

Minutes of Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee

Merrimack, NH Town Hall and Parks

June 15, 2023

In attendance were members Celeste Barr (Milford), George May (Merrimack), Eric Doberstein (Amherst), Nelson Disco (Merrimack) and Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich.) Guest from Merrimack Conservation Commission: Andrew Dunne, Karen La Bonte(available volunteer for water testing, Eric), and Ellen Kolb

We met at 6:00 P.M. at the Watson Park parking area. Accompanied by several members of the Conservation Commission. We toured the Watson Park area, viewed the lovely black metal fence. There were quite a few recreational activities ongoing at that time. This is mostly a swimming and fishing location. We moved down to Twin Falls just a few blocks down the road north of Watson Park but not accessible by trail. This area, although located in the heart of downtown Merrimack seems more remote. It was an incredibly beautiful trail network weaving across the Baboosic. Eric was our guide at this point as he had lived in Merrimack for many years and had visited this park daily. It clearly had lots of usage as the parking lot was full and the trails were well used, but it was immaculate with no trash anywhere. Despite the number of cars in the parking lot, it was not crowded.

Review of May Minutes- Minutes accepted.

Old Business

June 10th Canoe Trip- It was wet, muddy, challenging and a lot of garbage was collected. Thank you to Celeste, Eric and George.

Greenville's proposed renovation of existing Old Mill building into a rehabilitation facility- Marshall is attending the hearing this very evening.

New Business-Patriot Scaffolding, New Ipswich (Map 16A and 16B, Lot 25) These plans were incomplete. Cory had received notification from Tracie Sales about an application for a Shoreland Permit on Turnpike Rd. By the time we were able to review these plans we had only one day left before commenting period was closed. This was a real mess and a puzzle. The pictures included in the packet were taken on May 3. They showed that extensive site work (excavation and clear cutting) had already been completed. Foundations were already in place. The unsigned Shoreland Protection Permit was submitted with a date of May 12th. There was signed paperwork indicating the engineer, Ed Rogers of New Ipswich, was agent for all permitting, however this document was also of a later date than the pictures included.

There was no drainage, snow removal, water retention or general runoff indicated on plan and as the area is on the edge of steep slopes which drains into the river, it is of concern. Erosion could be an issue. We do not know if fertilizer or pesticides will be used. We felt it was an incomplete plan

Due to the location we questioned if the National Heritage Bureau had been contacted. Structures of historic significance in the area include Warwick Mills and High Bridge.

Besides a Cease and Desist order, we would like to see a 150' buffer of UNALTERED vegetation.

Many thanks to Celeste who constructed a letter this evening for us to submit to DES in order to meet the deadline for comments. See your emails dated June 15th, and attachment of preliminary draft included here.

Local Updates

Souhegan Watershed Association- Discussion continued on issues surrounding water testing. This year there will be probably 5 sample sites, one in Wilton, one in Milford and two to four on the Merrimack. Sites are limited due to testing capabilities. Targeted sites are ones that have lots of visitors and/or have had problems with E.coli in the past.

Eric had talked to Tracie Sales about using State's labs but to do this we would have to comply with State standards, and it would require training.

New Ipswich-See new business above

Greenville-Marshall, as stated previously was at a hearing for the proposed drug re-hab facility, but he had passed along a message that there was nothing new to report.

Temple-Nothing to report.

Wilton- Nothing to report.

Amherst-Nothing to report.

Milford-Nothing to report

Amherst- Nothing to report

Merrimack- Work is still on schedule to begin on trails in the fall.

Canoe ride on July 8th

Submitted by Kleta Dudley, Sec. June 17, 2023

Next Meeting July 20, 2023 Greenville Town Hall, not sure if there is a walk planned in which case the time might be earlier than 7:00 P.M. Details will follow. Good luck with parking.