

Members:

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- ✓ Bob Robbins (Chair) – Hudson
- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Vice Chair) -- Nashua
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) -- Nashua
- ✓ Jim Barnes (Treasurer) – Hudson
Glenn McKibben – Litchfield
- ✓ George May - Merrimack

Associate Members:

Mildred Mugica – Nashua

Also in attendance:

None

The meeting was called to order at 7:13pm downstairs in the west wing of the Nashua Library.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of May 28, 2009 were accepted.

New Business

Application – Hudson, Pelham Road Dam Repairs, Second Brook

Members reviewed a Dam Bureau application and set of plans for repairs to the Pelham Road Dam in Hudson. The dam is used for stormwater staging. The existing dam is an earthen dam with a concrete spillway. The culvert under the road has failed.

Members discussed the application and initial impressions of the project. Kath mentioned river continuity and suggested LMLRAC request that there be no hanging structures in the repairs. Members also discussed fish passage, but Jim pointed out that Second Brook is culverted downstream from the project, so fish won't get as far as the dam.

Kath asked about the purpose of the dam. Bob mentioned that there is a swamp upstream of the dam. Bob gave his view that the dam allows the upstream wetlands to do their job of water retention.

Jim indicated the Hudson Planning Board had not seen the application yet.

Kath mentioned a desire to see the upstream wetlands be managed from a larger perspective, with some level of protection of water quality, conservation, movement of aquatic life, etc. Jim mentioned that those wetlands are at or near the top of the proposed prime wetlands list currently being reviewed by Hudson.

Members discussed replacing the existing pipe with a box culvert with equivalent flow to the pipe. A box culvert won't be undercut (which eventually would result in a hanging structure) and allows the passage of aquatic life.

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Members voted to send a letter on the project; Jim abstained. Kath will write a letter about the project, recommending a box culvert with the same hydraulics as the existing structure, and send it to the following parties:

- the project's e-mail contact on the Dam Bureau application
- Ridgeley Mauck, DES Alteration of Terrain
- DES Dam Bureau
- the Town of Hudson
- Laura Weit

Manchester-Boston Regional Airport Environmental Inventory

Bob read from a letter he had received from Smart Associates, environmental consultants, working on the 2009 Airport Master Plan Update. Smart Associates is seeking inputs for the environmental inventory and assessment for the airport.

Kath asked George whether conductivity is measured on the Merrimack. George indicated it was not, and that he has only one conductivity meter.

Bob mentioned the runoff pipes that take stormwater flow that used to run into Little Cohas Brook and feed it directly into the Merrimack. Members agreed that the airport should provide onsite treatment of everything, including all stormwater. Members discussed on-site options – that the detention can be underground and below the frost line. Kath suggested that the airport be required to do more water quality testing. George mentioned impacts from the new access road – that it may lead to more traffic (ground and air) at the airport. Kath will write a letter summarizing the comments and may copy Jon Greenberg from New Hampshire Public Radio.

Old Business

Pervious Asphalt – lawsuit

Bob filled in other members on a discussion he had with an engineer about pervious asphalt. There is a difference between the pavers that Bob used for his driveway and the pervious asphalt. The pavers work fine because the water can flow between the pavers, but pervious asphalt can crumble after a couple of seasons. There are ways to combine the pervious asphalt with other methods, though.

Members discussed providing information about this matter in a followup letter to Smart Associates as LMRLAC learns more about it. Bob offered to ask the engineer in to talk about the subject at the August LMRLAC meeting.

Treasury

George had picked up LMRLAC's mail at NRPC recently, which consisted of several bank statements. LMRLAC currently has \$3000 in its account. Kath reminded Bob to put together records on the money he spent for the corridor survey to get reimbursed from the account.

Bob suggested that Jim check at the bank about the process for getting his name on the account, and to get new checks.

George asked about spending some of the money to purchase and install Protected River signs for the Merrimack at the Taylor's Falls and Sagamore bridges. George summarized his discussions with Nashua and Hudson a couple of years ago to get some funding for signs, and that both were noncommittal.

