



*A general interest program for legislators, staff, design professionals, and the public about the science of sea level rise, climate change impacts, and strategies for proactive responses.*

**DATE: Wednesday, February 19, 2020**  
Room 310, Old Appropriations  
State Capitol, 210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106



CEU  
Co-Sponsor



*(Pending)* **3.5** PDH/HSW LA  
CES, **3.5** LU/HSW AIA-CES,  
and **3.25** AICP CM Credits



**Stratford Point Living Shoreline** Image Credit: J. Mattei

The **Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CTASLA)** represents, educates, and advocates for the profession of landscape architecture in the state. We champion the role of landscape architects as essential to development of built environments, stewardship of the natural environment, and protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

Our mission is create healthy, beautiful, and resilient places for all communities. With at least 20 inches of sea level rise anticipated along Connecticut's coast by 2050, we believe that our state must do more to manage risk, mitigate losses, and modify its approach to transportation and energy infrastructure. Innovative climate initiatives developed in New York and Massachusetts offer possibilities for implementation here in Connecticut.

## Program Schedule:

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| <b>8:30 – 9:00</b>  | <b>Breakfast &amp; Registration</b>  |
| <b>9:00 – 9:20</b>  | <b>Introduction &amp; Welcome</b>  |
| <b>9:20 – 9:55</b>  | <b>Bridging Ecology and Design</b>   |
| <i>Keynote:</i>     | <i>Alexander Felson, ASLA, Ph.D.</i>   |
| <b>9:55 – 10:55</b> | <b>Modeling Sea Level Rise on Connecticut's Coast:<br/>Capitulation, Adaptation, or Restoration?</b> |

Register Online at  
[www.ctasla.org](http://www.ctasla.org)

*Moderator:* Gary Sorge, FASLA, Stantec  
*Panelists:* James O'Donnell, Ph.D., UConn Department of Marine Sciences  
Wayne Cobleigh, GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.  
Jennifer Mattei, Ph.D., Sacred Heart University

What will Connecticut's coast look like in 30 years? How should municipalities prepare? In this session, landscape architects will learn how to integrate modeling and visualization tools to evaluate site-specific risks. Panelists will discuss the limitations of FEMA mapping as well as how other states are successfully integrating living shorelines and other strategies into their climate change responses.



### **11:00 – 12:00 Seeing The Urban Forest for The Trees: Tools for Cooling, Carbon Sequestration, and Community Building**

*Moderator:* Aris Stalis, ASLA, Aris Land Studio

*Panelists:* Heather Dionne, City of Hartford  
Drew Goldsman, The Nature Conservancy  
Chris Donnelly, CT DEEP

The increase in ambient seasonal temperatures has implications for the health of Connecticut's trees. Increased prevalence of disease, pests, and drought is contributing to the loss of street trees. Can we replant enough trees to meaningfully sequester carbon? Landscape architects will learn about the state's urban forestry efforts, why trees are a vital community resource, and how community green jobs programs can be an asset in protecting them. Panelists will share their boots-on-the-ground experience and suggestions for species that may be more suitable in a warmer world.

### **12:00 – 12:45 Lunch**



**Bioswale** Image Credit: CFE/STS



**Mill River Park** Image Credit: MRPC



**Urban Forest** Credit: Urban Resources Initiative

### **12:45 – 12:50 Conferment of CTASLA Connecticut Olmsted Award**

### **12:50 – 1:50 Reimagining Infrastructure: Investing in Resilient Places for People**

*Moderator:* Tom Tavella, FASLA, Schmidt Design Group

*Panelists:* Gwen Macdonald, Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound  
Dawn Henning, P.E., City of New Haven  
Nia Rhodes Jackson, Mill River Park Collaborative

Green infrastructure is nothing new to landscape architects, but it has been slow to be implemented within Connecticut. With the state's older industrial centers facing multi-billion dollar costs from municipal storm sewer separation and increased storm flooding risk, some cities are beginning to embrace its advantages. In this session, landscape architects will understand how to scale green infrastructure strategies to the neighborhood and city scales. Panelists will also discuss the importance of community stakeholders and how integrating public amenities and open spaces into infrastructure projects is a recipe for success.





### **1:50 – 2:20      Advocacy Bootcamp (Optional)**

*Presenters:            John M. Bailey II, TCORS Capitol Group  
                                 CTASLA Advocacy Committee*

This session is intended for CTASLA members and allies who sign up to meet with lawmakers later in the afternoon. This is an optional part of the program and not required in order to obtain continuing education credits.

TCORS will introduce the basics of how the Connecticut General Assembly operates -- and why constituents should communicate important information to their elected representatives. CTASLA and TCORS will provide volunteer advocates with information about legislation relevant to our profession as well as a crash course on how to effectively communicate with lawmakers.

### **2:20 - 4:00      Lawmaker Office Visits (Optional)**

Following Advocacy Bootcamp, attendees will be guided towards the office(s) of their elected representatives to conduct brief meetings. Handouts will be provided. Meetings may be scheduled for any available time between 2:20 and 4:00. This is an optional part of the program and not required in order to obtain continuing education credits.



**Connecticut State Capitol** Image Credit: Wikimedia Commons



**Capitol Interior** Image Credit: ArtHartford

### **Panelists and Moderators**



**Wayne Cobleigh, CPSM** is Vice President of Client Services with GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., in Glastonbury, Connecticut. Mr. Cobleigh advises GZA's clients within the real estate development, energy and infrastructure and buildings practice areas. His experience includes addressing: federal, state and local permitting, siting and foundation design issues on due diligence, land development, building renovation and construction projects impacted by environmental conditions and the presence of contaminated soil, groundwater and hazardous building materials.



