

Groton Conservation Advocates

December 2017 e-Newsletter

Working to preserve the quality of life and ecological health of Groton through public education and political action.

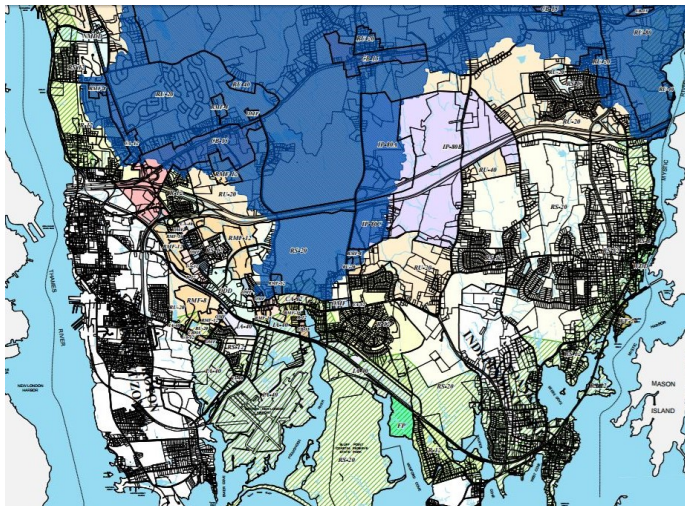
Poquonock Reservoir

Dear Friends and Neighbors,
We are delighted to present you with Groton Conservation Advocates' (GCA) first newsletter to keep you informed about Groton's environment.

GCA's mission is two-fold:

- To keep all those in the Town of Groton concerned about our environment informed, as needed, of local government plans and actions that have an impact on our local environment.
- To bring the perspective of needed environmental protection to the proceedings of the Town Council, the Planning and Zoning Commissions, and the Inland Wetlands Agency.

Advocacy actions taken before forming GCA:



Map of Town of Groton showing WRPD overlay in blue.

Protection of drinking water sources In the case of Groton's Water Resource Protection District regulation rewrite by the Zoning Commission, we urged the ZC to include a 100-foot non-disturbance buffer in place of a 50-foot buffer for properties in the WRPD. The wider, more protective margin was adopted.



Protection of existing open space When the Connecticut Airport Authority announced [plans to cut down trees at Bluff Point](#) (and six other privately-owned adjacent properties) they viewed as a hindrance to Groton-New London Airport access, we attended a public hearing and petitioned for a full environmental impact study. In process.



[Prospective sale and development of Mystic Education Center](#), state-owned land. GCA continues to watch this process to ensure that DEEP's forested portion of the property is protected as open space. **GCA supports a state Constitutional Amendment** requiring a public hearing in the affected town and a 2/3 vote by the legislature to convey state property to a town or individual. In process. (Continued on p.2)

First advocacy project after forming GCA last September:



GCA submitted a questionnaire about best environmental practices to both Republican and Democratic Town Council (TC) candidates to assess where they stood on the environment.

We endorsed four candidates. "The Day" published our [Letter to the Editor](#) with our endorsements and we sent an email to you, our friends and neighbors, with this information before the election. The results of the election were dramatic—a clean sweep—and we're delighted that we may have played a minor role in this outcome. Our hope is that the current TC will take a greater interest in protecting our environment than the previous Council.

On-going project:

The Zoning Commission continues its work on rewriting the town's zoning regulations to make them simpler and more user-friendly. GCA was there to hear a lively discussion of the definition of open space. We recommended that the town consider a unique zoning designation for Groton Utility lands around

Groton's reservoirs, as the term "open space" is misleading. We also recommended that the ZC incorporate enhanced safety requirements related to flooding and sea level rise into their new regulations.

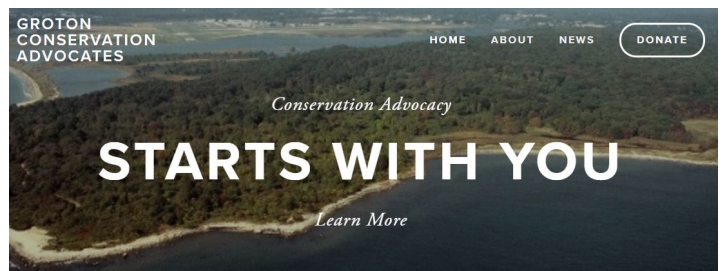
First article written about GCA published in The Day on December 9, 2017:

Please take a look at the article Deborah Straszheim wrote about GCA titled "[Residents organize environmental advocacy group in Groton.](#)"

GCA Steering Committee

Jim Furlong, Liz Raisbeck, Zell Steever, Jessie Stratton, Tom Tobin, and Eugenia Villagra

Please [visit our new website](#) to learn more about Groton Conservation Advocates!



Upcoming Events

Letter writing: It's one of many important actions we can take as advocates.

Rise Up Mystic will be hosting

Roger Kuhns of the [Citizens' Climate Lobby](#)

followed by a

Writers' Workshop

Tips on how to write letters to public officials, etc.

When: **Thursday, December 14th, 2017 at 5:45**

Where: **Groton Public Library (Rooms 1 and 2)**

Roger, a geologist and ecologist, will present from 5:45 until 6, or 6:15, so you won't want to miss that.

Groton Conservation Advocates will make a brief presentation at the meeting opening