George indicated six small signs and two large signs are needed: two large signs on the Sagamore Bridge, two small signs for the walkway on the Sagamore, and four for the Taylor's Falls Bridge. George will talk to the Nashua DPW about installing the signs at Taylor's Falls and the walkway. DOT would have to install the signs on the Sagamore Bridge.

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George will gather information on the cost of signs and will distribute to members. Members were agreeable to spending LMRLAC funds on Protected River signage.

Merrimack River Sampling – e. coli Levels

George summarized the water sampling results from last Tuesday. He stated that there were very few samples on the Merrimack, but that he had samples from Thornton's Ferry on down. There were high e. coli readings at the Sagamore and Tyngsborough bridges. George stated the Merrimack has typically been clean for the last number of years. George indicated that this was the first time he'd seen such a result. His first reaction was that the results were due to a CSO. George called the Nashua Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF) to ask whether a CSO had released. On a followup phone call, the Nashua WWTF indicated they are changing the way they get information on the CSOs and did not know the answer. George indicated he would continue to follow up on this.

Members briefly discussed the issue of CSOs further. Members discussed making the public aware of CSOs by having releases publicized. Kath indicated that most of the public is not aware that untreated waste is released to the river. Kath mentioned that the Nashua River Watershed Association is working with Fitchburg to find sources of pollution, and pointed out how cross connections or pipe blockage causes sewage to release directly to the river. She indicated Fitchburg popped manhole covers and sampled – in one case, they found a residential toilet that was plumbed to stormwater.

Members agreed to ask William Keating from the Nashua WWTF back in to discuss the status of Nashua CSO separations.

Membership

Kath mentioned LMRLAC should reach out to boaters on the river for possible members for LMRLAC, and to get information on the state of the river from people who are on the water. George suggested the Nashua Rowing Club.

Bob indicated that David Scaer is interested in membership. Bob also mentioned being asked to speak at a Rotary Club meeting about LMRLAC.

Kath suggested LMRLAC could reach out to its contacts in each town for feedback on an application in that town.

Jim stated that he has been appointed to the new Benson's committee in Hudson, which is currently scheduled to meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. He will keep LMRLAC informed of his availability. Kath will contact Jim when Hudson projects are on the LMRLAC agenda.

Meeting Location

Members briefly discussed where to hold the next meeting, at the Nashua Library, the Nashua Country Club, or perhaps at the new library in Hudson. Jim commented that he thought the meeting rooms at the new Hudson library were rather small, perhaps more for study groups, and wasn't sure about their availability.

Hudson Planning Board Presentation

Members briefly discussed LMRLAC's presentation to the Hudson Planning Board on June 10. Jim pointed out the presentation reinforced LMRLAC's presence. Among the topics discussed was the location of trail easements – that top of bank is preferable to on the bank. The boat launch at Sparkling River was also brought up.

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Jim commented that the boat launch at Sparkling River is not for public access. The town would construct it and have emergency access.

Members discussed how to encourage towns to include LMRLAC in plans that the towns see but that do not require state permits. Members praised Hudson for including LMRLAC in its checklist. Members discussed contact with planners in the member towns and how to maintain that continuity when staff turnover occurs in the towns.

Members also briefly discussed the Hudson prime wetlands presentation that followed LMRLAC on June 10. Kath mentioned that Nashua's prime wetlands ordinance had focused on open water, and contrasted that with Hudson's list, which focuses on swamps. Jim speculated that it has to do with the definition of wetlands.

LMRLAC will plan to go back to the Hudson Planning Board again next June.

Miscellaneous

Kath mentioned that she had recently been on the path along the river near the Sagamore Bridge. It appeared to her that no additional tree cutting had taken place since the tree cutting that had been discovered during the trail cleanup of a couple of years ago.

George mentioned to other members present that he would like to get in touch with Paul Wiggins regarding water testing. Members do not have a current e-mail address for Paul.

Meeting adjourned 8:56pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 27 at 7pm, at the Nashua Public Library. Bob will plan to invite the engineer in to discuss pervious asphalt.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
secretary