

**EXETER RIVER STUDY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

April 18, 2013

**1. Convene Meeting:**

Chairman Lionel Ingram called the meeting to order at 9:02 am in the Nowak Room in the Exeter Town Office Building. Members present were Frank Patterson, Roger Wakeman, Mimi Becker, Don Clement, Selectman, Richard Huber and Peter Richardson. Rod Bourdon and Ginny Raub were unable to attend.

**2, Minutes of the March 2013 meeting.**

Mimi Becker motioned to approve the minutes from March 21, 2013, seconded by Richard Huber. Motion carried.

**3. Status of the Exeter River Great Dam Removal Impact Analysis and Feasibility Study (Mimi Becker and Paul)**

Ms. Becker provided the members with an update of possible alternatives. She explained the meeting on April 4, 2013 determined those alternatives that were not acceptable and deleted from the list and those that were going to be pursued. She also mentioned a phone conference with Partners from DES including the Dam group; however, she was not able to attend that phone conversation.

Mr. Huber provided a summary of the meeting notes via a handout to the group. They discussed the following:

***Amend. Option #1. Spillway Extension into Founder's Park – deleted.***

***Amend. Option #2. Penstock & Rover Edge Spillway – deleted.***

***Amend. Option #3. Lower Spillway – The crest will need to be lowered by approximately 5 feet.***

***Amend. Option #4. Lower Spillway + Rubber Dam – Pursue this option.***

***Amend. Option #5. Labyrinth Spillway – deleted.***

***Amend Option #6. Augment & Stabilize the Dam - – Pursue this option.***

A Matrix was suggested to provide a fully vetted scope to aide in narrowing down the pros and cons for each option, determine the performance options or each and provide alternatives and modifications to compare the removal.

Some of the other key points of the discussion were:

- Once the data is available the Committee will present costs and consequences for each option to the board with their recommendation.
- Ms. Becker voiced her Dam In or Dam Out perspective. Some of the impalement must remain to deal with supply type issues.
- It was agreed that fundamentally the Committee will not have the ability to answer all of the questions the public may have when the time comes.

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- They need to educate the population to understand the possible costs associated.
- They may not have enough information for the warrant article.
- Any option selected must meet DES Standards.
- Results are needed on May 2, 2013.
- A viable option is needed (not necessarily a solution), to prevent down- stream effects or future hidden downstream issues. This information needs to be presented to the public.
- June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 will be the presentation to the public.

### Ms. Becker reviewed the upcoming meeting dates.

- River Dam Study work group meeting on May 2, 2013 and May 20, 2013.
- Coordination meeting for presentation of results of analysis on May 2, 2013.
- Full draft feasibility report will be presented on May 20, 2013. The River Dam Study will be invited to this meeting.
- Review of comments of the draft and proposed public presentation on June 6, 2013.
- A work group meeting to create a comprehensive document on May 29, 2013.

### **4. Update from the discussion with the Climate Adaptation Plan for Exeter (CAPE) team.**

Paul Kirshen (UNH Civil Engineering Research Professor) and Semra Aytur (UNH Public Health and Epidemiology Assistant Research Professor) addressed the Committee and spoke of coming events;

- Next Community Conversation in September 2013
- Small Group Meetings from October 2013 thru March 2014
- Next Community Conversation on April 2014
- Present Adaptation Plan from August 2014 thru September 2014

Ms. Aytur shared her opinion on the turn out and she found it to be reasonable. She explained there were a total of 50-60 people in all and 15-20 of those attendees were not residence of Exeter. The event attracted people who were already interested in these issues.

A discussion arose on overall perceptions of the event. Mimi explained a few of her students provided feedback. Some of the feedback included a group at one table that had a lively discussion while at another table, there was some shyness and discussion was stifled.

Chairman Ingram reviewed the statistics provided by CAPE and noticed a category of attendees that were missing. He recommended CAPE explore concepts for attracting demographic groups for those that do not have college degrees or are younger and marketing directly to them to make initial contact. (E.g. Bowling Clubs, mobile home communities and churches). If a range of population is not developed they may continue to market to those that are already involved.

Ms. Aytur reviewed the raw, statistical findings based on participant submitted feedback and offered a broad summary of common themes:

- A highly educated group attended the event
- The majority of people had some or little knowledge of strategies/actions for the impact of flooding and extreme weather events.
- The majority found the session valuable and learned of common concerns.
- Some attendees left the session with a better appreciation of the problems.

