

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MAY 26, 2005

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

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fred Vollono at 7:40 pm in the CRERPA meeting room.

Approval of Minutes: **Nancy Fischbach moved and Melvin Woody seconded a motion to approve the minutes of April 28, 2005 as submitted.** All voted in favor except Stasia DeMichele, who abstained.

Correspondence/Staff Report:

Linda Krause reported that she had spoken with Jerry Van Noordennen, Director of Regulatory Affairs for the former Connecticut Yankee power plant, who requested an opportunity to talk to the Gateway Commission at their June 23 meeting. He wants to report on their plans and the status of the property. He asked Linda to inform the Commission that site work will begin in June to demolish the intake structure and stabilize the riverbank.

Linda reported that she had received several calls concerning the plans by Connecticut Audubon to sell the Harlo Haagenon Preserve in East Haddam. The property has been placed on the market and was originally advertised as subdividable into 14 building lots. She spoke to Anita Balleck and Sam Carlson earlier, and had received a call yesterday from staff of the Trust for Public Land seeking Gateway Commission support to oppose the purchase and seek alternative means of preservation. Gateway was asked to take two actions. The first was a letter to Connecticut Audubon expressing concern that their action in this instance in selling the land donated as a preserve would lessen trust in all preservation organizations, and asking them to reconsider. The second was to

support an effort to work cooperatively with other organizations to acquire the property. **Melvin Woody moved and Nancy Fischbach seconded a motion to send a letter to Connecticut Audubon expressing dismay at their actions.**

As the motion was being discussed, East Haddam residents Sam and Peggy Carlson arrived at the meeting and were invited to join the discussion. Mr. Carlson stated that they had contacted the listing agent for the property and received information of the offer. He noted that the conditions of sale have since been modified to provide for just one building site with conservation easements, and the asking price has been reduced to \$775,000. East Haddam residents have been collecting testimonial letters from long time neighbors of the property as to Mr. Haagenson's clear intent to donate the property for preservation. Mr. Haagenson deeded the property to the Connecticut Audubon in 1989, in accordance with his wife's wishes, and reserved life tenancy for himself. He died in 1994. The property has been operated as a preserve, open to the public.

The possibility of legal action was discussed, but it was noted that there was a question of standing to object to the action. Mr. Haagenson has a nephew living in New Jersey who has been asked to become involved. Mr. Carlson showed pictures and a map of the property.

After further discussion, the Chairman called for a vote on the motion on the floor. Further discussion focused on the content of the letter to Connecticut Audubon. It was noted that the property has been used by the public for a decade. The land is important in relation to the river for water quality, habitat and scenic value. Preservation of this property is important to preserve the natural and traditional river scene.

With the agreement of the seconder, Melvin Woody modified his motion to include a statement that the Gateway Commission agrees to participate in efforts to permanently preserve the property as it was intended. The motion was approved unanimously.

In other staff reporting, Linda said that she felt the meeting on May 3, 2005 with the new DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy, had been useful. Fred Vollono, Raul DeBrigard and David Blatt attended on behalf of the Gateway Commission, along with CRERPA staffers Linda Krause, Torrance Downes and Amy Cabaniss. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the work of Gateway and CRERPA.

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of Peggy Wilson, Linda distributed the Treasurer's report. **Nancy Fischbach moved and Fred Vollono seconded a motion to approve the treasurer's report as submitted.** The motion was approved unanimously. Linda presented two bills, one from CRERPA for \$451.36, and the other from the Tidewater Institute for \$1335.84. **Melvin Woody**

moved and Nancy Fischbach seconded a motion to pay both bills, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Status of Gateway Standards: Linda reported that the new Lyme Zoning Regulations, including the Gateway standards revisions, have been scheduled for public hearing in July. Old Saybrook is also in the process of adopting the standards. That leaves East Haddam, Essex and Old Lyme which have yet to act.

Tidewater Institute: Judy Preston presented a series of PowerPoint slides showing the history, achievements and proposed future activities of the Tidewater Institute. She stated that Tidewater was established to provide information to local decision makers. The organization has three goals: to work collaboratively with other organizations along the river, to provide ecological education on the local level, and to facilitate access to information resources. Tidewater worked to bring the Pace Institute to the Connecticut River. One slide showed John Nolan of Pace on a river boat trip last January. Tidewater is now participating in two regional workshops, in Ellington and Old Lyme, through the Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA). Judy has also conducted several workshops under a grant from the Long Island Sound license plate fund, entitled "Tools for Intelligent Tinkering". In addition, she has given courses through the Middlesex Community College and Old Lyme library. Judy applied for and received a grant from EPA through the Long Island Sound Study to inventory and provide information on riparian buffers along the Connecticut River. Judy then showed several activities that she felt would be appropriate for future projects on behalf of the Gateway Commission. She asked Gateway members for continued financial support through the remainder of the summer and then through the end of December. She will be attending graduate school in September and will need to determine what sort of workload is possible.

Linda spoke in favor of continuing financial support for Judy and the Tidewater Institute. She noted that through Judy's efforts, there have been several excellent educational opportunities. When Judy teaches various sessions, she always promotes the Gateway Commission. Those present discussed the future relationship with the Tidewater Institute. Melvin Woody stated that support for the work of the Tidewater Institute is fulfilling the shift in emphasis for the Gateway Commission, from land acquisition to education and information. Judy presented a proposed budget. **Susan Bement moved and Rudi Bessier seconded a motion to continue financial support for Judy and Tidewater through December 2005, in accordance with the proposed budget.** The motion was approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Krause, for Dorothy Papp