

Members:

- ✓ = present

- ✓ Bob Robbins (Chair) – Hudson
- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Vice Chair) -- Nashua
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) -- Nashua
Glenn McKibben (Treasurer) – Litchfield
Cynthia Ruonala (Public Relations) – Nashua
- ✓ George May - Merrimack
- ✓ Jim Barnes – Hudson
Ray Peeples – Litchfield
Stan Kazlouskas – Hudson

Associate Members:

- ✓ Millie Mugica – Nashua

Also in attendance:

Minda Shaheen, NRPC
Steve Couture, Rivers Coordinator, DES

The meeting was called to order at 7:28pm in the NRPC meeting room. Members welcomed Steve Couture to the meeting.

Millie gave a brief summary of the river trail cleanup day near the Sagamore Bridge in Nashua on November 18. She mentioned the discovery of tree-cutting activity, and that this had been brought to the attention of Nashua's Code Enforcement department via the Nashua Conservation Commission. An initial investigation of the activity considered it a timber trespass. Given the nature of the apparent tree cutting (a few trees at an estimated 18-inch diameter), Steve Couture recommended the issue be pursued at the local level rather than at the State. Karen will contact the Nashua Conservation Commission and ask them to continue to follow up with Code Enforcement on the tree cutting violation.

Corridor Management Plan Update

Minda briefly discussed her e-mail from earlier in the day that distributed a copy of the draft plan with DES comments. The most significant comment from DES had to do with the nature of the objectives listed in chapter 2 and suggestions to make them measurable and more specific.

Steve briefly presented two examples of recently developed corridor management plans, with two different approaches to presenting the goals and objectives list. He first showed a copy of the Upper Merrimack River LAC's management plan, which had detailed, time-specific objectives, with activities listed after each objective in support of it. The management plan for the Souhegan River, on the other hand, was not as specific with times, taking instead a short/medium/long term approach to identifying actions.

Since LMRLAC's intention is for the corridor management plan to be adopted as part of each community's Master Plan, members agreed it cannot be as specific with dates for the actions. A brief discussion followed on whether to make a separate action plan/work plan, either as a separate document or as an appendix. Bob suggested that development of an action plan be an objective of the plan.

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Members briefly discussed the gap in Designated River designation for the Merrimack River. The region of the river around Manchester is not designated. Steve suggested LMRLAC could add an objective to pursue a middle Merrimack designation (for the towns of Manchester, Bedford, Pembroke, Bow, Hooksett, Allenstown). Members briefly discussed how that section of the river has three dams, and that development along that section of the river has an impact on the Lower Merrimack.

Steve summarized that the rest of the comments fell under the categories of issues to consider, corrections, resources to incorporate, coordination with State level activities. One example given of such coordination was to encourage local review of culvert sizes in accordance with NH Fish and Game stream crossing guidelines, for local review of projects that do not fall within State jurisdiction. Members agreed to accept Steve's recommendations.

Bob brought up tying Chapter 5, Recommended Actions, to Chapter 2, Goals and Objectives. Members discussed how best to put the information together, and agreed for Minda to put together a table tying actions to objectives and put that into the document.

Members agreed to discuss prioritizing actions within each goal in the meeting. Minda distributed copies of suggested priorities that Jim had put together.

Kath suggested having an action to plan a design charrette for all communities to discuss topics relevant to the river, such as low-impact development.

Minda pointed out that the funding is running out on the grant to update the plan, but members agreed that the plan is close to complete. Jim's recommended order of priority will be the default unless members submit additional comments to change the order.

Members reviewed each action class in order, and requested the following changes:

General:

- add partners to actions when possible, using the wording in action 3.4 as a guide for phrasing
- Steve suggested an item to have studies in each community on the benefits of open space/cost of community services.
- add an action to create a brochure in one of the action classes
- Minda will alphabetize the action classes to avoid a perceived priority

Action Class 1 (Corridor Management):

- bulleted list and details be put back into action item 1.2, and that it mention regulated activities may include, but are not limited to (with the bullet list following), and that an LID bullet be added to the list
- combine action items 1.3 and 1.4, making the floodplain recommendation general to all the communities
- add a new item, 1.10, to discuss wetlands setbacks, riparian systems, and the Merrimack River as three categories requiring setbacks, as a separate item from 1.5, which will still discuss wetland setbacks. Minda will make a study recommendation and put some information in on systems of measuring, considering such items as the 'high bluff' reference that Pembroke uses.
- make item 1.1 more broad, referring to general river protection measures (as opposed to shoreline protection specifically).
- priority order is now 1.2, 1.10 (3 categories of setbacks), 1.9. 1.1, combined 1.3/1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8

Action Class 2 (Conservation):

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- item 2.6 led to a discussion whether LMRLAC should hold workshops and informational meetings, or whether we should encourage Conservation Commissions to do so. Bob suggested we could fulfill this by getting on the Commission agenda and bring a speaker, or partner with them on a workshop
- item 2.2 will be removed and its intent combined with 2.1, making the item generic to all the towns in the corridor, rather than having separate actions for individual communities
- remove specific examples from item 2.8
- item 2.6 moves to action class 1, items 2.7 and 2.8 move to action class 3

Action Class 3 (Public Access and Awareness):

- item 3.1 was discussed and members agreed to add outreach to schools under item 3.1. Members also agreed to move item 3.1 higher on the list.
- a Neighborhood Watch was a specific item mentioned as an addition to item 3.5

Action Class 4 (Water Quality):

- item 4.8 add reference to DES permit
- item 4.2 – George suggested, and members agreed, to remove VRAP as a specific water quality monitoring program and instead refer generally to water quality monitoring programs
- remove item 4.9, about soil types
- move item 4.12 up in list, after item 4.1
- item 4.13 will be rephrased some to study the river to encourage the assessment of a wide range of chemical components

Action Class 5 (Water Quantity):

- item 5.2, regarding a demand/yield analysis, the Army Corps study of the Merrimack may already be looking in to this. This item can be clarified by mentioning contact between LMRLAC and the State, with NRPC as the partner

Action Class 6 (Wildlife and Aquatic Habitats):

- some discussion under item 6.1 indicated that the definition of surface waters already includes vernal pools. Members discussed encouraging communities to include vernal pools in their wetlands definitions. Members also discussed how large parcels provide the best wildlife habitat, expressing some concern that protection of (for example) vernal pools without upland areas does not give wildlife adequate area.

Action Class 10 (Administration):

- item 10.3 - reword to make it clear who's involved in the reporting of violations

Members pointed out a few items of concern they had with other chapters. George asked about the list of water bodies in Table 1 of Chapter 3 and whether it's up to date. Minda stated the data came from DES, and Steve pointed out that the plan would have to cite a source for whatever changes we make to the table. Minda offered to make a footnote for the table. George will look in to this on the DES Website. Examples of water bodies on the list that appear to have incorrect status are Green's Pond, Naticook Lake, and Round Pond. In addition, Musquash is not on the list.

Minda will update the plan based on the feedback and distribute. Once it's distributed, members will have one week to respond with a final round of comments. Members agreed that the intention is to approve the plan at the January meeting.

Membership

Steve pointed out that Karen, Kath and George have appointments that have either expired or will shortly.

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Steve distributed copies of a flyer about economic impact of deteriorating water quality.

Meeting adjourned 9:55pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 24 at 7pm at the Nashua Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
secretary