

**LMRLAC – February 23, 2017**

**LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**February 23, 2017**

**Members:**

- ✓ = present

**Current:**

- ✓ Gene Porter (Chair) – Nashua (current term expires Dec 2019)
- ✓ Nelson Disco (Vice Chair) – Merrimack (current term expires 08/28/17)
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) – Nashua (current term expires 08/12/17)
- ✓ Christine Dupree (Treasurer) – Hudson (current term expires 11/25/17)
- ✓ Michael Croteau – Litchfield (current term expires 08/12/17)
- ✓ Richard LeBourdais – Hudson (current term expires 11/06/17)
- ✓ Francis Murphy – Nashua (current term expires 02/18/19)

**Pending Renewal:**

- ✓ George May – Merrimack (current term expired 01/07/14)

**Associate Members:**

Mildred Mugica – Nashua

**Also in attendance:**

David Cedarholm, Tighe & Bond  
Adele Fiorillo, Normandeau Associates, Inc.  
Brian Pratt, CLD Consulting Engineers, Inc.  
Donald Ware, Pennichuck Water Works

Meeting called to order at 7pm by Chairman Gene Porter in the Hunt Room of the Nashua Public Library, with a quorum present.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the January 26, 2017 meeting were approved with the corrections distributed prior to the meeting.

**Old Business**

**Action Item Status from Previous Meeting(s)**

- Beazer East. Chairman Porter reported that he contacted the engineer on site, who has not received reports about the monitoring wells. Chairman Porter stated the data is available via the NH DES OneStop Web site.
- Meeting with Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC). Chairman Porter is awaiting a reply from the Executive Director regarding a meeting to discuss matters including GIS data in the corridor and planning for a Corridor Management Plan update.
- American Rivers Report. Chairman Porter reported that he has contacted both NH DES and the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF) about the source of, and their views on, the forecast that 40-63% of the Merrimack River watershed in NH will be developed by 2030. He also requested access to current and projected development overlays. He is awaiting a reply.
- LMRLAC Annual Report. Copies of the Annual Report have been submitted to Merrimack and to Nashua. The report has not been submitted to Hudson yet.

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**New Business**

**Merrimack: Pennichuck Water Expansion Shoreland Application (File #2017-00449),  
Dredge and Fill Application (File #2017-00386)**

**Litchfield: Shoreland Application (File #TBD), Dredge and Fill Application (File #2017-00451)**

The project is located in Merrimack and Litchfield, and involves installing an intake raw water pipe in the Merrimack River and a finished water pipe from Merrimack to Litchfield.

Ms. Fiorillo explained that Mr. Ware would explain the need for the project, and Mr. Cedarholm would follow with the technical details. Prior to starting the discussion, Chairman Porter asked for clarification about the “not for public release” markings on the plans, given that the meeting itself is a public one. Ms. Fiorillo explained that the markings are for the Natural Heritage Bureau and Division of Historic Resources reports, which include sensitive information regarding historic sites and the presence of threatened or endangered species.

Mr. Ware explained that there are two main reasons for the project: to change the current intake, and to support expansion of water service to Litchfield.

Mr. Ware explained that the current intake has been permitted since 1985 by the Army Corps of Engineers and NH DES. The permit allows Pennichuck Water Works to draw water from the Merrimack River and pump it to Bowers Pond for amounts from 12-30 million gallons per day (mgd), depending on the time of year and river elevation. He further explained that the current intake is a ‘run of bank’ intake, which is not viable for winter. The run of bank intake also creates a scour effect.

Water from the new intake will typically be piped to Bowers Pond, but also has the option to be pumped directly to the treatment plant. This provides the capability for a year-round, independent source of water. Mr. Ware explained that the preference is to feed the Merrimack River water to Bowers Pond, since the river water has good dissolved oxygen levels.

To lead into the discussion of the finished water pipe portion of the project, Mr. Ware then gave a background on the customer base on the east side of the Merrimack River. He stated that currently nearly 2000 customers in Litchfield are fed by wells owned by Hudson. The well-based supply is insufficient for summer and poses a risk if, for example, one of the existing wells went down for some reason. He also explained that a seasonal connection across the river currently exists, by which Pennichuck Water Works can supply water to Pennichuck East Utilities. Adding the roughly 400 additional Litchfield customers whose wells are affected by PFOA contamination approaches the limits of the current system.

Mr. Ware explained that the project had been in Pennichuck’s plans, but has been accelerated due to the PFOA contamination issue. The process for implementing the project started in February of 2016 when the well contamination issue started becoming apparent. The hope is to get the work both permitted and completed in 2017.

Chairman Porter asked about the impact to river flow; Mr. Ware explained that the typical draw of 22 mgd equates to 34 cubic feet per second (cfs). Normal river flow is around 2000 cfs, which equates to about 1.5% of river flow. In the event of low flow, similar to that measured in the summer of 2016 of 700 cfs, the impact would equate to about 4.8% of river flow.

Mr. Cedarholm then took the floor to explain the technical aspects of the project. He showed a picture of a bathymetric survey and discussed the rationale for the selected crossing location.

Mr. Cedarholm then displayed a cross-section view of the project and explained the process for installing the finished water pipe across the river. The finished water pipe will be an 18” high

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density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe. Directional drilling will take place, from the Litchfield bank, drilling through to the Merrimack side. A portion of the pipe will run under the river bed, a portion of the pipe will rest on the river bed secured by Submar mats, and a portion of the pipe will be installed in a trench. He explained that his firm is working with a firm that specializes in directional drilling and difficult drilling projects.

