

**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**January 23, 2003 - 7:00 PM**  
**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

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**Present:**

Angela Rapp - NRPC  
Steve Couture - NH Department of Environmental Services  
Curt Laffin - Hudson  
Stan Kazlouskas - Hudson  
George May - Merrimack  
Will Jewett - Litchfield  
Glenn McKibben - Litchfield  
Kathy Hersh - Nashua

**I. Updates**

- **Beazer Site**  
Steve Couture from NH DES informed us that Mike McClauskey, the project manager in DES, is reviewing a scope of work for the analysis of the sediment in the Merrimack River. They are trying to determine if the seepage from the site is historical or fresh. There is no timeline right now. The eventual testing of the seepage will be contracted out instead of conducted in-house.
  
- **Depot Street**  
Angie has been working with the Town of Merrimack and Steve Landry in NH DES to renew the contract for this project. CLD will be revising the site plan to reflect the changes in parking and the pervious surface being used on the path down to the Merrimack River. A site visit and meeting with the DPW in Merrimack is scheduled to finalize the budget and submit the contract to Governor and Council for approval. That deadline is February 6<sup>th</sup>. **As of the writing of these minutes, NRPC will not be able to meet that deadline due to coordination issues between NRPC and the Merrimack DPW. We will be working to meet the February 20<sup>th</sup> deadline.**

**II. Site-specific Permit for a Bowling Facility in Merrimack, NH**

The LAC received a site-specific application for the expansion of a bowling alley in Merrimack that is within the Merrimack River Corridor. A site plan was not received with the application. Steve Couture said that the information needs to be requested from the Site-specific team at DES. **As of the writing of these minutes, it was discovered that, due to lack of staffing and funding at DES in that department, they would not be sending site plans with Site-specific applications from now on. However, we did request a site plan from the Town of Merrimack, and received a copy on Wednesday, January 29, 2003.**

**III. Update on the LAC Nomination Process**

Steve Couture recently sent out letters to the Conservation Commissions, Boards of Selectmen and Planning Boards from all of the communities in the Lower Merrimack River Corridor regarding the need for appointments to the LMRLAC. Steve will begin following up on these letters on February 20<sup>th</sup>.

**IV. New Hampshire Invasive Species Committee Request**

The LAC was sent a letter with information about the State's Invasive Species Program. The deadline for providing feedback on this program was in December. Angie will follow-up on the procedure and whether Doug Cygan, the contact for this program, needs something from the LAC.

**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**January 23, 2003 - 7:00 PM**  
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---

Page 2

**V. Lower Merrimack River Watershed Management Plan Update**

Steve Couture informed the group that the Lower Merrimack River Watershed Management Plan project was not funded under the Watershed Initiative Grant Program. Although it was a good grant application, it did not fully support that there would be improvement in water quality as a result of this project. Mr. Couture feels that this has positive repercussions, however. This gives the LAC some time to regroup, strengthen its membership, invest time in developing some goals and electing officers for the committee, and focus on funding sources that allow for a more diverse Management Plan to be developed - a plan that doesn't solely focus on water quality but also on the cultural and historical aspects, recreation, habitat, ecology, trails, land acquisition, etc.

**VI. Activities for the Upcoming Year**

The discussion about the Management Plan spurred conversation about what type of activities/projects should be planned for the upcoming year. An example from the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee was included in the meeting agenda packet sent out. The group organizes "Bug Nights" every year and has a great turnout. The LAC might need to start a little smaller, but it would be great to see the group plan an activity or project to educate the public and raise awareness about the LAC. One idea was raised about constructing a travelling display with information about watershed protection, etc. The Small Outreach and Education Grant program through DES awards funds for projects like that. The maximum amount is \$2,000, and it is a revolving fund with no deadlines. Mr. Couture will fax copies of proposals for similar projects, including the Isinglass River project, which was recently funded. He will try to get us a picture or the actual board to look at for our next meeting. These funds can be used for other types of outreach programs as well; for example, to recruit volunteers for the next water quality monitoring program this summer.

