

SoRLAC-Online

December 16, 2020

Chair Ritz called the meeting, conducted via online meeting, to order at 7:00 PM under the emergency provisions of RSA 91-A, New Hampshire's Right-to-Know law, as allowed by Emergency Order 11 under Executive Order 2020-04 in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. Secretary Dudley conducted a roll call.

In attendance were members Cory Ritz (New Ipswich), Celeste Barr (Milford), Cam Lockwood (Temple), Rob Clemens (Amherst), Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich), Marshall Buttrick (Greenville), George May (Merrimack), Rich Hart (Amherst), and Peter Howd, (Wilton), Nelson Disco (Merrimack.) Guest Sarita Croce, Assistant Director of the Public Works Dept. Merrimack NH

Approval of Minutes from November 2020 -Approved, after a discussion on whether it was appropriate that an email between Celeste and a member of the Milford Conservation Commission (Chris Constantino) had been included in the minutes. It was decided that it was okay but that Kleta should send a copy of the minutes to Chris.

There was also one correction concerning the location of the sale of Christmas trees being sold by the Rotary Club. The trees are being sold at Watson Park.

Business

Merrimack Waste Water Treatment Plant- Sarita Croce gave a presentation explaining the upgrades to the MWWTP. It included an overview of the project, the goals, the scope and the environmental review which laid out the permits required. She gave us a virtual tour of how the waste goes through the system. This is a system that cost \$5 million dollars when it was first constructed in the 1970s and the upgrades are projected to cost \$60 million. James Taylor was unable to attend the meeting but had reviewed the information beforehand and was very familiar with the facility having overseen previous upgrades when he worked at this facility. He had submitted questions for Sarita. These are the questions.

1) Force main replacement at the Souhegan pump station. This station is close to Souhegan

River at the confluence of the Merrimack River but sits up high enough that it has never flooded. This is a replacement of an original pipe (1972) with a larger one that discharges to the Town sewer system on Railroad Ave. Care will need to be taken of excavated material so that it doesn't run off into the river. It may be worth our while to get permission to observe runoff controls implemented.

Sarita said that they had decided to not replace this pipe because they were concerned with soil contamination. Only a small portion of this pipe will be replaced. The rest of it will get a lining.

2) Since the station will be off line, but sewerage flow will continue, bypass pumping will be required. My concern here will be any leaks in the discharge piping from the pump(s) and whether a backup pump will be present in case of pump failure to prevent a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO). This pump(s) will need to run 24/7 until completion of the project. That said there are companies that specialize in doing this with many years of experience such as Godwin and Rain for Rent.

The project will be done in stages and will have to stop flow for some situations. A siphon will be used and plugged while work is executed between 12 midnight and 4.a.m. There will be minimum pumping during other hours.

3) Will the station be offline requiring extended bypass pumping to install new equipment such as pumps and controls, or will it be a phased approach allowing some existing equipment to run while new is installed? Since all equipment is being replaced, my guess would be they will shut it down but it would be good to ask Sarita.

The plant and the pump stations are in a flood plain. The emergency generators will be raised above the 500 year flood plain.

Although the project is still awaiting final review by NHDHR, the NH Division of Historical Resources' report determined the property would not be considered potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. They said it was an "unremarkable facility" and doesn't need to register.

A topic that came up several times during the presentation was the problem that flushable wipes cause in septic facilities. Cam related a conversation she'd had with someone that had recently serviced her septic.

As companies are not going to quit making the products perhaps a push should be made to require they disintegrate. They clog the current WWTP systems, and it is a goal to make the maintenance and removal of these easier. In the MWWTP upgrade, flushable wipes will be removed, cleaned, rinsed and probably sent out for incineration. Currently, the wipes mix with grease and wrap around the impellers at the Thornton's Ferry site and the pipes have to be unclogged on a weekly basis. These are also a problem at the Septic Receiving Area. A \$35,000 upgrade is being done there to help solve the problem.

George ask if there will be any changes in the chemicals dumped into the river. Sarita says they are looking at ways to lower phosphorus and nitrogen. Eighty percent of the phosphorus is due to Anheuser Busch.

George asked if the water returning to the river was near the site where hides from an old tannery had been discarded. Sarita was not familiar with that site. It was determined not to be that close. It was also determined that most of the outflow would affect the Merrimack and not the Souhegan.

