



THE MEADOW VIEW

**The Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and
Wethersfield, Connecticut**

Vol. III No. 3

October 1991

**Great Meadows Conservation Trust
Members and Friends
Are Invited To**

THE NEWLY CREATED POND AT EARLE PARK

***Saturday, November 9, 1 to 3 P.M.
(Rain date November 10)***

**Meet at Holland Brook Connecticut Audubon Center, 1361 Main
Street, Glastonbury**

The pond created at Earle Park is in compensation for the wetlands lost
to the development at Red Hill.

The project will be presented by Judy Harper, Staff, CAS Holland Brook
Nature Center, and John Rook, Planning Specialist, Town of Glastonbury.

Walking shoes are advised for the walk to the pond and for the optional
walk through the park to the Connecticut River.
There will be cider and donuts after the walk.

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MACBROOM ADDRESSES ANNUAL MEETING

Our 24th Annual Meeting on June 7th at Trinity Episcopal Church, Wethersfield, was preceded by the traditional Great Meadows punch and a delectable pot luck dinner. Tables were decorated with large maps of the Connecticut River valley drawn by Betsy Katz.

At the meeting the by-laws were amended, to increase the allowed number of directors from nine to twelve. John Lepper of Wethersfield, Peter Stern of Glastonbury and Donald Watson of Rocky Hill were reelected and Peter Revill of Rocky Hill was elected to serve as directors until 1994.

A special award was made to Eleanor Wolf as a member who has rendered outstanding service to the Trust. She was given a framed photograph of her home viewed from Wethersfield Cove by photographer Duffy Schade. (See below).

Following the business meeting, James MacBroom, P.E., an exceedingly knowledgeable water resources consulting engineer, and a member of the Rivers Advisory Committee of the DEP spoke on the state's River Management Program, illustrating his talk with slides by AMERICAN RIVERS. The evening concluded with a lively and informative question and answer exchange on members' concerns about the Connecticut River and its floodplain.

To Eleanor Wolf Great Meadows Conservation Trust Volunteer of the Year 1991

In recognition and appreciation of one of our founders and steady well-spring of Great Meadows Trust.

Eleanor's quiet strength is an inspiration for how great feats can be accomplished through gentle persuasion, good humor and a twinkling eye. Her knowledge of Great Meadows area, its history and presently, is a vital resource for the Trust.

*This photograph, made in April 1991, of Eleanor and Dick Wolf's house, celebrates the Trust's "Home" - its address for many years, and still the usual meeting place of the Trust's Operations Committee. We thank them both for sharing it,
from Great Meadows Conservation Trust
June 7, 1991*

Eleanor Wolf's Reply to the GMCT Operations Committee

June 13, 1991

Surprised - and pleased
That you who in this house have squeezed
Each month in busy meeting
Should honor me who just loves greeting
You with coffee, tea and such -
It really is too much!

You've sat for hours on chairs with backs so
straight

I'm sure you've taken home some backs that
ached!

You've driven distances to come
And parked 'way down the street - no fun
In rain or winter's snow.

(To save the Meadows takes long hours I know.)

But I stay cozily at home. My only toil
To dust and bake and put the kettle on to boil.

Now Duffy's lovely photo adorns our wall -
My thanks, my well-loved friends, to one and all.

Eleanor

BETSY KATZ HONORED

The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter's White Oak Award has been given to Betsy Katz, member of the Trust's Operations Committee and Co-Chair of the Program Committee. The citation -

In recognition for her dedication and commitment to the Connecticut Chapter of The Nature Conservancy; as volunteer coordinator of special events and trips; and as a source of boundless energy and enthusiasm.

With great appreciation, the Trustees and Staff of the Connecticut Chapter are pleased to honor Betsy Katz with the White Oak Award.