Mr. Cedarholm explained the path for the pipe on the Litchfield side of the project. The location is a currently unused US Fish and Wildlife smolt facility. He explained that the pipe will run up the bank and then northerly along the top of bank to the property line, where it then will turn easterly to connect with an existing main in Charles Bancroft Highway. The portion of the bank where the pipe will run is a previously disturbed area, with a gabion mat currently in place.

Mr. Cedarholm then explained the process for installing the raw water intake pipe. The pipe will include an intake screen, held in place by four rock anchors. He also explained that the screen will be a very fine mesh, and the system is designed to have a velocity of less than a half-foot per second. This should prevent fish from being sucked against the screen.

Chairman Porter asked whether any maintenance would be required. Mr. Cedarholm replied that regular inspections of the installed pipes will take place. He also explained that the intake screen has an air burst self-cleaning system.

Chairman Porter commented on the request from NH Fish and Game that the installation equipment be cleaned to avoid contaminating other sites with the invasive Asian clam present at the project site. Ms. Fiorillo replied that they expect that NH DES will include that as a condition on the permitting.

Mr. LeBourdais asked about testing the sediment removed as a result of the drilling for the intake pipe, in particular, to test for industrial chemicals. Ms. Fiorillo explained that the materials will have to be disposed of off-site, and that testing would likely be a condition of that disposal. Ms. Dupree requested that LMRLAC receive a copy of the sediment testing results. Mr. LeBourdais requested that incremental testing of the removed sediment be considered.

Chairman Porter asked that the bathymetric chart and profile drawing be added to the application material.

Mr. May asked what will happen to the existing intake pipes. Mr. Cedarholm explained that they will be left in place and covered with a plate.

Mr. May asked about plans for any potential future expansion of the infrastructure. Mr. Ware replied that buildout was considered in planning the project, and the size of the proposed pipes will cover projected demand for the foreseeable future.

Mr. May asked about the now dormant gas pipeline project and what concerns Pennichuck may have had. Mr. Ware replied that Pennichuck had worked with the gas company and was reassured that the level of redundancy in the proposed project did not pose a risk to the water intake.

Mr. May asked whether Pennichuck performs water quality sampling and whether LMRLAC could have access to that data. Mr. Ware explained that Pennichuck performs testing on raw water samples from Pennichuck Brook and from the Merrimack River. Mr. Ware recommended that Chairman Porter send an e-mail requesting the data.

Mr. Croteau asked about the impact to the shoreland buffer on the Litchfield side of the project. Chairman Porter explained that he had attended the site walk on Wednesday, and that he was

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satisfied that the pipe location along the top of the bank would not have an impact on any of the large trees in the area.

Chairman Porter asked about the timing of the project, since some of the narrative indicates that the project will start in June, but fish migration runs until July. The work prior to the end of fish migration will be onshore work only.

Chairman Porter will write and send a letter to NH DES, responding to the applications, with the following comments:

- Request that NH DES require suitable sampling of disturbed sediments
- Request a second bathymetric survey to verify stability of the river bed

Chairman Porter thanked Mr. Ware, Mr. Cedarholm, and Ms. Fiorillo for coming to the meeting to discuss the project.

### **Litchfield: Erickson Construction Preliminary Review**

Mr. Pratt introduced the proposed project, which is located on a 9-acre parcel in Litchfield. The applicant (Erickson Construction Co, Inc.) is a construction company for sunrooms, additions, and foundation support structures. They are looking to construct a 15,000 square foot building with parking and storage, with a proposed phase B construction of a second 15,000 square foot building. The project will require Alteration of Terrain, Dredge and Fill, and Shoreland permits. Mr. Pratt stated that the current plan is to submit the applications by March 13.

Mr. Pratt pointed out the proposed location of stormwater treatment areas on the plan, and explained that there may be some grading within the 150' shoreland buffer. Mr. Pratt explained that the septic system location has not been identified yet, but that he has sampled the soil on site.

Chairman Porter asked about permeable pavers. Mr. Pratt replied that they were not practical for the project due to the traffic from large trucks on the site.

Ms. Dupree asked that the storage location of any hazardous materials be marked on the plan and well away from the shoreland buffer. Mr. May asked that snow storage be marked on the plan and that it not be near Colby Brook.

Mr. LeBourdais asked what the increased impermeable surface will be on site. Mr. Pratt replied that he has not yet made the final calculations.

Members asked about the possibility of a trail easement along the river. Mr. Pratt replied that the applicant, while not necessarily opposed to the concept of a trail, would prefer not to grant a piecemeal easement.

Ms. Archambault asked about the location of the proposed gazebo on the plans. Mr. Pratt replied that it's a planned amenity for the employees, and that there is currently no proposed cutting for either siting the gazebo or for providing views of the river from it.

Chairman Porter requested additional detail about stormwater treatment in the permit application. He also asked about whether fuel would be stored on site. Mr. Pratt replied that there will be no fueling on site.

Members thanked Mr. Pratt for coming and providing an initial briefing on the proposed project.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

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**Next LMRLAC Meeting**

The next LMRLAC meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2017, at 7:00 pm at the Nashua Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Archambault  
Secretary