Someone asked about PFOAs. Sarita said there should be a decreasing amount of PFOA over time. There was a short discussion on the problems that WWTPs in general faced with dealing with industry products that they had no control over.

We don't have any issues with the plan.

Gardent Property-This is in Milford. We received very thorough and detailed paperwork on this property. We were impressed. George had one question about a culvert that was an existing culvert listed as being 12" in the wetland area on the driveway. He was concerned that it would not be large enough for "critters" to get through. After much discussion it was decided that the culvert was probably getting replaced with a larger 24" culvert. There is no additional runoff according to the plan, the buildings all have measures for drainage and although there is some alteration to terrain, it appears there is little impact on the river. We have no objections.

Culvert Replacement on 101-State office requested our comments. Cory will send same reply he sent to DOT.

Updated NHDES website-Might want to take a look. Tracie offers these tips:

- The Rivers Program page can be found at <https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/rivers-management-and-protection>
- Documents for each river can be found on this page by clicking on the river name about halfway down the page.
- A shortcut to the OneStop database and mapper is at the top of every page.
- Links to programs related to the Rivers Program are in the right-hand side bar of the Rivers Program page.

Online meetings or other local opportunities- nothing to report

Local Updates

Souhegan Watershed Association- Nothing to report. Still undecided about water testing next year. Cam asked George about a mis-identified waterway on a map that she had brought to his attention in an email. He asked her to resend the information. He reminded us how important he thought it was that streams were identified and had signage. A discussion followed on who paid for signage and who was responsible for installation of signs. Cory commented that New Ipswich had signage on their stream crossings. George said the signs for the Souhegan Protected Waterway had cost \$150 each. Towns paid for their own signs and the State had produced them.

New Ipswich- Nothing to report concerning the Souhegan. Kleta said she thought the Conservation Commission had paid for the stream crossing signs and the town garage had installed them. The posts were not the heavy duty posts that the Souhegan signs had used. Kleta also said she thought the signs for the stream crossings were not as expensive as the Souhegan signs had been. Cory asked her to contact Bob Boynton and find out what they cost and where they came from.

Temple- Cam attended a meeting with SWRPC (Southwest Regional Planning Commission.) They were urging that the Souhegan be included in the Master Plan. They also felt signage for stream crossings was a nice addition as well.

Greenville-Nothing to report

Wilton- The matter concerning the Ryan property on Stage Coach Road went before the Zoning Board and as the owner had moved the shed outside the setback the issue went away.

A proposed subdivision just off Main Street needs to address storm water issues for retention purposes. The town engineer is looking into this.

Lable Arts got sold and is shutting down. The mill building is for sale. George wants to know if this is an opportunity to remove the brook that runs through the property. Peter thinks it is a matter to be taken up with the new owner. He will keep us posted and will let the Conservation Commission know that SoRLAC is interested in pursuing this.

Milford- Celeste led a hike in the freezing rain on Dec. 12. Fifty five people showed up, none of them had ever been on the section of the trail she lead them on. There will be different segments of the river featured in future hikes. Before the hike, she gave a short presentation of the animals that might be found in the habitats they hiked through.

Rob mentioned that he had participated in a Regional Open Space Team (ROST) meeting hosted by the Milford Conservation Commission. He mentioned the Hayward Property to get an idea of what their take was on it. He was surprised that they seemed pleased by the way the property was being developed.

Rob also happened to be in Milford on an errand and decided to have a look at the site for the MVC Eyecare building. He reported that he couldn't figure out where the water in the pond exits the property and felt it was infiltrating into the ground.

Merrimack- Nelson reported that the Planning Board was working on the Capital Improvement Plan. This is for July 2021-2022. The canoe launch at

Saveren's Bridge was included. Public Works put it in and at this point, it is just a suggestion. Also, they are updating the Master Plan.

George reported that the fence is up at Watson Park and it has a gate in it. There will be a skating rink soon in that area. He also took a ride up to the Overlook property, condominiums we had reviewed earlier. He said it looked good.

Amherst- Rob checked all the Souhegan River crossings and there was a sign at all of them, and he felt the town could now turn its attention to smaller tributary stream crossing signage.

The Amherst Conservation Commission, the Community Development Office and the DPW are working on revisions to the Town's Stormwater Ordinance.

Surveys for the Master plan went out and water resources were given a lot of attention in the survey, but not the Souhegan River, specifically.

Next Meeting, Jan 21, 2021 online

Submitted by Kleta Dudley, sec. Dec. 17, 2020