

SoRLAC

July 15, 2021

Home of Celeste Barr, Milford NH

In attendance were members Cory Ritz (New Ipswich), Celeste Barr (Milford), Bill Mahar (Wilton), Rich Hart (Amherst), Cam Lockwood (Temple), Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich), George May (Merrimack), Peter Howd (Wilton), Nelson Disco (Merrimack), and guest Tracie Sales from DES.

Nashua Reg. Planning Commission - SoRLAC <https://www.nashuarpc.org/about/related-organizations/sorlac/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SouheganLAC/>

Local River Mgmt. Advisory Committees <https://www4.des.state.nh.us/blogs/rivers/>

May Minutes approved, Kleta will put in PDF format and send out.

Old Business

River's Edge- Residential development in Wilton, 20 Units near Rt. 101. To view the link to the River's Edge case at the Planning Board go to https://www.wiltonnh.gov/government/boards_and_committees/planning_board/cases

For some reason I was unable to copy and paste the links in the agenda that Cory sent out (on July 14) but links are in that agenda. Conservation Commission letter and Engineering comments can also be viewed there.

Peter reported that a new plan was submitted this week for drinking water and hook up to town water. Wilton's contracted engineer commented on the plan that a lot of land disturbance was needed (10-15 feet will need to be shifted which makes it difficult to have test pits.) The Conservation Commission is opposed. This item will remain on our agenda.

Property at 8 Woodbury St, 432 Daniel Webster Hwy, Merrimack, aka Souhegan River Trail- DES has ruled that the Town must do a boardwalk crossing of the "former wetlands" rather than a pathway as they had

originally planned. After the dam in the area was removed the water level dropped and the area in question is no longer wet but DES won't change the designation as a wetland. The Town has re-submitted a new plan with a boardwalk which will be more expensive but meets all requirements of DES.

Merrimack Woodbury Street Sidewalk Extension Project- NH DES Expedited application accepted.

Stony Brook Riverwalk Project Wilton- Completed and had a ribbon cutting ceremony with a dedication of a bench to Spencer Brookes.

54 School Street, Milford-NH DES project approved with waiver granted. SoRLAC not copied on waiver application.

This building was a school over 100 years old. It was also the Milford Cabinet (newspaper) building. It is being turned into elderly housing and the only green areas on the property were proposed to be paved for parking. We had sent a letter suggesting otherwise (less parking and permeable paving.) Apparently, a waiver was granted that we were not notified had been issued. It approved 74% of original submission for impervious surface. Tracie commented that it was a hiccup in the communications. The waiver was for the increasing of run off from parking to the River. Short discussion followed on what the Storm Water Management looked like if it was even required and if not, why not. Maybe it had something to do with its location in the urban zone. Also, discussion on how to make sure we are notified in future of waivers being issued.

Arcidi Property Site Visit- Rob and several other SoLRAC members attended a Milford Conservation Commission Meeting. Mr. Arcidi was doing a presentation. Mr. Arcidi is the gentleman that bought the old Hayward Farm that has a large frontage on the Souhegan. In our view he has taken some liberties with timber harvest on the property and also has applied and will probably get permission to use herbicides on buffer areas on the property.

In an email Rob had requested a site visit to the property. He has not received a reply to his request. There is corn growing on the property. We do not know if Mr. Arcidi planted it or leased out the property.

There was a short discussion on water testing in the area and just upriver from the area. E-coli levels were high and when the testing was done the river was low. George feels that Best Management Practices were not used in the timber harvest and that the Forest Service should be called to task for giving the permit to cut.

Mr. Arcide assured the crowd at the meeting that he was just trying to bring the farm back to the way it was 100 years ago. Celeste said she tried to politely point out that farming and land use practices have changed a great deal in the last 100 years and that perhaps he might avail himself of the advice that the NRCS could offer. A short discussion followed on how the Agriculture Department should do a better job educating farmers on better land use practices.

New Business

29 Beacon Dr. Merrimack, NH-This is a private residence that is increasing the size of it's septic system and planning an addition (equal to about ½ the size of existing house.) The plans were from Meridian. The 100 year flood plain was not evident on the plans but the known history of the adjacent properties suggest that in the past there is significant history of flooding. One of the houses next door had been bought by the Feds and removed, the other one had been flooded but remains.

Although we didn't feel there would be an impact on the River, we were concerned that the Zoning Board might allow a permit within the 100 year flood plain. There were many comments on the problems of development being allowed in areas know to be prone to flooding and the fact that the taxpayer always ended up picking up the bill.

Nelson said he would take the issue to the town. Celeste and Tracie tried to determine where in the flood plain the lot was and it is possible it is in the 500 year flood plain.

Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan- Our old plan was done in 2013. Application for grants for 2022 need to be submitted by 4 p.m. on September 17, 2021. The 2022 Request for Letter of Intent (LOI) is now available. There is only \$64,000 available. Tracie said our proposal needs to be focused on Water quality issues and needs to tie together issues we want to address and the resources we have to work with and to come up with ways we intend to address these issues. Tracie also said there may be money available from the Rivers and Lakes Management Fund. She did feel we should start on our Management Plan now.

Drinking water (and water quality with respect ot that) would need to be a focus only if applying for a Drinking Water Source Protection grant.