Funding for projects was discussed. The Rivers and Trails Program is also available for technical assistance for trail projects. This assistance has been used for other designated rivers as well. Nashua received assistance from this program for the Merrimack Heritage Trail and for the Urban Trails Alliance (for three consecutive years). The Rivers and Trails Program could be used to begin compiling the Management Plan. This would be a great time to begin engaging new members in the group to discuss goals for the plan and the committee as a whole.

Kathy Hersh mentioned that there is \$18,000 in a fund that was established to buy several easements down along the Merrimack River to connect the Heritage Trail behind Greeley Park. This money could be used as match for the Watershed Assistance Grant, for the Trails Bureau grant program or for Rivers and Trails (who could help get the project underway). It was mentioned that the LAC should have Margaret Watkins (Rivers and Trails Director for NH) come to a meeting and discuss the program.

LAC decided to work on designing the display at the next meeting. Another idea was to produce a brochure to accompany the display wherever it is placed. The brochure could have facts about the Merrimack River, things people could do to protect the river, access points, and information about the LAC (where and when it meets, etc.).

Ideas for the display were: How to conserve water, goals/accomplishments of the LAC.

**VII. Local Updates**

- DES - Mr. Couture handed out information regarding the CSO study being conducted on the Merrimack River (see attached) from the Hooksett Dam through Lowell, MA. Mr. Couture will give us updates as they occur. The study will be looking at flow, biomonitoring, sedimentation, etc.

**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**January 23, 2003 - 7:00 PM**  
**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

---

Page 3

The dams in the Middle Merrimack are up for relicensing. A stakeholder meeting will be held in Bow, NH on Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm (see attached). If the LAC agrees to, they can be an intervenor in the relicensing by sending a letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

- Nashua - The Nashua Conservation Commission and NRPC are hosting a meeting with the four Conservation Commissions being affected by the Circumferential Highway on Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the NRPC offices. The LAC is invited to come as well.

Kathy Hersh informed the group that the Commuter Rail Project is still underway. River access was suggested to be part of this project. Boat access could be difficult because there is a bridge to access the opposite side of the tracks. The LAC should be stressing this access ASAP if river access is something they would like to see happen down there. Alexander Vogt is the person to contact regarding this issue.

Regarding groundwater infiltration at the Commuter Rail Station site (which was one of the LAC's main concerns in the review process), there will be islands in the parking lot that will allow for stormwater percolation. Ms. Hersh also said that they are working to make this a transit-oriented development project with stores, residents, etc. It should be a keystone project.

Ms. Hersh said the City is also working on an East Hollis Street Master Plan. It would provide recommendations for a mixed-use area with businesses, industry, residences, and renovation or construction of a second commuter rail stop. The area being looked at also includes the location of the confluence of the Nashua and Merrimack Rivers. Federal Transit money is being used for the study.

- Merrimack - George May said that the Thornton's Ferry boat ramp is still in progress. There will not be a study until the spring. There is a plan which can be obtained from Bob Lamoureux.
- Hudson - NRPC is currently writing the natural resources chapter of the Hudson Master Plan.
- Other updates: George May asked the group if they were still interested in sponsoring a canoe trip this summer. The trip would begin at Moor's Falls and take out at Greeley Park. He will update us on the date that is chosen.

Curt Laffin informed the LAC about a group unofficially called the "Conservation Stewards" that is comprised of towns, organizations, etc. that recruit the talents of retired people. This is happening all over the country. This group is focusing on the professional experience of people as it relates to natural resources such as lawyers, planners, biologists, etc. They would assist communities in decisions about the environment, especially where these communities lack the funds for professional advice/assistance.

Stan Kazlouskas asked if we had any work for a Biology intern from Rivier College. One of the nuns at Rivier has students looking for internships. The LAC doesn't have specifics right now, but it would be helpful to save these contacts as we begin to apply for funding for the Management Plan and start working on the display.

