to move the staff report to Chester Appeal under New Business.

### Treasurer's Report

Peggy Wilson reported that Logan Clarke, Nancy Fischbach, and she have begun to meet for a few minutes before the regular meeting as an ad hoc finance committee. Over the last month, Peggy determined the current interest rate on Gateway's checking account was 3.4%. She also noted that total Tidewater expenses, including overhead to CRERPA amounted to 29% of Gateway's income for the calendar year 2005. Should the Gateway decide to retain Tidewater's services at their current rate for the whole of 2006 and assuming the same level of income, that percentage will drop to 23%. Peggy also noted the unbudgeted legal fees of \$4200 to date for fiscal year 06.

There were two bills to be paid:

\$676.20 to CRERPA for January staff services

\$560.00 to CRERPA for January Tidewater services

**Logan Clarke moved accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills.**

Susan Bement seconded. All were in favor.

### Referrals

Linda reported that there were three referrals from Essex and one from Old Saybrook in the last month.

One from Essex involved a front yard set back that was not visible from the River. The second was not on the riverfront. The third application was to increase the height of a structure by "2.5'" to raise it out of the floodplain; however, later in the application, it became apparent that the plan was actually to raise the building 2.5 feet for eventual safety concerns. Since the public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, the Commission has in all likelihood missed its chance to comment. Linda apologized for missing the discrepancy.

Madge Fish recused herself from the discussion concerning a petition in Old Saybrook to decrease the minimum building lot area in Flood Zone A. It would appear that the proposal would increase the likelihood of destruction of more wetlands. There was some wonderment that perhaps the applicant had not learned anything from the consequences of Hurricane Katrina. There was general consensus to write a letter of opposition to the proposal.

## Tidewater Institute

Judy Preston distributed an explanation of her hours spent for Gateway in the last month. Commission members were pleased with its format. Judy further explained that:

- work on the Riparian Buffers Grant was moving forward in the form of marrying raw data to GIS maps
- she will be co-teaching a service learning class at Wesleyan in the fall in hopes that the Groundtruthing project will be funded
- Tidewater's "Walks and Talks" program starts next week on Wednesday at the Old Lyme Library. Its topic will be anticipating spring.

## Status of New Standards

Linda reported that the Chester appeal has led to new interest in the Gateway regulation from some of the towns. A representative from the Essex Land Trust called to see what they might do to help move passage of the regulations along in Essex.

Ted Crosby said there is more awareness in Old Lyme due to an impending subdivision. He is considering asking the First Selectman for a moratorium on zoning permits to put pressure on the Zoning Board. A fall back strategy is passage of a Stormwater Ordinance that would include a similar 50 foot buffer requirement.

It may be time to put some effort into urging Old Saybrook and East Haddam to act as it has been 2 years since Gateway adopted the new standards. Nancy Fischbach reported that Deep River has already had ample opportunity to be thankful that their regulations are in place.

## Other/New Business

Linda reported on the status **Chester ZBA Appeal**. Monday, attorney Paul Geraghty will file a motion for a restraining order on any zoning permits on the Barnick property.

As discussion of Chester's interpretation of a "developed area" as regards the need for a 50 foot buffer developed, Linda noticed with some alarm that the sentence "Developed areas will be determined by the Gateway Commission." has been omitted from the regulations passed in Chester, Deep River, and Lyme. Linda took responsibility for the oversight, and Torrance Downes distributed a draft definition of a developed area that the Gateway might include in a revision of the regulations. The Commission supported scheduling a public hearing for such a revision as soon as possible.

**Logan Clarke moved that Rupe Wilcox be presented with a Commission Resolution commemorating his long and dedicated service to the Gateway, possibly to include a State Certificate of similar resolve.**  
Peggy Wilson seconded. All were in favor

**Nancy Fischbach moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 pm.**

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Papp.

**The next meeting of the Gateway Commission is Thursday, March 23, 2006**