

DRAFT

Minutes of Connecticut River Assembly Meeting

**Wethersfield Town Hall
505 Silas Deane Highway
Wethersfield, CT 06109**

February 10, 2011

Attendance:

Members

Joseph Smith, Chairman	Wethersfield
William B. Garner	Enfield
Bill Flagg	South Windsor
Philip Benoit	Rocky Hill
Steve Sorrow	Suffield

Others

Mary Ellen Kowalewski	CRCOG
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Joseph Smith called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Presentation on Recent Activities of the Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC) by Jacqueline Talbot, Connecticut River Steward in Connecticut

Ms. Talbot asked the members to introduce themselves, and note why they wanted to be members of the Connecticut River Assembly.

Ms. Talbot talked about her work with the CRWC. She talked about the variety of issues and activities that impact the large Connecticut River watershed that extends from the US/Canadian border to Long Island Sound, including: dams and flood control structures, the impacts of non-point source pollution (specifically nitrogen) on the water quality of the river and Long Island Sound, other pollutants found in the watershed, and the diversity of wildlife and ecosystems. When the CRWC was formed in 1952, the Connecticut River was sometimes referred to as “the best landscaped sewer in the nation.” The river is much cleaner now than it was then. The CRWC has its main office in Greenfield, MA and there are three CT River Stewards that work in different parts of the watershed. CRWC works on education, outreach and advocacy on river issues. One recent issue that the Council has been involved in is the development of draft CT Streamflow Regulations that balance human needs with environmental concerns. The Council also sponsors a “source to the sea” clean-up each year, and there are many other volunteer opportunities available.

Members present discussed these and other issues with Ms. Talbot. Members thanked Ms. Talbot for her informative presentation, and for participating in the CRA meeting.

Update on MA/CT Lower Connecticut River Joint Commission Project

Mary Ellen Kowalewski updated the CRA on the work of this project, including the web-based mapping of recreational resources, CT River Survey to which members were encouraged to respond, the Small Grants Competition which would be announced soon, and the MOU for a

Connecticut River Bi-State Partnership for Massachusetts and Connecticut that had been drafted and was now undergoing review by the participating regional planning organizations.

Report on Municipal Issues

- Steve Sorrow, Suffield—Mr. Sorrow noted that the Friends of the Canal were concerned that the Windsor Locks Canal is now nearly dry due to siltation. There is also concern that a local trash collection company operating in the vicinity of the canal may be permitted to handle wet garbage, creating runoff that could potential harm water quality in the canal. DEP is now reviewing this issue. Mr. Sorrow also talked about the next extension being recommended for the Canal Trail. Mr. Sorrow also spoke about the potential for hydropower generation at bridges along the Connecticut River.
- William Garner, Enfield—Mr. Garner reported on possible creation of an overlook at the abutment of the former CT river bridge in the vicinity of the Enfield Train Station in Thompsonville. He also talked about possible trail connections to this area.

Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.