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- Social Capitalization: 90% did feel they could rely on neighbors and 10% did not have anyone to call.
- Most people found it most effect to speak with others and hear multiple perspectives and share diverse conversation.
- 10% of the data showed there were medication worries during an extreme weather event.
- 100% said clean water was important to them.
- The group found protections again street flooding was extremely important.
- 40% said some water may soak in but most flows into storm drains and moves untreated into local storm waters.
- The research showed the majority of people are not willing to change.
- Some of the other worries were electricity and power outages, heat stress and water quality.

Mr. Kirshen asked to schedule a meeting sometime in May. He requested an hour be allotted to him for presentation. The members listed additional groups to contact such as the Conservation Committee, Heron Group and the Chamber of Commerce. Peter Richardson, Richard Huber and Don Clement will be contactor for further scheduling. The members agreed a daytime meeting is preferable and suggested Mr. Kirshen make meeting arrangements with the Exeter Public Library.

CAPE will provide a list of members to Chairman Ingram once the list is confirmed.

### **5. Overview of the State of the Estuaries report (Jill Farrell, PREP)**

Ms. Farrell displayed a PowerPoint presentation titled *State of the Estuaries 2013 - PREP (Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership)*. Some of the points in the presentation were:

- Piscataqua Region covers Hampton/Seabrook and Great Bay Estuaries which make up 52 towns, 42 in New Hampshire and 10 in Maine. The watershed covers 1086 sq. miles of drainage.
- Indicators are numeric measures of a complex ecosystem to inform of patterns, trends or conditions over time to understand condition of a complex system such as an estuary.
- Some of the resources used to gather data were from the Water Resources lab at UNH which performed a Water Grab, Fish and Game and the Great Bay Research Reserve.
- The data gathered was broken into three groups to measure:

A. Positive Indicators

B. Cautionary Indicators

C. Negative Indicators

- Pressure Indicators such as impervious cover does not allow water to seep in. There is 1,840 acres in surface added each year which could lead to detrimental effects. Exeter has increased from 7.5% in 1990 to 15.6% in 2010. PREP is changing how they collect data since impervious cover is continually changing.
- Nutrient loading into the estuary could be attributed to precipitation, rain, non-point source solutions or anything that may come from a pipe such as a waste water pipe.
- Ms. Farrell briefly provided percentages for total nitrogen and dissolved inorganic nitrogen and explained this attracts algae.

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- Dissolved oxygen measures indicators which violates standards or exceeds the allowable limit in Squamscott River. (This is the tidal portion of the river).
- Eelgrass Cover keeps sediment in place and protects juvenile fish and lobsters that flow through the mouth of the river to the bay.
- Restorations efforts include oysters, Salt Marsh Restoration, Upstream river miles, Restoration Eelgrass. UNH partners with PREP to take part in restoration efforts.
- A Citizen Guide is available which provides information on what one can do to help improve the Estuaries.
- A Policy Guide is available for Municipal leaders and Legislators.

Chairman Ingram requested Kristen Murphy, (Natural Resource Planner for the Planning Board) provide the last report of adopted buffer ordinances. Ms. Murphy does not think the VRAP data that is collected is vigorous enough to compute data accurately. Chairman Ingram suggested the report be shared with all developers along with CBA and EEDC to give them an idea of the problems and review the results.

Ms. Becker offered ideas for possible coordinated policies which could include a report providing details of the stance of enforcement by town or a workshop (invited by water shed) to reach out to each community to gather and address the consistency of dealing with the worse-case scenario.

Mr. Clement spoke of the administrative order of the EPA in Exeter and explained the new MS4 regulations will impact the water quality in other communities since many have not had to deal with their storm water. Exeter formed a group called the Integrated Planning of the Exeter/Squamscott Water Shed. This is a combined effort between Exeter, Stratham and Newfields. The group plans to develop the river and make it healthier and cleaner.

Ms. Murphy will put together a recommendation for a plan to fit everything being discussed into one package and possibly use the high school as an arena. A set date was not provided.

### **6. Other Business – None at this time.**

### **7. Public Comment – None at this time.**

A motion was made and the meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadine Young

Recording Secretary