

# **Minutes of Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee**

**Milford Police Facility, Milford, NH**

**February 16, 2023**

In attendance were members Celeste Barr (Milford), Cam Lockwood (Temple), George May, Cory Ritz (New Ipswich), Marshall Buttrick (Greenville), Peter Howd (Wilton), Rob Clemens (Amherst), Nelson Disco (Merrimack), George May (Merrimack), and Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich.) Will Ludt was a guest attendant from Amherst Heritage Commission.

**Review of January Minutes-** Minutes accepted.

**Pine Valley tour-** This is a general presentation on Friday Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> at noon, 37 Wilton Rd. Parking is at the Greenfield Blacksmith Shop. The new owners (as of a year ago) will present an overview of what they wish to accomplish. They intend to add an additional turbine. There was no previous data available. George said that he thought the previous owners were “cowboys” and did as they wanted. As licensing only occurs every 50 years, SoRLAC would like to see sharing of more data going forward. In stream flow rules were not in place the last time the dam was licensed. The current turbines only operate at high flow. The new one will operate at lower flow. The sluiceway is still operating and there is a fish ladder.

**Outreach Events-** Discussion of Earthday events in corridor towns and efforts to get kids involved in activities. There will be a cleanup in Milford April 22 sponsored by the same people

that sponsored the Pumpkin Fest. Milford Thrive will be hosting an event April 8 at Keyes Field.

Rob said the Amherst Conservation Commission traditionally coordinates a cleanup. He believes there is a church and some boy scouts helping. Scheduled for May 6.

There was a short discussion on cleanups on the river using watercraft. Was noted that it had not been successful in the past. George suggested that next year we should get drains (to river) cleaned and perhaps stenciled. This was done in downtown Wilton via a contest. Good public awareness ploy.

Wilton's sustainability fair is April 15<sup>th</sup> at the High School. Discussion followed as to whether we wanted a table. We do as does SWA (Souhegan Watershed Association.) Celeste has the old information panels and will bring them to March's meeting. Pamphlets need updating. Volunteers are needed to participate. Peter will send an email to Sandy La Fleur, the lady coordinating the fair.

**Presentation by Will Ludt of Amherst Heritage Commission-**  
The Heritage Commission works closely with the Amherst Conservation Commission and Mr. Ludt explained that they have access to small grants and are looking for ideas on where best to award them. They wanted to do something with water. Peter noted that the Heritage Commission was more of a land use organization than a historical organization. Cory explained our preview is to review project with a 1/4 mile of the river's corridor commenting on what is appropriate to maintain clean water. He also mentioned that we have just gotten a grant to update our Management Plan.

There was discussion of ideas of projects we would pursue if we had any money. George suggested signage at tributary crossings in each town. Providing signs for parking and signs marking access to river are also needed. We also need an updated map of the river's watershed, with tributaries included. Discussion followed on tributary signage.

Homework was assigned to gather information for a list of tributaries in each town so we can determine what it would cost to get signs. We are making the assumption that each town's Highway Department will install the signs.

**Corridor Management Plan and E.coli testing-** Point people were appointed for some towns along the corridor and outlying towns in the watershed regarding inclusion of our Management Plan in their town's Master Plans. Cam is to review Master Plans of Temple, Mont Vernon and Lyndeborough. Rob will do Amherst and Bedford. There is no reference in Greenville's Master Plan of the Souhegan, or in Merrimack. Peter will look into Wilton. Cory provided this link in tonight's meeting's agenda to locate your town's Master Plan status.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1szU9K9HZVB4zVYHDqIWbKUMORBibVbwQ/edit?usp=share\\_link&ouid=116063050519300167776&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1szU9K9HZVB4zVYHDqIWbKUMORBibVbwQ/edit?usp=share_link&ouid=116063050519300167776&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Cam noted that towns should include tributaries in their master planning.

Moving on to E.coli testing- We are still working with the state and EPA on the bacterial tracking. Cory said sites have been proposed which are different than normal sampling sites. The State will help with testing. EPA will

take care of the labs. We supply volunteers. There will be 3 types of samples. Regular sampling, a “handful” of temperature above 85 degrees, and ones taken in wet weather. State will train volunteers. Because of DNA sampling requirements, there will be no test on Fridays.

There are two rain gauges- one in Milford and one in Greenville. Celeste wanted to know who owned them. Cory will send out a way to view rain gauges.