Mr. May mentioned that the VoTech has an environmental class that has a service learning component. These students could do some water quality monitoring along the Merrimack River.

**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**January 23, 2003 - 7:00 PM**  
**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

---

Page 4

The Natural Resources department at UNH can also be utilized when the Management Plan is updated. They have been used before to comb through plans and recommend how the plan should be revised and what information is needed to do so. They need to be contacted at least a semester in advance to get the project approved by their professor.

Mr. May mentioned that the instream flow rules are also being reviewed currently. This issue, which has been on the table since 1989, needs public support. Please write or call your legislators to show support for this on behalf of the Local Advisory Committee.

The next meeting of the Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee will be **Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.**

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**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**February 27, 2003 – 7:00 PM**  
**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

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**Present:**

Angela Rapp – NRPC  
Stan Kazlouskas – Hudson  
Will Jewett – Litchfield  
Bob Robbins – Hudson  
Mike Grunder – Hudson

**I. Updates**

- Depot Street  
Project has been delayed again due to Chip Chesley's (Merrimack DPW) resignation. A contract with CLD has been revised and a new scope and budget have been compiled, however. Final approval from Mr. Chesley is required and will be received by March 7, 2003.

**II. Site-specific Permit for a Bowling Facility in Merrimack, NH**

The committee reviewed this application and found that this project has no real impact to the Merrimack River, as it is across DW Highway and has appropriate stormwater detention. One comment that should be passed along to the Merrimack Planning Board, however, is that the engineer stated that gas and sediment traps would be installed in the catch basins on the site and that they "should be checked twice a year". The LAC would like to recommend that the language be changed to say "will be checked twice a year and after every major storm".

**III. RMAC Correspondence – Senate Bill 87 and Removal of River Gages on Saco and Upper Connecticut Rivers**

The LAC received two letters from the Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) (see attached). One was regarding Senate Bill 87 (SB 87). SB 87 proposes to eliminate the setback requirements for the application of septage, biosolids, and short paper fiber. It would also eliminate the immediate incorporation requirement. Many of the LACs have written letters to Chairman Johnson (see attached), chair of the Senate Environmental Committee, in opposition of this bill. Should the LMRLAC write a letter in opposition as well? Stan Kazlouskas volunteered to draft a letter to Chairman Johnson in opposition of the bill and in favor of protecting the Merrimack River from this type of encroachment.

The second letter was in regards to the removal of two river gages on the Saco and Upper Connecticut Rivers. The Rivers Management Advisory Committee is also in opposition to this, as these gages could provide valuable information on instream flow in the future. No action will be taken, but the LAC will monitor the progress.

**IV. Brainstorming Session on Display Board**

Angie presented the option of postponing the discussion of the display board until there are more official members present. It is important a majority of the group is involved in the development of this project so it can be successful and representative of the entire committee. All agreed that more input should be provided so that everyone can be involved in the development of the project and delegation of tasks. It will be on the next agenda in March.

**Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**February 27, 2003 - 7:00 PM**  
**Nashua Regional Planning Commission**

---

Page 2

V. **Review of the By-Laws**

The LAC does not currently have valid by-laws. Again, attendance by more of the official members is necessary in order to develop a set of by-laws that are accurate and reflect the true purpose and goals of the LAC. Angie passed out the Isinglass River LAC by-laws which were recently adopted and could be used as a template (see attached). This will be on the agenda at the March meeting.

