

LMRLAC – November 17, 2011

LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

November 17, 2011

Members:

✓ = present

Current:

- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Chair) -- Nashua
- Michael Redding (Vice Chair) – Merrimack
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) – Nashua
- ✓ Michael Croteau - Litchfield
- ✓ Nelson Disco - Merrimack
- ✓ George May – Merrimack
- Bob Robbins – Hudson
- David Scaer – Hudson

Pending Renewal:

Jim Barnes (Treasurer) – Hudson
Glenn McKibben – Litchfield

Associate Members:

Mildred Mugica – Nashua

Also in attendance:

- Geoff Daly, corridor resident and potential member, Nashua
- Lucy St. John
- Tracie Sales, Water Resources Manager, Merrimack River Watershed Council

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 at Margarita's by Chair Kath Nelson.

Minutes

The minutes of the October 27 meeting were accepted pending one edit requested by Nelson. Upon re-review after the meeting, Nelson withdrew his request for the additional edit.

General Discussion

EPA Draft NPDES Permit (#NH0001465) for PSNH Merrimack Station in Bow

Ms. Sales and Mr. Daly attended the public hearing on November 3 and briefed the LAC on the proceedings. A discussion followed with several members expressing concerns that the draft permit was incomplete in its impact analysis. Some examples cited were the lack of detail on fish species in the information about impinged fish and eggs saved and insufficient information on the temperature impact to the water column. Members expressed concern over the amount of mercury allowed to discharge under the draft permit as well, and the impact of the steam from the cooling tower.

The discussion turned to whether LMRLAC wanted to provide additional comment beyond the initial letter. The public comment period ends on February 22, 2012.

George commented that the permit as written was better than nothing but that better alternatives exist to what is currently proposed in the permit.

Kath suggested among the considerations is whether the LAC should focus on educating the public about the benefits of the permit as written, versus focusing on further improvements in the permit.

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Kath suggested that members consider what the LAC might want to put in a follow-up comment letter; she will compile the suggestions and the LAC will review them at the January 2012 meeting.

Michael C. mentioned that the New Hampshire chapter of Trout Unlimited had sent a letter of support.

Rivers Management Advisory Committee

Kath informed the LAC that she has been invited to serve on a subcommittee to review the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). She summarized the process two years ago, when she also participated in a SOP review which clarified the notification process. She stated the first meeting of the subcommittee is expected to be December 12.

Kath mentioned that she had hoped to see LAC comments incorporated into the permits as a next step. However, she expressed concern that the desire for further efficiencies in the process may conflict with the LAC's desire for additional involvement. She suspects the number of days the LAC will have to respond to applications will be shortened. Kath asked for members to give her feedback that she can take to the subcommittee meeting.

George gave several recommendations: that DES notify the LAC of any permitting application within the corridor; that DES require a signoff from the applicant that it notified the LAC; that plans be submitted electronically to make it more convenient to review the plans prior to the LAC meeting; and that DES require a response from the LAC and give a deadline for the response. Kath replied she thought that the process for at least some applications (Alteration of Terrain, wetlands) already did require the applicant to notify the LAC.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

Next meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, January 26, 2012, at 7:00 pm at the Nashua Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
secretary