Presented this Fifth day of October, 1991
Lakeville, Connecticut

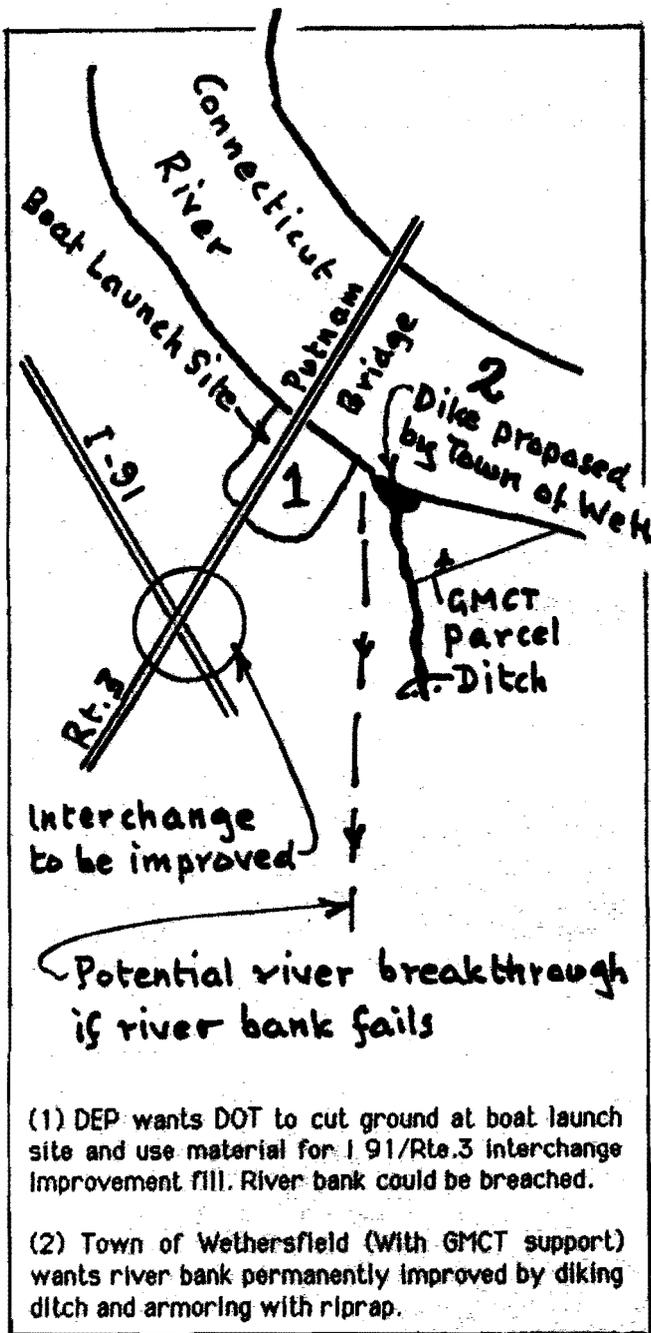
A well deserved recognition! Congratulations Betsy!

HUNTING SEASON'S HERE

We share the Meadows with game clubs, so it is well to be careful when you are down there. The hunting season is allocated as follows:

Ducks, mergansers, coots	Oct. 19 - 26
Canada geese	Oct. 19 - Feb 5
Snow geese	Oct. 19 - Feb. 1
Small game	Oct. 19 - Dec. 31

Hunting is allowed every day including holidays, but excluding Sundays.



Wethersfield Town Engineer James Sheehy has proposed a concept plan to stabilize the river bank which is even now felt to be vulnerable to erosion. This plan calls for maintaining the existing bank at elevation 16 feet under the Putnam Bridge and continuing it with a dike extending a short distance into the Great Meadows Conservation Trust's (GMCT) Standish Parcel. The dike would close off the large ditch between the DOT property and the parcel. This ditch has been responsible for some erosion of GMCT land, and scouring of adjacent fields. The dike would contain a 24-inch pipe to allow drainage of normal local storm water, but be small enough to minimize river water coming back into the meadows. The river bank and dike would be armored against washout with riprap of large stone.

Wethersfield's Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Commission and GMCT Board of Directors have approved the concept plan. The Trust has agreed to grant slope rights for construction of the dike. The concept plan was submitted to both DOT and DEP. DOT found no problem with it; DEP has refused to consider it since DOT had already filed an application with them for cuts and fills in connection with the I-91/Rte 3 interchange project.

DOT's latest application to DEP does not include construction of the boat launch. However, DEP, using its Cuts and Fills Balance Regulation, is requiring that the land be graded in a manner that would make construction of a future boat launch ramp possible.

DOT people say they can get the required fill from another location and would not have to lower the ground near the river bank.

The whole matter now goes to public hearing before the DEP Adjudication Unit in November. (Rescheduled from October.)

PUTNAM BRIDGE BOAT LAUNCH

The sketch illustrates the local concern over the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) desire to have the Department of Transportation (DOT) excavate material to partially rough out the grades for the proposed boat launch ramp. The Town of Wethersfield, the Trust and others feel that lowering the ground level at or near the river bank could cause the Connecticut to change its course during a major flood.