VI. **Regional Environmental Plan (REPP) - Regional Priorities for the Merrimack River Corridor**

This agenda item will be discussed in March as well. More representation from the other communities is necessary in order to develop a good set of priorities to be included in this plan. For more information on this plan, please see: <http://www.nashuarpc.org/envplanning/phase2.htm>

VII. **The Next Meeting - Change of Date**

The next meeting of the Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee needs to be changed due to the absence of NRPC Staffing. The group concluded that the meeting will be **Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.**

# Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting

March 25, 2003 - 7:00 PM

## Nashua Regional Planning Commission

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### Present:

Angela Rapp - NRPC  
Will Jewett - Litchfield  
Glen McKibben - Litchfield  
Ray Peeples - Litchfield  
George May - Merrimack  
Mike Grunder - Hudson

### I. Updates

- Depot Street  
The contract has been submitted to DES. Governor and Council will vote on it on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### II. Regional Environmental Planning Program (REPP) - Identify Lower Merrimack River Corridor Conservation Priorities (see attached)

Angie introduced the project. The last REPP plan can be found online at [www.nashuarpc.org/envplanning/repp.htm](http://www.nashuarpc.org/envplanning/repp.htm). The committee reviewed the priorities identified in the REPP Plan from 2000. Angie asked the members to update the committee on the status of the ones identified in the last plan and identify new potential new parcels.

Hudson - Mike Grunder asked who owns the parcels that Hudson identified (TM 13-8 and 23-4). He will research.

Merrimack - George identified several parcels that he would like to see included in Merrimack. One is the Harcross site on Daniel Webster Highway. It is a contaminated site which is in the process of being cleaned up. It sits on both the Souhegan and Merrimack Rivers and would provide great access to the rivers. The other parcel is across the street next the strip mall on DW Highway. It would be a great connection on the south side of the Souhegan River to the Town Center.

Litchfield - The two largest parcels identified in the last REPP plan have been sold to the Wilsons. They are still being farmed, however. There is still hope to preserve them. Another parcel Ray suggested is located south of the McElwain Agricultural Preservation. It is used as a boat ramp and could be the start of protecting an entire corridor of land along the east bank of the Merrimack River in Litchfield. M-3 and M-4 identified in the previous REPP plan have conceptual plans for an elderly housing development. This will most likely come before the Committee because of setback issues.

Nashua - no one from Nashua was present to discuss the Beazer site or additional sites.

### III. Brainstorming Future Projects

The group discussed the possibility of obtaining a Small Education and Outreach Grant from DES to make four display boards to put in town halls, libraries, etc. in the Lower Merrimack River Corridor. Glen reported that his company uses Skyline to make displays like this. He is getting cost estimates in the mail and will bring them to the next meeting.

The committee needs to decide: 1) what the message on these boards will be; 2) who will write the grant; 3) should the group make the displays or have them made; 4) how much money will be spent; 5) where will the money come from up front to buy supplies or pay someone to make the displays; 6) should there be a combination of displays and literature produced with the grant money.

Ideas brainstormed were: 1) Ask for \$2,000 from DES from Small Education and Outreach Grant and get four displays made; 2) Pay to have four displays with different themes; 3) Buy supplies (foam board,

# Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee Meeting

March 25, 2003 - 7:00 PM

## Nashua Regional Planning Commission

---

Page 2

photo paper, etc.) and make the displays, using the rest of the money for literature and a PowerPoint presentation like the one that Ray Peeples made; 4) make the displays interactive.

For the next meeting the group needs to research and think about content for the displays and the costs associated with making the displays from scratch or paying someone to make them.

#### IV. **Review of the By-Laws**

Because of time restraints, the committee was not able to fully discuss this issue. However, it was decided the Angie will compile some suggested revisions to the Isinglass By-laws and send out to the committee. These will go out with the next agenda. **(attached)**

#### V. **Updates**

George May informed everyone that the Merrimack River Watershed Council has published their annual canoe trip guide. The LMRAC will be leading a trip on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The schedule is available at NRPC and on the MRWC website at [www.merrimack.org](http://www.merrimack.org).

Mike Grunder reported that the Friends of Hudson Natural Resources have sent out letters and a magnet to all of the residents living in the Robinson Pond Watershed in Hudson. The flyer educates landowners about protecting the pond by reducing phosphorous and also defines the watershed limits of Robinson Pond. The group received a Small Education and Outreach Grant from DES to develop these letters and send them out.

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