**Heather Dionne** has worked in the arboricultural industry for 20 years as a CT-licensed arborist and International Society of Arboriculture arborist. She has been the City Forester in Hartford, CT for seven years where she manages the city's aging population of trees; balancing the safety and health of those living, working, and visiting Hartford; and planning ahead to ensure the health and environmental benefits of trees continue for generations. Heather sits on the Board of Directors for the Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut, is a member of the Hartford Tree Advisory Committee, and is Chair of the CT Urban Forest Council.



**Chris Donnelly** is the Urban Forestry Coordinator in the Division of Forestry, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. In that role, he has the good fortune to work with a broad cross-section of people involved with trees and urban forestry in the state of Connecticut. The urban forestry program at DEEP runs a small grant program, with the funding courtesy of the US Forest Service. DEEP Forestry also recommends communities as Tree City USA's and has an advisory role on a range of urban forestry related issues.



**Alex Felson** recently joined CIRCA as the new Deputy Executive Director and Director of Resilience Design. He will play a key role in developing the state's resiliency planning. This includes working on the Connecticut Connections Coastal Resilience Plan – a US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) National Disaster Resilience (NDR) grant. Dr. Felson is a senior certified ecologist and a registered landscape architect who founded the Urban Ecology and Design Lab and runs Ecopolitan Design. Prior to joining CIRCA, he held the position of associate Professor at Yale University.



**Drew Goldsman** is the Urban Conservation Program Manager for The Nature Conservancy in Connecticut. This program provides support to cities across Connecticut, currently with a focus on Bridgeport, embracing natural solutions as an integral way of equitably fostering vibrant and healthy communities. Current initiatives range from supporting a resilient coastline to on-the-ground community engagement. The work includes investments in the urban forest and in green stormwater infrastructure. Drew has a strong background in urban environmental and social justice causes.





**Dawn Henning, PE** is an environmental engineer with private, non-profit, and government sector experience in urban watershed planning and green infrastructure design and implementation. As a Project Manager for the City of New Haven, her recent projects include conducting a stormwater modeling study to assess flooding in downtown New Haven, managing a federal grant to install green infrastructure throughout downtown New Haven, and facilitating the process for the development of the New Haven Climate and Sustainability Framework. She has a Masters of Environmental Science and a BS in Environmental Engineering.



**Nia Rhodes Jackson** is the Mill River Park Collaborative's programming and event guru, producing its festivals, events and public programming. With a background in environmental studies and youth development, MRPC offers her the unique ability to integrate her passion with her work. Prior to joining the Collaborative, she was the Executive Director of the Friends of the High School for Environmental Studies (FoHSES), a non-profit in support of the nation's first environmental high school. During her time at FoHSES, she oversaw efforts to engage students in nature-based activities with environmental themes.



**Dr. Jennifer Mattei** is a professor of biology at Sacred Heart University and has a wide range of interests in population ecology, restoration, and conservation, with over 25 years of experience working in coastal ecosystems. Dr. Mattei's current research on coastal habitat restoration, involving the installation of "living shorelines" has been supported by the NFWF, CIRCA, CT In-lieu-fee Program and Corteva Agriscience. This research includes installing artificial reefs, saltmarsh, upland dunes, pollinator meadows and upland coastal forest habitat. *(Photo Credit: Brian A. Pounds/Hearst Connecticut Media)*



**Gwen Macdonald** is the Director of Green Projects for Save the Sound's Green Projects program which includes river and habitat restoration, living shorelines, and green infrastructure. Gwen has a B.S. in Ecological Engineering from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry with post-graduate studies at Rutgers University and the University of Massachusetts. Gwen also participates in state- and region-wide prioritization of projects and issues facing restoration and works with other stakeholders to advocate for policies that will encourage healthier rivers, marshes and shorelines in Connecticut and the Sound.



**Jim O'Donnell** is a physical oceanographer. He earned a BSc. (Hons) in Applied Physics from Strathclyde University in Scotland, and a M.S. and Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Delaware. He was elected to the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering in 2009 and recently appointed to be Executive Director of the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA). Professor O'Donnell's research focuses on understanding the physical processes that determine the circulation and transport of materials in the coastal ocean.



**Gary Sorge, FASLA** is a Vice President and Discipline Leader for Planning and Landscape Architecture for Stantec. His leadership, planning, design and technical capabilities span a broad range of project types including complete streets, parks and public plazas; restoration of urban, historic, waterfront and remediated sites; greenway and multi-modal corridors; recreation and cultural facilities; and transit- oriented development. Mr. Sorge was elected Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2009, recognized for his works in public space design, reconstruction and restoration.



**Aris W. Stalis, ASLA** provides a global perspective to his designs and approach to the restoration of environments. His beliefs start with striving for a sustainable approach, that incorporates the multiple aspects of community, ecology, and design. Balance in nature helps formulate his process, to develop solutions that incorporate the broad spectrum of ideas provided by stakeholders. Aris is very involved in his community and his own culture, realizing that sustainable thinking is also about cultural preservation. His enthusiasm includes excitement about densely urban to highly rural environments.



**Thomas R. Tavella, FASLA, LEED @AP** has more than 30 years of experience in land use planning, landscape architecture and urban design. Tom is the Studio director, East Coast, for Schmidt Design Group Inc. a firm that strives to create positive change by design. Tom's projects consistently embrace the philosophies and technologies of sustainable design. He has been integrating green infrastructure into his projects since the mid-1990s and is a recognized leader in green infrastructure. He is a past National Vice President of Communications and a past President of American Society of Landscape Architects.