CONSULTANT'S RIVER REPORT TO WETHERSFIELD

The Town of Wethersfield has retained James MacBroom of Milone and MacBroom, Consulting Engineers, to examine the technical aspects of the river bank cutting proposed by the State. (Mr. MacBroom spoke to the Trust at its Annual Meeting in June.) In a preliminary report, MacBroom has noted, (1) the cut would increase overbank flood flows into the Wethersfield Meadows, (2) the hydraulic analysis made by the State is inadequate to handle the complex flow

pattern at the bend in the flood plain river, (3) the site has "an alluvial channel with a dynamic sedimentary floodplain subject to periodic flooding", i.e. the river can change its course, (4) the river has periodically changed its course, and (5) the new fills have not been analyzed for hydraulic effect, and the need for the cuts has not been proven.

MacBroom recommends that the proposed cut at the river bank be deleted from the plans and made elsewhere to avoid affecting the channel and floodplain, and that any further hydraulic studies should be made with a sophisticated computer model known as the finite element analysis.

ILLEGAL CLEARING OF QUARRY PARK LAND

In July, the owners of the property north of and abutting Rocky Hill's Quarry Park cut a wide swath through the State property, and made excavations without permits from the State or the Town of Rocky Hill. The area includes recognized archaeological sites. The land owners, acting under the direction of Mr. R. Johnson, claim a right of way over the park property from the end of Matteson Avenue. (This street joins Old Main Street opposite Marshall Road.)

Thanks to an alert neighbor who called the authorities, State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni arrived and stopped the process even though most of the area had been cleared and scraped. A meeting of some twenty officials and neighbors discussed the situation on site. Mr. Johnson, a land attorney, claimed to be unaware of the State law regarding archaeological sites and the necessity of researching the area before commencing work under permit, a matter which had been brought up at an earlier hearing about the land. Failure to observe the law carries a penalty of \$5,000 and 5 years in jail. Mr. Johnson agreed to stop the work until the area has been checked. Mr. Bellantoni said he would undertake dig research assisted by the Albert Morgan Archaeological Society. Since then, some seeding has been done and a gravel path built.

The reason Mr. Johnson gave for clearing the land was that the abutting owners plan to build two houses on their property which can only be reached by crossing Quarry Park.

The watchful neighbors, including members of the Rocky Hill Neighborhood Association, will continue to monitor activities. Their efforts to protect Quarry Park are greatly appreciated.

WELLES STREET HOUSING, GLASTONBURY

A proposal to remove flood plain material and use it to construct a paved 300-space parking lot within the Connecticut River Channel Encroachment Lines came before the Department on Environmental Protection (DEP) for public hearing on September 24, 1991. The parking is for 150 units of housing on Welles Street, now under consideration by the Public Housing Authority for financing providing that at least 50% of the units qualify as affordable housing. The proposal had been given a tentative approval at an informal meeting of the Glastonbury Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission. The Conservation Commission, the local Inland Wetlands Authority, has had a site review.

DEP Water Resources staff reviewed the plans, but could only rule on those parts falling within the the encroachment lines. The fill taken on site is intended to raise the grade to the 500-year flood level of 32 feet for the housing units. The 19,000 cubic yards of excavation will compensate for flood storage capacity lost in the construction of the housing and parking lot. This meets DEP guidelines. Plans for grading and drainage in the parking lot and for regrading the excavation site received DEP approval.

DEP raised the issue of potential danger to life and property related to the parking lot. The housing falls within the flood plain, but outside the encroachment lines, therefore not under DEP jurisdiction at this hearing. In making its rulings DEP staff uses a flood level of 36 feet based on the water level experienced in 1938.

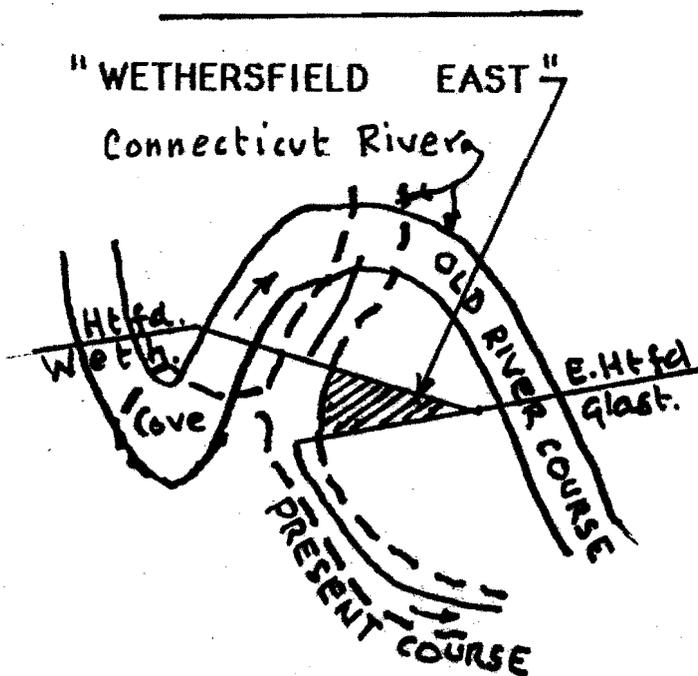
The hearing remains open pending submission and approval of a contingency plan for the safety of residents in event of flooding in excess of the 100-year flood elevation to which the parking lot was designed, or the introduction of other documentation.