There was no shortage of ideas of what needs to be addressed) Some of the issues thrown out for discussion:

Storm water management- Shouldn't the stormwater management be watershed wide, rather than just specific to a town, does EPA have plans?

Peter suggested tying together the George's water quality test results for the last 20+ years with data from DES to create a regional plan.

Tracie and Cory discussed drinking water issues, potential sources of pollution to existing sources, identifying sites and working with people affected and people responsible. Identifying quality of buffers along river and how well they are managed. We were reminded of a site in New Ipswich where pig manure had been stored and spread on fields shortly before a heavy rainstorm which resulted in a lot of manure being washed downstream.

Cam will be sending out a link to a DES program she attended in May concerning drinking water.

Cam also inquired about people selling water. There was a discussion about foreigners (anyone out of state) buying property for the sole purpose of harvesting drinking water for sale elsewhere. Celeste related a story about an international company that had attempted to purchase a well in Pepperell several years back. Tracie said that technically someone would

need a permit to sell water. This is something that should be discussed in a Watershed Plan.

SoRLAC would need to re-open a bank account in order to receive any direct money. However, if we are getting a 604(b) grant, those go directly to the planning commission (NRPC in our case), so a bank account would not be required. For other grants, the funds could go to SoRLAC or we could have the RPC or a consultant be the grantee, so funds would go directly to them, and a bank account would not be necessary. It is our choice, but if we are subcontracting to another contractor, they may be subject to the State's competitive bidding requirement. Tracy (who as added these comments, thankfully,) is not sure about that but will check on this if we decide to head in that direction.

Cyanide Testing in Wilton- Jen Beck wanted to do Cyanide test on barrels that had been buried in a parking lot near or at the new police station in Wilton. The Cyanide had been used in a factory for some unknown purpose and put into barrels and encased in concrete then buried a very long time ago when the Abbots had had a mill there. Then the property was abandoned. There is a Brownfield history of this, and the casings have been tested in the past and shown no leakage. The Wilton River Walk organization wants to build a gazebo on the site but the town doesn't want to take on the liability until they know if there is a leak or a chance of a leak. The State is not willing to pay for the testing. Conservation Commission would like a letter of support from us in favor of the testing. They will be funding the first test. There is a current debate on whether to dig up the encased barrels or not. It is estimated to cost about 1/2 million dollars to get it done. It would have to be Federally or State funded.

Other Items

We need to work on recruitment of volunteers. Each town is allotted 3 seats on the committee. Members should submit following advertisement to their town website or anywhere else it might be seen.

Souhegan River Advisory Committee seeks representatives from watershed towns

The NH Rivers Management and Protection Program has a partnership between state government and local citizens in the Local River Management Advisory Committees for each of New Hampshire's designated rivers. The Souhegan River Leadership Advisory Committee (SoRLAC) has been in existence for over 20 years. The committee plays a vital role in protecting the river. For example, work being done within a quarter mile of the Souhegan River is looked at by SoRLAC at regular monthly meeting and recommendations are made for permitting to the state.

Up to three residents from each riverfront community along the length of designation or other stakeholders for the protection of the Souhegan River can be appointed to

the committee by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services. Committee members represent a broad range of interests, expertise and backgrounds. Anyone interested in protecting the river including farmers, business representatives, recreationists, conservation members, landowners or members of local government. Membership is a three years commitment; however, our meetings are informal and anyone is invited to attend. Agendas and minutes may be posted here <http://www.nashuarpc.org/about/related-organizations/sorlac>.

More information about NH LACs is available at <https://www4.des.state.nh.us/blogs/rivers/>

If you are interested in volunteering as a representative of the SoRLAC or simply coming to our next meeting to find out what we do please contact Chairperson Cory Ritz at critz123@gmail.com for more information

Parking Lot (Items to be addressed at a later date)
SoRLAC: Best Practices for Projects and Project Evaluation

Local Updates

Souhegan Watershed Association-George has arranged testing. Heavy rains right after June's testing probably negated the results of that test, but there are test planned for end of July and end of August. Tracie asked that he submit data to Melanie Cochran as the State has an Environmental Monitoring Data Base.

New Ipswich- Nothing to report

Temple- Talking about testing wells in town again

Greenville- Nothing to report

Wilton- Besides cyanide and new trail already discussed, Peter talked about water testing that the Stormwater Management Team will be doing adding to sites that George already does. There will be additional items tested for at these sites: temperature, chloride, nitrogen, dissolved oxygen, and e-coli. Wilton dump will need to test turbidity and other sampling sites may be added.

Also, there are two building permits that may be coming before us. One is a deck on the former Putnam Store on Main Street and there are lots of request for variances before the Zoning Board to tear down the old Intervale Hardware Store and build an eleven unit Condominium.

Milford-Nothing to report

Merrimack-Nothing new beyond what is reported under Old Business and Nelson and Cory think there are no more letters needed for the boardwalk. If needed the Committee will provide.

Amherst-Starting work on Master Plan. Had started it before pandemic but work stopped and has once again started up again. Rich requested any plans concerning river. George will forward water quality information to him. Tracie suggested adopting Corridor Plan as an appendix in all of our Master Plans.

Next Meeting Aug. 19th , location to be determined
Submitted by Kleta Dudley, sec.