## **Local Updates**

### **Souhegan Watershed Association-**

**New Ipswich-**Nothing to report.

**Greenville-**Thanks to Marshall. His letter writing in regards to Consolidated Communications LLC having proposed aerial lines along 31 in a scenic easement have been addressed by the DOT. The DOT has assured him “that all request to use the highway right-of-way for new utility purposes be in accordance with Chapter VII of the NHDOT Utility Accommodation Manual and Section 23 CFR (Code of Federal Regulation)645.209(h) which limits the use of aerial installations adjacent to scenic areas.” To view the entire letter see Cory’s email on Tuesday Feb. 7, 2023.

The plan for conversion of Mill 6 in Greenville to a rehab center has not yet been accepted for consideration by the Planning Board because it is yet to be presented. There will be a huge issue with parking. At present rumors are that the party responsible for the plan have a vague plan

to share parking with another mill and parking in a flood plain perhaps. Marshall felt that the parking issues were clearly double dipping and probably would not pass the Planning Board. There is no consideration for snow removal sites either. And some confusion as to green sites on the plan. George questioned the sewage situation. There is/was an illegal apartment in the mill but there are no restrooms facilities for large groups of people.

**Temple-**Nothing to report

**Wilton-** Housing opportunities are the focus in Wilton currently. Planning Board is looking for affordable work force housing and considering possibilities of repurposing old mill buildings into multil use building sites. They will have to convince the public to allow conversions.

River's Edge- They haven't been before Planning Board recently. The number of houses in their proposal has dropped from 22 to 8. That is a result of an ordinance that limits housing on Dead End private roads that are over 1500'. Cory mentioned he wants the pond to go. The Conservation Easement they had alluded to previously might not happen.

Catholic Church in town will be repurposed into 4 apartments, the rectory will be split into 2-3 apartments. They need a storm water management plan and there are issues with parking.

Storage Facility on 31- A set of lots with Souhegan River frontage, Wilton tax map E-27-1 through E-27-4 are being used without proper use review. They are owned by Fairways Properties LLC. They are in the industrial District but the recorded subdivision plan contains a series of requirements for any development or change of use (which has been underdeveloped). Site Plan review, at a minimum is required. There is now a mobile office and parking for several 10's of commercial vehicles. The town has started a cease and desist process for the use without planning board review, but it is moving very slowly. Peter will bring a draft letter to DES with cc to Wilton boards at the next meeting.

**Milford-** Things are quiet in Milford. Celeste is reaching out to new Town Administrator (Lincoln from the Dog Park.)

And later but still pertaining to Milford so I've inserted it here, Celeste gave us an overview of proposals for building remodeling for schools in Milford. The bid to do so there was \$3 million. Bates elementary school will see extensive remodeling. Marshall shared that his mom had gone to elementary school there and that the rear fire escape was a slide back then.

Celeste also has met with the Boy's and Girl's Club concerning the River's Education Trail. A gentleman in Milford while recuperating from an injury got a 10K grant and designed some Story Boards which will be used on

the trail. One of the boards will talk about fish health and one will discuss local history.

**Amherst-**There is in March's ballot proposals an item to build/rehab a new elementary school for \$54 million. Clark school will close

Rob had a question at this point about New Boston and Goffstown being in the Souhegan watershed and where the tributary dumped into the Souhegan. It is at the very end of the Souhegan, maybe 100' before it flows into the Merrimack.

Question came up at this point in the meeting as to whether all the towns had hazard mitigation plans and Emergency management Plans.

**Merrimack-**The Souhegan River Trail plan is out to bid again. The original bid was higher than budgeted and required that the work had to be done in a certain timeframe (no one could do it,) so some changes have been made. Bids should be back soon.

George met with town council and has resigned from Merrimack River Advisory Committee. He will also be meeting with the Conservation Committee to solicit money for SWA water testing. He would like to lapse out of SoRLAC as a representative but still attend as a representative of SWA.

Short discussion on Baboosic Lake Association and their water monitoring situation.

**RMAC (River Management Advisory Council)**-Remote meetings were voted on.

There is a committee supporting HB 212 to monitor PFAS in surface waters.

Submitted by Kleta Dudley, Sec. February 20, 2023

Next Meeting 7:00 P.M. March 16, 2022. Milford Police Facility