

Natural Heritage, Open Space, and Watershed Land Acquisition Review Board

Regular Meeting (via Zoom/teleconference)

November 12, 2021

Minutes

Board members present: Eric Hammerling (Co-Chair), Walker Holmes, Dan Morley, Amy Paterson (Co-Chair), Elanah Sherman, John Triana, and Joe Welsh (all by Zoom except Elanah, who attended by phone)

Guests: Sylvie Boucher, Sandy Breslin Conservation Fellow, Connecticut Land Conservation Council; Matt Macunas, Legislative Liaison and Associate Director, Legislative Affairs and Regulatory Policy, Connecticut Green Bank; Catherine Rawson, Executive Director, Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

Welcome and Introductions

Eric called the meeting to order at 10:34 AM.

Approval of October 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Amy, seconded by John, the Minutes were approved unanimously with one abstention.

Special Guest Presentation: Matt Macunas

Matt said the Connecticut Green Bank, a quasi-public organization, is the nation's first state-level green bank. Its purposes include financing clean energy; confronting climate change; and – a priority goal - addressing the needs of vulnerable communities.

The Bank functions as an Intermediary between state interests and private capital. Among its social and environmental impacts are: generation of about 25,000 job years; creation, through initiatives, of more than \$107 million dollars in tax revenue; and generation of hundreds of millions of dollars in public health value.

Matt said Public Act 21-115 (An Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation), which benefitted greatly from Review Board member Joe Gresko's leadership, expands the Green Bank's scope beyond clean energy to include environmental infrastructure. In response to a

question from Eric, Matt said that, although most Green Bank funding is in the form of loans, some funding is also available as grants. In response to questions from Amy and Eric, Matt confirmed that some level of partnership with the OSWA program may be possible and that Green Bank funding may be available to provide the matches required of municipalities by grantors.

Catherine asked if the Green Bank could help “amp up the pace of conservation through investment in purchasing;” Matt responded that the Bank may be able to provide this assistance. Walker expressed hope that a collaboration between OSWA and the Green Bank could close the gap that currently exists in state resources between open space purchase and municipal park building.

In response to a request from Matt, Amy said she would email him a list of Review Board members, as well as a link to past Minutes; Amy also agreed to include Matt on the invite list to future Review Board meetings. Matt said he would email his presentation slides to Amy for distribution to the Review Board.

DEEP Staff Updates:

Tabled

Business

Update on OSWA/UGCG Working Group:

Tabled

Green Plan:

Tabled

Public Comment

No comment

Adjournment

With no motions, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Elanah Sherman, Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday, December 9, 2021, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM