Town of Granby
Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting
October 13, 2026 at 7 pm
Via Zoom
Minutes – Subject to Approval

1. Roll Call

Present: David Desiderato, Zach Donais, Will Madsen, Kara Marshall, Jeff Spence, and Ruth Zafian commissioners
Josh Anderson and Austen Camille, Flyway Institute
The meeting opened at 7:03 pm

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Review of the August 11, 2026 Meeting Minutes

David Desiderato moved, Zach Donais seconded, and the Commission approved the minutes with one abstention.

4. Granby Land Trust Letter Request

Rick Orluk, President of the Granby Land Trust, requested that Kara Marshall author a letter in support of an application for an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Application to DEEP for 45 Mountain Road, North Granby. Orluk provided a draft letter, which the commissioners discussed. The commissioners discussed how it fits into the Plan of Conservation and Development as well as whether it provided sufficient protection of the land. David Desiderato moved that the Commission revise the letter to state general approval and Ruth Zafian seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item:

- Kara Marshall to revise the letter and provide a hard copy to Rick Orluk.

5. Energy Conservation & Renewables on Town Property

Kara Marshall reported that Mike Walsh presented a plan to the Board of Selectmen regarding energy efficiency upgrades on town properties. Walsh reported that the town will work with Titan to issue RFPs for the work identified in scoping studies earlier this year. This represents a good end to efforts promoted by the Conservation Commission.

Zach Donais was unable to reach Kent McCord regarding Renewables for Town Properties.

Action Items:

- Zach Donais to follow up with Mike Walsh regarding the renewables.

6. Composting

Will Madsen attempted to reach Brent Motto at DEEP, representatives of the East Granby Conservation Commission, and the Simsbury Sustainability Commission but has not yet connected. He still plans to reach out to the Simsbury Conservation Commission. His goal is to learn more about potential DEEP Sustainable Materials Management Grant, and to possibly work together with other local towns to develop a plan to improve composting options in the region. The Commission previous explored Blue Earth, but we have not secured sign ups from the required minimum of 50 families for household composting. He is seeking to explore other options, such as collection at town sites and transport to the schools where Blue Earth already collects compost. Jeff Spence suggested we also explore options within existing town facilities. Spence, new to the commission, asked why this is an area of focus. Madsen and Marshall responded that it is estimated that between 30 and 40 percent of solid waste in Connecticut is compostable and diverting this waste could deliver improved environmental quality, reduced bear nuisance, and cost savings to the town. David Desiderato suggested that the Commission form a subcommittee to work on this item.

Action Item:

- Will Madsen, David Desiderato, and Ruth Zafian to form a subcommittee to
    - Recruit speakers and plan a public education event
    - Continue to develop a plan to apply for the Sustainable Materials Management Grant

7. Sustainability Fair

Action Item:

- David Desiderato to research the fair held in Simsbury and Suffield to discuss possibilities for Granby

8. Educational Events

Austen Camille and Josh Anderson of the Flyway Institute shared information about their plans for events during the first week of March, known as Leopold Week, in honor of Aldo Leopold and his influential work, *A Sand County Almanac.* They have received funding to hold reading week events and will partner with the library to hold a reading of his works as well as the screening of *Green Fire*, a documentary about Leopold. They asked for support from the Commission in the form of volunteers at the event and possibly in educational talks leading up to the event. There may also be an opportunity to share information about the Commission's projects, such as composting or invasive plants. Will Madsen suggested inviting author Didi Pershouse. Jeff Spence asked who the audience for this would be. Josh Anderson described his work with the Salmon Brook Ecology Center at the middle school as well as journalism students at the high school. They plan to include a Leopold Award for a local student. The event will also include a community pot luck. Spence suggested outreach to local community colleges as well. David Desiderato suggested a hands on activity, planting native seeds or building Leopold benches (similar to those on the land trust properties). There are no additional actions needed at this time, but Austen Camille and Josh Anderson will update the committee as plans develop.

9. Meeting Topics for November 10, 2026

Jeff Spence suggested the Commission explore an educational effort aimed at composting or otherwise diverting Christmas trees from municipal collection. He will do research with the DPW to estimate the cost saving potential.

The Granby Land Trust letter can be removed

10. Final Comments from Commissioners

Jeff Spence and Ruth Zafian expressed their thanks for being welcomed to the commission.

11. Adjourn

The Commission adjourned at 8:07 pm

Minutes Prepared by Kara Marshall

Kara L Marshall

October 13, 2026