

LMRLAC – December 14, 2017

LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

December 14, 2017

Members:

✓ = present

Current:

- ✓ Gene Porter (Chair) – Nashua (current term expires Dec 2019)
- ✓ Nelson Disco (Vice Chair) – Merrimack (current term expired 08/28/17)
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) – Nashua (current term expired 08/12/17)
- ✓ Christine Dupree (Treasurer) – Hudson (current term expired 11/25/17)
- Chris Barrett – Nashua (current term expires 08/22/20)
- ✓ Michael Croteau – Litchfield (current term expires 11/08/20)
- Richard LeBourdais – Hudson (current term expired 11/06/17)
- ✓ George May – Merrimack (current term expires 06/14/20)
- ✓ Francis Murphy – Nashua (current term expires 02/18/19)

Associate Members:

Mildred Mugica – Nashua

Also in attendance:

Geoff Daly, Nashua resident

Rusty Russell, executive director, Merrimack River Watershed Council (MRWC)

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm by Chairman Gene Porter in the Nashua Public Library Theater, with a quorum present.

Minutes

Corrections to the minutes of the October 26, 2017 meeting were submitted at the meeting. An updated draft will be circulated for review.

New Business

No permit applications have been submitted for review at this meeting.

Mr. Croteau asked Chairman Porter if he had received communication about an upcoming Litchfield application for a maintenance facility/warehouse within the quarter mile corridor. The developer, at a Planning Board meeting discussing the proposed project, had indicated that he had contacted LMRLAC. Chairman Porter will review his communications for information about the project.

Updates on Projects from Previous Meetings

Nashua: 131 Burke Street

Chairman Porter stated that the Nashua Conservation Commission and City Attorney are working on easement language for a public access easement on the site.

Social Media Presence

Ms. Dupree showed the Facebook page she has started for LMRLAC, and highlighted some of the uses and benefits for having an active Facebook page – to attract interest in the organization and the river, to recruit members, to share information. She also explained the benefits of having a Web page and some options for doing so – from a free page through Google to paying for a domain name and a Web site host.

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Chairman Porter made a motion to authorize Ms. Dupree to spend up to \$100 to establish a domain name (proposed name: lowermerrimacknh) and a Web page. Mr. Murphy seconded, and the motion passed. Chairman Porter appointed Ms. Dupree LMRLAC Webmaster.

A discussion followed on the types of items to post on the Facebook page and/or on the Web site. Chairman Porter and other members will submit pictures for Ms. Dupree to review for posting. Chairman Porter encouraged members to think of useful and creative items for either Facebook postings or the Web site. Mr. Russell explained that the MRWC is looking to expand its Web presence as well.

Status of Boat Ramps

Nashua

Chairman Porter indicated the grant money has been received for the Greeley Park boat ramp improvements, and that Nashua is working on a request for proposal (RFP). He does not know what the plan is for routing the access road.

Mr. Murphy asked Chairman Porter to attend and be prepared to present at a meeting on January 11 at City Hall, where the Waterways Manager, Madeleine Mineau, will hold a meeting with the Friends of Greeley Park regarding the boat ramp. Chairman Porter replied that he could do so. He stated he plans to attend a Public Water Access Advisory Board (PWAAB) meeting on January 4 at which Ms. Mineau is also scheduled to speak.

Merrimack

Mr. Disco indicated there are no updates from Merrimack. A brief discussion followed on the possibility of a launch near the site of the new Pennichuck water intake pipe rather than further downriver. The bank is not quite as high, but just as steep, nearer the Pennichuck site.

Mr. Daly commented that it is possible to launch car-top boats from Horseshoe Pond and access the river. Mr. May mentioned the Thornton's Ferry access point but pointed out that the area is generally quite muddy.

Litchfield

Chairman Porter reminded attendees that there is a proposed car-top boat launch above Cromwell's Falls.

Hudson

Ms. Dupree indicated she is not aware of any updates.

News from the Merrimack River Watershed Council

Mr. Russell explained that he is looking for feedback on how the MRWC could work with LMRLAC. He listed several items that he had made note of, including: river access, pathways, signage, land protection, social media, and combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

Chairman Porter stated LMRLAC could use some help with getting access to water quality data. This led to a discussion on the limited availability of water quality data, and that the data that is available is not centralized. Chairman Porter stated that he intends to present a paper in March at the "State of the Waters" conference in New Hampshire. He is considering writing on the sources of data on water quality, but is having trouble finding data on nutrient loading (e.g. phosphates). Chairman Porter explained his desire for data on nutrient loading, because the data is needed to determine the level of effort needed to reduce its impact.

Mr. Russell mentioned that Massachusetts has a bill which would require public notification, in real time, of CSO events, including a measurement of the CSO discharges. This led to a discussion of CSOs and best practices. Mr. May stated his support of the approach Nashua

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has taken, to use a holding tank to store CSO discharge for later processing at the treatment plant. Mr. Russell summarized that step one is to provide public notice of CSO events, followed by a review of the treatment options and approach. He indicated it can be less expensive to use holding tanks for later treatment at a wastewater treatment facility, rather than a two-pipe system. Lack of space for locating a holding tank can be a factor, which is why a review of treatment options is needed in each case.

Mr. Russell indicated he has some information on CSOs that he'd like to share with LMRLAC. Members expressed interest in receiving the data.

Mr. May asked whether the MRWC could pursue coordinated water quality testing. Mr. Russell replied that funding would be a limiting factor.

Members thanked Mr. Russell for the information.

Other Topics

Boat Ramp on Lake Sunapee

Chairman Porter informed attendees that Lake Sunapee has five older boat ramps which are not open to the public. He stated that there is a plan to construct a new ramp on the lake which would provide public access, but that the permit renewal for the proposed ramp was not granted just before the RFP was issued. Mr. Croteau indicated he has heard that the Sullivan County Sportsmen Association has filed a lawsuit regarding the permit.

Nashua Downtown Riverfront Plan

Chairman Porter reminded members that Nashua now has a Downtown Riverfront Plan, which includes trails out to the Merrimack River.

Membership

Mr. Croteau indicated that he had approached Litchfield about getting another member, but had gotten no response. Ms. Dupree mentioned that recruiting members is the type of activity that a Facebook account and Web presence can help with.

Mr. Croteau has been reappointed to a new three-year term.

Water Quality Presentation by Geoff Daly

Mr. Daly gave a presentation outlining water quality concerns in the Merrimack River and in local water supplies, with a focus on concerns about perfluorooctanoic acid and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOA/PFOS) and methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE). He showed some water quality sampling data from sites along the Merrimack River. He explained that the only two methods of removing PFOA/PFOS from water are by reverse osmosis and zeolite. (Mr. Daly had given a zeolite presentation at the April 2017 meeting.) He further explained that a reverse osmosis treatment facility for a wastewater system the size of Nashua's would require a facility the size of a baseball stadium and would be prohibitively expensive to build and maintain.

Mr. Daly also gave some examples of water contamination due to runoff of firefighting foam from airports as a result of training drills.

Mr. Russell indicated he has access to a paper which discusses MTBE in NH wells that he can share with LMRLAC.

Chairman Porter asked what the LAC might do in response to this information. Mr. May suggested LMRLAC could speak out on the subject.

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Members thanked Mr. Daly for his presentation.

Items from the Floor

Mr. May requested LMRLAC consider removing the quorum requirement from the by-laws. The proposal will be discussed at the next meeting. Secretary Archambault will e-mail the current by-laws to members for review.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42pm.

Next LMRLAC Meeting

The next LMRLAC meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2018, at 7:00 pm at the Nashua Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
Secretary