

Town of Granby
Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting, via Zoom, August 12, 2025 -- Minutes

Present: Kara Rogers Marshall, Chairwoman, David Desiderato, Will Masden, Kent McCord

1. **Call to Order** -- at 7:05

2. **Public Comment** -- None

3. **Review and Approval of the June 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes** – approved without change, unanimously.

Kara noted that Kathy Kane is no longer available to take minutes. After a brief discussion it was agreed that, for now, members would rotate responsibility for taking minutes; **David will take the August minutes and Kent will take September's. Kara will check the legal requirements for posting minutes.**

The September 9th regular meeting will be in-person and will include a discussion of the 2026 meeting schedule, which must be published in advance.

4. **Continued Farm Lease Conversation**

For our ongoing discussion of how town-owned agricultural properties can be better managed, Will noted that the Commission's responsibilities under state law include maintaining an inventory of open parcels. **He will ask the assessor's office for a list of town-owned properties and will check with the Granby Land Trust and the Plan of Conservation and Development.**

5. **Energy Conservation**

Kara, Kent, reviewed recent efforts to identify potential energy efficiency, technical assistance, and audit programs available to the town through Eversource and related entities. **Kara will check on timelines of various programs.**

Jim Szipszky, via email, reported he had toured all mechanical rooms with Town Manager Mike Walsh and identified lots of potential opportunities for improvements. The next step is to figure out which facilities would be toured by Eversource's consultants and they are working on that.

Federal budget cuts to the EnergyStar grant program may make benchmarking energy usage more difficult; it is advised to download and save historic data. Historic and ongoing data is needed for SustainableCT documentation. **Kent will check with Jim and maybe Dana at Eversource.**

Solar: Kent reported on conversations with CSW Energy, which is installing the array on the Holcomb Farm CSA barn. A proposal to install an array on the town garage is expected shortly. Once the project has town approval, it will be submitted for a renewable energy credit program that has 2 deadlines per year; the next is February 2026. It would be an approximately 200 kilowatt array, mostly for export, as the garage has relatively low usage. One unknown is the cost of any utility upgrades. The garage is a good demonstration project; to date there are only 2 small arrays on Granby town and school buildings.

6. Composting

Will reported on his tour of the Blue Earth facility in Hartford and conversations with Sam King, Senior Manager for Business Development and part-owner. Blue Earth needs 50 participants from Granby to commence pickup services, which has a cost and provides annual bags of compost. Compost is delivered to several sites, and some is used to generate electricity.

The Commission discussed some of the elements of a campaign to reach at least 50 signups, such as partnering with groups in town, publicizing through social media, engaging multi-family housing developments, using crowdfunding and SustainableCT matching funds, and publicizing potential savings in town trash costs. The Commission will discuss it further at its September meeting. Will is submitting an article for the September Drummer and has scheduled a presentation at Granby Public Library on September 16.

7. CGS 7-131A (Index of Wetlands, etc) – will be discussed next month

8. Meeting Topics for September 8, 2025

- Farm Lease
- Composting
- Open Space / Wetlands
- Energy, Renewables
- Plan of Conservation and Development
- Sustainable CT and what's next

9. Final Comments from Commissioners

David asked if anyone is following the planning activities about the town center; **Kent will check in and update Commissioners.**

Will reported his homeowners' association does not allow vegetable gardens in the front yard.

Kara reported the Granby Grange is participating in Granby Open Farm Day, September 6, 10 to 4. Residents are invited to submit entries for contests in several categories; more information at <https://www.facebook.com/GranbyGrange>

David reported on the recent Second Saturday Invasive Action; volunteers removed Winged Euonymus along the Salmon Brook. He will be selling native plants on Open Farm Day at the Holcomb Farm CSA.

10. Adjourn – at 8:15, unanimous

