

LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES June 23, 2005

Members:

✓ = present

- Bob Robbins (Chair) – Hudson
- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Vice Chair/ Public Relations) -- Nashua
- George May (Secretary) - Merrimack
- ✓ Glenn McKibben (Treasurer) – Litchfield
- ✓ Cynthia Ruonala – Nashua
- ✓ Jim Barnes – Hudson
- ✓ Karen Archambault -- Nashua
- Patrick Tate – Hudson
- Ray Peeples – Litchfield
- Rick Maddox – Hudson
- Sharon Akers – Merrimack
- ✓ Stan Kazlouskas – Hudson
- ✓ Will Jewett – Litchfield

Also in attendance:

None

Vice Chair Kathryn Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in the Hunt Room of the Nashua Library. Bob had indicated he'd be on a business trip and expected to arrive late to the meeting. George had indicated he would be unable to attend. In George's absence, Kath asked Karen to take minutes for the meeting.

Approval of the May minutes was tabled as several members indicated they had not received them. Karen indicated she would resend the May minutes to all members. A brief discussion followed on the best way to get paper copies of minutes to those members without access to e-mail; Kath said she would discuss with Bob whether he might get secretarial support to do that.

Rick Maddox indicated that he would be submitting his resignation from LMRLAC. He wished the members and organization well and members thanked him for his service.

No applications had been received in the past month for projects in the corridor. Kath briefly discussed Nashua's stormwater project at the Nashua Country Club, which had involved construction of ponds. She had been to the site and indicated the constructed ponds look good. Kath also pointed out that Nashua is having a ribbon cutting ceremony for the project on Tuesday, June 28 at 9:30 am and that LMRLAC received an invitation to it.

Kath mentioned that Angie Vincent is leaving NRPC and her last day is June 29. She'll be going to work for the City of Nashua in its Planning Department. Kath indicated there is no designated replacement for Angie at NRPC as yet, but that it would likely be one of NRPC's new environmental planners.

Kath also mentioned that the next daytime planning meeting is Thursday, July 28.

Corridor Plan

Bob is working on the postcard for the survey, Glenn is working on a better eagle shot for the postcard. Glenn described how the eagle shot discussed at the previous meeting was too dark. Glenn indicated he has a couple of leads on other eagle shots for the postcard, and indicated we may need to give a photo credit on the postcard somewhere. Jim suggested Paul Williams as a

possible source for a shot. Kath indicated that Bob would have to indicate when he needs the photograph by in order to meet the postcard/survey schedule.

Survey: Kath indicated she is working part-time at NRPC, working on the Souhegan watershed plan. Kath handed out copies of the survey she had put together for the Souhegan for LMRLAC members to review/modify/add suggestions and to be prepared to discuss at the next meeting. The target audience for the survey was discussed, contrasting the Souhegan approach with the desired LMRLAC approach. For the Souhegan, the plan is to present at various community groups and to get surveys filled out during/at the meeting presentations. For LMRLAC, the plan is to send the survey to the list of river abutters – the abutters list to be put together by NRPC. A discussion followed on LMRLAC making brief presentations to community boards – whether it be selectmen/aldermen, planning, or conservation commissions. Jim indicated that selectmen meetings in Hudson are very busy, and that the Conservation Commission and Planning Board would be the better choices for Hudson.

Elections

Kath read off the draft slate of candidates for elections:

Chair: Bob Robbins

Vice Chair: Kathryn Nelson

Secretary: Karen Archambault

Treasurer: Glenn McKibben

Public Relations: Cynthia Ruonala

It was indicated that a quorum was present at the meeting. Jim Barnes made the motion to hold elections; it was seconded and passed. Jim made the motion and Stan seconded it to accept the slate of officers as presented. The motion passed.