GREAT POND PRESERVE ESTABLISHED

The 75-acre town-owned Great Pond Preserve has been established by action of the Glastonbury Town Council to protect a unique and ecologically significant area in South Glastonbury. Both the state chapter of the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Glastonbury Sub-chapter TNC will help in the

stewardship of the Preserve and the protection of its natural features. The 48 acres not already owned by the town will be deeded to the town by the Balf Company by July 1994, and will be protected by a temporary Conservation Easement until that time.

The Town Manager has been authorized to execute the Management Agreement for the Preserve. The Nature Conservancy will then start raising money for a Stewardship Fund. A joint Stewardship Committee will organize to begin the work of protecting the preserve and planning for its opening by 1994 as a beautiful natural area for present and future generations.



Many years ago, Wethersfield's Dog Warden received a call to dispose of a dead dog "in the meadows." He had to go to Hartford, cross the Connecticut River on the Bulkeley Bridge, drive to Glastonbury, find the meadow road which leads east across Keeney Cove, then proceed north to hunt for the dog in a 55-acre tract of land on the south border of East Hartford. Why? Because that land is part of Wethersfield, and has been ever since Sowheag, chief of the Wongunk Indians tribe, sold it to a group of original English settlers in the 1640's for "so much as was to his satisfaction", and that he might "Sitt down by them and be protected." On December 8, 1671, a deed was signed by Sowheag's son Taramuggus and other of his heirs, and for an additional "twelve yards of trading cloth". This agreement

set the boundaries on the east side of the river to run from Pewter Pott Brook six miles east into the wilderness and six miles south along the Great River to Middletown. West of the river the boundary on the north between Wethersfield and Hartford ran in a direct east-west line to the west bank of the river. The whole area deeded included the future Glastonbury, Newington, Rocky Hill as well as Wethersfield.

Up until the late 1690's, the Great River flowed south just east of Hartford Avenue in Wethersfield, then, after hitting a ledge of rock at the south end of the present Wethersfield Cove, flowed north across the Wethersfield-Hartford line before again turning southerly to flow through the present Keeney Cove in Glastonbury, making a large hook in the river which the Indians called "Hoccanum".

In 1692 Glastonbury successfully petitioned the General Court to separate from Wethersfield and in 1693 it became a separate township, the river becoming its western border.

No one is sure in which year before 1700 a record-breaking flood occurred when the Great River cut across the hook and bent itself into a double bow, approximately in its present channel. Now the farmers of the two towns were in great difficulties. Some of their meadow lands were on opposite sides of the river, with access only by private boat or by the ferries. For years a revision of the boundary was sought through the courts until 1767 when Colonel John Chester of Wethersfield petitioned the General Assembly to "settle" the east line of the town. In 1770 they set the line to be from "ancient Pewter Pott Brook's" mouth south and generally along the course where the river "Formerly was." This meant that Wethersfield's north and east lines crossed the river five times!

It took over 100 years of bitter contesting between the two towns until the Legislature, in 1874, finally established the boundary to be the center of the Connecticut River - except for the little triangle of Wethersfield which even to this day is east of the Great River, making Wethersfield, with Haddam, as the only towns in Connecticut spanning the river.

We wish our daughter town, Glastonbury, which is so much larger than her Mother, success in her celebration of 300 years of independence. We are happy to remain close to our daughter with that little triangle of meadow land which lies against her border.

Eleanor B. Wolf

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G Glastonbury, R Rocky Hill, W Wethersfield



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	Eleanor Revill

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Material for this issue has been provided by John Lepper, Eleanor Revill, Julianne Steffens, Don Watson, Eleanor Wolf and Editor Peter Revill

MEMBERSHIP

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