

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
May 14, 2025

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee (“Committee”) of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”), of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”), took place on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 233 Skiff Street, Hamden, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine(R), P. Betkoski(R), P. DeSantis(R), B. Eitzer(R), M. Horbal(R), G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young(R)

RPB: R. Harvey, N. Campbell, T. Clifford(R), J. DiCarlo(R), C. Havrda(R), C. Mancini(R), S. Mongillo(R)

Authority: S. Sack(R)

Management: S. Lakshminarayanan(R), V. Benni, J. Hill, and J. Triana

Chair Levine called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Ms. Horbal and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its April 9, 2025 regular meeting and the April 17, 2025 special meeting, as presented.

At 4:33 p.m., Mr. Betkoski entered the meeting.

Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, provided a historical overview and update regarding the property at 233 Skiff Street in Hamden, Connecticut. He reported that this was the last remaining rental house from a group of 15 designated for disposal or demolition since the early 2000s. This property, which is located next to the Mill River, is designated as Class 1 and Class 2 land and is slated for sale as part of the *Land We Need for the Water We Use* program.

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, determined that the house in question was likely constructed in the mid-1800s, as indicated by the architectural features observed in the basement. Although the basement's cinder block foundation suggests a more recent 1950s-1960s era, the wooden beams exhibit characteristics that point to a much earlier period of construction.

Mr. Triana noted that the town of Hamden requested use of the front yard to serve as a staging area for the reconstruction of the Skiff Street bridge, resulting in a license agreement established in late 2015. Construction commenced in 2016 and progressed approximately three years. By late 2019, the construction of the bridge, sidewalk, and storm drain in front of the property was completed. However, it was later discovered that the bridge and sidewalk encroached beyond the property line. This necessitated a license agreement for the storm drain and an access easement, leading to protracted negotiations with the town that were resolved 15 months ago. The town was granted the ownership of the sidewalk and bridge, along with the easement for the drainage. Subsequently, preparations were made to delineate the lot for the house, which required obtaining variances from the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) board due to prior subdivisions. Now that the process has been completed, Mr. Triana will begin drafting the disposition application for approval by the Representative Policy Board.

At 4:50 p.m., Mr. Malloy entered the meeting.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
April 30	92%	98%	94%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
April 2025	2.76	3.78	4.26
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	36.82	58.77	42.68

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Madison, Weber property – Reviewed draft of the survey. Received signed P&SA from seller. We executed the P&SA and sent the deposit to the sellers’ attorney to hold in escrow.
- Cheshire, Bis property (CH 5) – Corresponded with DEEP about updating the survey and legal description.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Updated survey and resent to Planning Office.

Forestry Update

- Organized the planting of 1,100 tree and shrub seedlings over two weeks at various RWA properties, including but not limited to Gaillard, Peat Swamp, Brenski Swamp, Maltby Recreation Area, and Saltonstall.
- Met with Nathan Pitruzzello on April 3rd to discuss the firewood permit program and renewal process as a first step in developing an online renewal and payment system with WebTrac software and support.

Recreation

- Held walk on history of Genesee area and had 15 attendees.
- Bethany Horsemen worked on the horse bridges at Chamberlain.
- Corresponded with trail coordinator in West Rock area about adding trails on our property.
- About 1800 trout were stocked in the Maltby Lakes. 12 large fish had tags and one was caught the first week.
- Docks were put into Lake Saltonstall and the broken railing piece was repaired.
- Four new heavy-duty picnic tables were purchased for Saltonstall and Maltby rec areas.
- Boat rentals began at Saltonstall on April 26th.
- Awarded grant (\$750) from Whitetails Unlimited for assistance with the kid’s archery event.
- The Water Wagon was brought to two events by the recreation staff. Rain canceled the third event.

	April		March	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,974	4,972	4,842	4,827

Special Activity Permits

- American Distilling, Inc. (Mr. Christopher Hanson)-tour of active witch hazel harvest site for CT Woodlands Master Program, RWA property near 2061 Durham Road, Madison, (4/23/2025).
- Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society) – (Erik Sechler, Ecological Program Coordinator) – survey and seed collection of CT endangered plant species with CTDEEP approval species name *Hydrastis canadensis*, *Limosella australis*, *Eriocaulon parkeri*, Beaver Head Swamp (Guilford) and Lake Saltonstall (East Haven and Branford) (5/10/2025-12/31/2025).
- Shoreline Hikes (Trevor Cash)-School project is focused along the Connecticut Shoreline and the purpose is to promote all the local trails, make the information including descriptions, difficulty, photos, and more accessible online. Teach the community about nature, help keep the trails clean and safe.
Madison, Guilford, Clinton, Old Saybrook, Killingworth-Connecticut Shoreline area (4/17/2025 – 4/17/2026).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Met with abutters of the Sperry Rd., Woodbridge field to talk about our expectations, especially annual mowing to control invasives. Corresponded with tenant of one of the Downs Rd., Hamden fields about adding a shed, greenhouse, and/or bee hives.
 - Madison, 752 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Met with abutter. He said the materials would be removed.
 - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Certified letter sent to abutter. Met with him and stated our intent to reset the points and install a fence. Abutter supplied a survey of his own that showed a different geometry for the lines. Our survey is on the land records, but his is not.
 - New Haven, Whalley Ave. PRV – Noticed two vehicles parked there all the time.
 - West Haven, Shingle Hill Tanks (WH 7) – Reviewed draft of the new license agreement with attorney.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in West Haven, Haddam, Hamden, and North Branford. Portions of the Great Hill Rd. were cleared of autumn olive.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	5.5 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	3 acres

- Arbor Day 2025 – NRA coordinated team of RWA staff to plant trees in East Haven and North Haven.
- Killingworth, Kroupa Pond dam (KI 8) – Discussed ownership of the dam with Engineering staff. Reviewed our files and checked the site in the field. Met with DOT surveying crew at the site.
- Guilford, Goat Lot Rd. gate – Received notice from Guilford Town Engineer that they approved the installation of a gate to prohibit vehicular access. We are required to post a sign saying the road is still open to pedestrian use.
- North Branford, UI watermain easement – Emailed surveyor about producing the maps separately for UI and the town.
- Land Use Plan – Sent out draft of West River, Maltby, and Prospect sections to staff for comments.

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- North Branford, North St. fence – Researched responsibility for fence at the cul-du-sac on North St. Determined we are responsible for the fence and one of our police officers submitted a work order.
- Drone flights – Conducted a drone flight at the Whitney Dam to collect base map information for the engineering's CBYD blueprints. Conducted drone flights at Lake Gaillard and LGWTP to exercise new drone-detection sensors installed at the treatment facility.

At 5:07 p.m., Ms. Young entered the meeting.

There were no other land items to report.

At 5:13 p.m., Ms. Campbell entered the meeting.

Chair Levine noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in Madison for an update on Witch Hazel harvesting.

At 5:15 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Oslander, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair

(R) = Attended remotely.