Nashua Boat Ramp

Kath mentioned Nick Caggiano's presentation at the previous meeting about the Greeley Park boat ramp in Nashua and that Nashua is looking into having the ramp designated as a State ramp. She mentioned Bob's letter to Nashua mayor Bernard Streeter and the Mayor's response, suggesting that LMRLAC send correspondence to Guilford regarding signalization of the RR crossing on the road approaching the ramp. After discussion, it was decided that the tone of the letter should be to request Guilford's cooperation to work with the City of Nashua on signalizing the crossing. Kath indicated that Bob would generate a letter draft, and e-mail it to LMRLAC members. Kath is working on a contact at Guilford for receiving the letter. She indicated that Jay Minkarah (Nashua's Director of Economic Development) will get her that information.

Kath reviewed parts of Nick's presentation last month for those members who had not been in attendance. She indicated the issue with moving the pipe from downstream to upstream of the launch is to protect the pipe from having boats hit it during launch.

Stan asked whether there were lots of boats on the river at present and whether there was a loss of bank or runoff recently, citing the current brownness of the water. Glenn mentioned construction in Manchester above the dam and wondered whether that may be a factor.

The issue of speed limits on the river was discussed. Stan indicated that marine patrols do pull people over and issue warnings or tickets, from the Massachusetts line to the shoals. He indicated that there are no wake areas: under bridges, less than 150' from shore. Kath suggested LMRLAC submit a letter to the State supporting marine officers on patrol enforcing the rules of the river.

Discussion returned to the Nashua boat ramp. Will asked whether the issue of minimum acreage or facilities (parking, restrooms) had come up in the discussion. Kath indicated she would contact Nick about any acreage requirements imposed by the State, and on any design specifications the State may require (for restrooms, parking, grade of launch, etc).

Ultimately Kath suggested that Bob write an exploratory letter to Guilford, for Guilford to contribute funds for signalling the RR crossing on the approach to the Greeley ramp in Nashua.

River field trips

Kath indicated she hasn't heard back from Tom Burke, the pontoon boat owner. The boat tour could be an intro for the new NRPC staffer. It was also suggested that members could take notes during the boat tour on highlighted spots along the river in each town. These highlights would be toured by land by one or more members from each town, with an NRPC staffer, as part of pulling together the updated river corridor management plan. Discussions on when best to conduct the tours in each town followed. After discussion on the relative merits of holding the tours on either summer weekends, summer weeknights, or fall weekends, it was decided that the preferred order is: 6pm weeknights, fall weekends, summer weekends. Discussion of when specifically to conduct these tours is to be put on the July agenda. For areas to highlight in each town, members should consider such factors as opportunities/threats, undeveloped shoreline, pipes, etc.

Local Updates

Nashua: Karen mentioned that the Nashua Conservation Commission has a wetlands mapping project underway to update maps and to work on the definition of associated wetlands, but that none of the target areas are within the corridor. Karen also mentioned that the Keyspan project had been inspected by one commissioner in the spring, who gave a favorable report on the project. Karen said she would get a copy of the commissioner's report for the next LMRLAC meeting. Kath mentioned the recent boating and walking events held along the Nashua River in downtown Nashua.

Hudson: Jim indicated that the site plan checklist is being reviewed. He mentioned a couple of large projects, not in the corridor, but which involve agricultural lands, wetlands, and steep slopes. Kath requested that Jim keep LMRLAC posted on the projects.

Kath discussed that she had recently taken an online presentation from EPA's Center for Watershed Protection. The presentation indicated that it's generally the network of roads that adds to the impervious surface, rather than the rooftops of the buildings constructed. Some discussion of cluster zoning in the various towns followed, including the considerations of providing a density incentive for cluster zoning, what does and does not get included in the open space calculations, and keeping the lot lines out of wetlands.

Discussion on the rotating meeting schedule followed, with some adjustments to it. Merrimack meetings will be held in the library conference room. Nashua's schedule will include the months assigned to Hudson, in case a Hudson location is not lined up. Litchfield meetings will take place in the town offices on Hillcrest Drive. Kath asked that the minutes reflect reminding George for directions to the Merrimack meeting spot for the August meeting. The meeting schedule is:

Nashua: May, September, January
Hudson: June, October, February
Litchfield: July, November, March
Merrimack: August, December, April

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 28, at the town offices on Hillcrest Drive in Litchfield.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
Secretary