

LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES August 25, 2005

Members:

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- ✓ Bob Robbins (Chair) – Hudson
- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Vice Chair) -- Nashua
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) -- Nashua
Glenn McKibben (Treasurer) – Litchfield
- ✓ Cynthia Ruonala (Public Relations) – Nashua
- ✓ George May - Merrimack
- ✓ Jim Barnes – Hudson
Ray Peebles – Litchfield
Stan Kazlouskas – Hudson
- ✓ Will Jewett – Litchfield

Also in attendance:

- ✓ Rich Tichko, NH F&G (rtichko@wildlife.state.nh.us)
- ✓ Nick Caggiano, Nashua Parks & Rec
- ✓ Amy Prouty Gill, Nashua DPW

Chair Bob Robbins called the meeting to order at 7:18 pm in the Klummp meeting room at the Merrimack Library. It was noted that a quorum was present.

Chairman Robbins explained the role of the LAC to the visitors.

Rich Tichko explained the history of obtaining access along our stretch of the river. There is a desire to put a ramp at Thorntons Ferry in Merrimack but that cannot happen until a better access road can be constructed. There has been a lot of interest and study to put an access in Litchfield but that is almost impossible because of the steep, unstable bank. There has been planning to create a state ramp at Greeley Park but the land use agreement that was being used was declared invalid by the state attorney general. A new agreement has just been written and F&G has just now given it to Nashua DPW and P&R to review. Both state and city want this to happen but the agreement has to be followed. If agreements are in place, the state will showcase the general plans and hold an open house to solicit ideas from the community; then a design will be created and another open house will be held to solidify the plan. Construction would then follow. Rich explained that because of budget constraints caused by two major accesses being constructed at Lakes Sunapee and Winnisquam there probably would not be funds available for Greeley Park until 2008.

Amy explained that there was already discussion going on with the railroad about improving the railroad crossing and that it was expected that the improvements were going to happen regardless of these plans and that it was mostly a matter of who was going to pay for them. Nick said that it would take the city only a short time to review the agreement and that he would start submitting budget requests for this project for the next couple of years. He suggested that we could petition the aldermen to let them know the importance of funding this project. It was also suggested that Alderman David Deane and Kathy Hersch be invited along on the pontoon boat trip on Sept 24 to help build support. We agreed to stay in touch on this project.

The July minutes were approved unanimously.

A motion to spend money up to the provided grant amount for services and supplies for the survey postcard and survey was approved unanimously.

Further discussion of the Greeley Park boat ramp and boat ramps in general resumed with discussions of how a water body's "social carrying capacity" (defined as when people stop using a water body because it's not fun any more) varies with demographics. It was also noted that a water body generally reaches its social carrying capacity well before reaching its environmental capacity.

It was also mentioned that the Greeley Park deed required review to confirm that leasing the boat ramp (to the State) does not violate the park's deed in any way.

The Chair pointed out that Sharon Akers, Rick Maddox, and Patrick Tate should be dropped from the membership list.

Amy Gill mentioned a culvert project under the railroad near the Nashua Country Club that the Committee would likely be hearing more about in the near future. Karen summarized a site walk by the Nashua Conservation Commission at Thoreau's Landing (located just north of the mouth of the Nashua River and along the Merrimack) earlier in the evening, showing a great deal of erosion along the bank of the Merrimack. The Army Corps of Engineers may become involved in shoring up the bank.

Upcoming 'drive by' field trips in each town still need to be scheduled and dates are to be worked out by e-mail.

Meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
secretary