

Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm via Zoom

In attendance:

Cory Ritz, Chair

Peter Howd

Celeste Barr

Bill Mahar

Rich Hart

Rob Clemens

Marshall Buttrick

Nelson Disco

Cathy Joly,

Camilla Lockwood

George May

**Dawn Tuomala, Deputy DPW Director and Town
Engineer of Merrimack, Guest**

Stephanie Malett, Guest/prospective member

The entire Committee voted to approve April minutes.

Old Business:

1. River's Edge (a residential development in Wilton, 20 units near Rt 101) has not appeared before the Wilton Waterworks Board to get permission to hook up to Wilton Water system yet. The project is still on hold for permits.
2. The. New Ipswich driveway permit discussed last month has been issued by DES .

New Business:

1. Woodbury Street Sidewalk project in Merrimack
Dawn Tuomala , Deputy DPW Director and Town Engineer for Merrimack shared plans for a sidewalk construction project.
The Woodbury Street sidewalk is part of the town's plan for sidewalk improvements. It connects the Merrimack High School to DW Highway. The Woodbury St. sidewalks fall within the shoreland protection zone. Some fill of technical wetland is required to fit the sidewalk. The street is on a steep slope so Rob asked if there would be some method for slowing the flow in the adjacent ditch. Dawn said that it is likely that stone bars would be left in the ditch to slow the adjacent water flow.
The sidewalk will provide an indirect connection to Watson Park River Trail and the trails behind MHS.

The committee voted (unanimously) to authorize Cory to sign the expedited wetland permit.
2. Stony Brook Riverwalk Project in Wilton. Peter reported that the project has been completed. A grand opening is scheduled for June 12th at 11:00AM. There will be a few speeches, a memorial dedication and a riveting ribbon cutting.
3. NH DOT Railroad crossing and sidewalk improvements in downtown Wilton.
This project aims to improve railway crossing, the roadway it crosses and the pedestrian safety

in that vicinity. Sidewalk improvements at the bottom of Burns Hill Road will improve safety and walkability in a busy stretch between WLC High School and Main Street. The project will not impact the banks or channel of the Souhegan River or Stony Brook, so no wetlands permit from NHDES Wetlands Bureau or US Army Corps of Engineers will be required. NHDOT will obtain a Shoreland PBN from the NHDES Shoreland Program for work within 250' of both water bodies. The work has also been reviewed by the state's Water Quality Program and is not anticipated to have a negative effect on water quality in the project area and will not require EPA NPDES CGP coverage, AOT permitting or any permanent stormwater treatment as we are actually decreasing the total impervious surface in the project area.

There are no objections by SORLAC re: the Shoreland PBN. Cory will respond as such to NHDOT.

4.. School Street Milford Residential development Plans sent to SoRLAC members from Cory on April 15th (5:46pm)

The committee had concerns about the significant increase in impervious surfaces on the site projected by the current plan. Cory will write a letter to NHDES stating this. Points we will include with our comments are a request for : use of permeable material for parking lot construction, the addition of rain gardens, a reduction in the number of dwelling units to reduce the amount of parking and pavement needed and lastly the option for mitigation efforts elsewhere in the shoreland /wetland.

5. Other items

- a. Meeting report out with Milford Conservation Committee 5/13 . Five SORLAC members were able to attend this MCC meeting to which Ted Arcidi, developer of Ryefields Farm, Elm Street Milford (the former Hayward Farm fields) was also invited. Arcidi is requesting permits for herbicide application on the banks of the Souhegan River to knock back invasive species.

Arcidi reviewed all that he has done on the site including cutting trees on the bank of the river, burying the stumps, riprapping along the river without state permission. He states that he is just interested in farming and bringing the property back to the way it was 100 years ago. SORLAC members stressed that much has been learned about protecting water quality over the last 100 years and recommended he work closely with NRCS to use best management practices for riparian agriculture (especially since farming is a new venture for him).

Rob will send a thank you to Arcidi and to the MCC and request a site walk on the property.

If agreed upon, we will invite NRCS to help him be successful and at bare minimum bring some NRCS guidances for him

- b. The 2021 Rivers and Lakes Programs Legislation Tracking Spreadsheet has been updated as of today, May 14, 2021. It is available on RMAC Forum and the LMAC Forum. We are waiting to hear what the results of a couple of executive sessions to be posted. Of particular interest are the results of SB 95, a portion of which would allow LACs to continue meeting remotely if desired. Members offered various perspectives and opinions about zoom versus in person meetings. We did not all agree on one method so will not submit a position.
- c. Cam attended the NHDES held 2021 Drinking Water Source Protection Virtual Conference on Wednesday May 19 and Thursday, May 20. She will share some of her notes via email with the committee.
- D. SoRLAC is advertising for vacant positions on the Committee. (See wording below). We discussed making the writeup more user-friendly. Please share with your Town Website

administrators.

e. Topics deferred for a future meeting:

- a. SoRLAC: Best Practices for Projects and Project Evaluation
- b. Souhegan River Watershed Management plan (2013), renewal plan

Local updates

- a. Souhegan Watershed Association --George requesting data from Rich Hart from the old website for input to the new SWA website. George still hoping for a couple of river sample tests this summer. TBD.
- b. New Ipswich -nothing new
- c. Temple -nothing new
- d. Greenville -nothing new
- e. Wilton - The new TDS building on the river's edge in downtown Wilton completed and looks good.
- f. Milford --ZZizza Pizza on Elm St. at North River Road Bridge crossing of the Souhegan River has river's edge seating. We are happy to see a new business use on this site that does not require underground gasoline tanks adjacent to the river.
- g. Merrimack -nothing else
- h. Amherst --Open Space warrant article \$6M over 5 years on the Town ballot (June 2021) to allow the Conservation Commission to recommend properties for purchase of Open Space according to specific criteria.
Solar installation to be installed at Amherst Country Club. No stormwater impacts from this project identified.

8) Next Meeting: **June 17, 2021**

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 for each of New Hampshire's designated rivers. The Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC) has been in existence for over 20 years. The committee plays a vital role in protecting the river. All work being done within a quarter mile of the Souhegan River is looked at by SoRLAC at regular monthly meetings and recommendations are made to NH Department of Environmental Services regarding permits and other practices.

Up to three residents from each riverfront community along the length of designation (and from other communities in the watershed of the 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, educators, landowners or members of local government may request to join.

Membership is a three year commitment; however, our meetings are informal and guests are welcome 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.