

1. **Convene Meeting:** The meeting convened at 9:04 am in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices. Member Present: Rod Bourdon, Frank Patterson, Roger Wakeman, Lionel Ingram (Chair), Dr. Mimi Larsen Becker, Richard Huber, Pete Richardson, and Don Clement (Selectman's Rep) IN ATTENDANCE: Sallie Soule (DES), Paul Vlasich (DPW), Eric Hutchins (NOAA) and Kevin Lucey (DES).

2. **Minutes of 10 July meeting:** Dr Becker moved to approve the minutes from July 10, 2014 as amended second by Mr. Wakeman. VOTE: Unanimous

3. **Discussion of the status of the Dam's removal and the River's restoration.** Mr. Vlasich gave an update of the project. He reported the Town warrant was secured for 1.7+ million dollars. The VHB contract was awarded and signed by the Town Manager for \$367,816. The schedule is to have the dam out by the fall of 2015. Mr. Vlasich talked about other grants in process. The full application for the Aquatic Resource Mitigation grant (ARM) was submitted with an award of \$100,000. There is a site visit to the dam on October 21, 2014 with the consultant and project manager. Mr. Vlasich invited the Committee to attend. The EPA Watershed Assistance grant is another funding opportunity because the dam removal project had already been awarded grants from this same grant. This grant would be for coastal zone management and would amount to \$75,000. Two other funding opportunities are the State Conservation Grants from the Moose plate license plates and from Fish and Game. Mr. Vlasich also stated there would be geotechnical borings on the river.

Mr. Wakeman asked to confirm the target finish date of 2015. Mr. Vlasich said it should be completed mid September 2015. Mr. Richardson asked about the drawdown of the river for surveying. Mr. Vlasich said water would be below limit of dam for safety reasons.

Mr. Kevin Lucey spoke as Restoration Coordinator for the NH Department of Environmental Services. He said the 319 grant is a good fit for the coastal program. The \$75, 000 would pay for design and permitting. Mr. Lucey spoke on other important aspects of the project for the 319 grant such as outreach and education, ecological monitoring, documenting changes, and funding ideas.

Dr. Becker asked what were the criteria for education and ecological monitoring. Mr. Lucey said it was case by case. Dr. Becker asked if there were guidance documents. Mr. Lucey said that the grant is not competitive and the spending would be discretionary. The \$75,000 requires a 1-1 match and the warrant article pays for that. Any additional money requires a 1-1 match by June 30,2016.

4. Discussion of the 106 Process: Mr. Eric Hutchins from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation wanted to be the consulting party for the dam removal. The federal preservation officer for NOAA under ACHP is Miguel Aparicio. The Advisory Council had questioned NOAA's role since the NOAA does not fund the project and technically speaking not the lead federal agency. Mr. Hutchins said this might not change how NOAA is working with the River Study Committee. Mr. Hutchins said the project would need a federal permit at the end anyway.

Mr. Ingram asked if the project has no federal contact and would Mr. Hutchins get court-marshaled if he continues to work with the Committee. Mr. Hutchins said that could be a possibility but that he would like to continue working with the Committee and see the project move forward. Mr. Ingram asked if the Committee would now turn to the consultant for the 106 process. Mr. Hutchins said nothing changes except steps in project. Mr. Hutchins said that the Committee has been thinking about the historical aspects early. NOAA is not precedent setting or is part of the decision making process. He noted in the schedule written by VHB (consultant) the Memorandum of Agreement is developed in 40 days and 1 day to execute it, which would normally take one month to be in touch with every agency and department. He noted this should be changed. Mr. Hutchins also said he had spoken with Mike Bailey from the Fish and wildlife service about possibly funding part of the project for \$50,000. Mr. Hutchins suggested holding a public meeting on the historical mitigation and layout the new timeline after VHB refines the scope of the project. He said the Committee should have the alternate analysis of the project at a detailed level to present to the public, which can be attained by archeological resources.

Mr. Ingram laid out the new plan going forward would be to understand the immediate historical impacts and ways to mitigate them. Mr. Hutchins noted that the community might want a different alternative to mitigation. The lead federal agency will not provide money and will not be able to issue a final concurrence without the Memorandum of Agreement.

Dr. Becker asked if there were legal criteria to follow that would take precedence over public comments.

Mr. Hutchins said the process is going to be a negotiation between public and legal criteria with least environmental damage practicable.

Mr. Richardson noted that on the map marking historical points on at the project site, that there were no historical markings at the river bottom. Mr. Vlasich said only areas immediately outside of the dam were marked but that he can change it so the river is also marked. Mr. Richardson also asked what the differences were between blue and yellow on the map. Mr. Vlasich said agencies outside of the consultant are the markings in blue.

Mr. Ingram noted in the plans a certain heading did not exist. Mr. Vlasich said the current revision does not include the contract task for cultural resources.

Mr. Clement said the Town's approach to the 106 process as the archeological survey conducted by the consultant and cultural and historical mitigation. The Town will make a decision, which the Board of Selectman will bring forward. The plan is to set up another committee of the four agencies involved: the Historical Society, Historical District Commission, Heritage Commission, and River Study Committee. They will be in charge of coming up with a practicable way of commemorating the dam. Dr. Becker said the recommending body is currently structured with a possible bias with consequences to the biological system and regulations. Mr. Clement said they would have to come up with a way to bridge the differences. Mr. Ingram said there is a mitigation aspect and impact side to the project. Mr. Vlasich's task is working with construction and consultation. The mitigation and impact goes to the River Study Committee, which controls money and consultant. It was decided the new group would not drive impact but be an advisory board to the River Study Committee.

Mr. Vlasich said to let the consultant define what is possible and let ideas play out within what is practicable and within budget. Mr. Ingram said this new group would be created to avoid bias and tasked to oversee mitigation activities to understand the historical aspect, which will go through the River Study Committee.

Dr. Becker commented that once construction begins the project could not stop because there needs to be a discussion about how to handle the problem. Mr. Ingram said they should be able to come to a decision so the consultant is not hung up by decision-making.

Mr. Vlasich said there are a lot of unknowns. They still have to fine-tune the schedule and the 106 process. Everyone's task is to gather information so will not have to make decisions based on unknowns.

Mr. Hutchins said to consider the Division of Historical Resources and the Advisory Council with alternatives to minimize impacts. He said agencies want to see how the Town chose the alternatives and details of impacts. He recommended making the group for historical mitigation to look at long-term historical mitigation and the BOS will respond to that.

Mr. Richardson commented that the new group should be started soon and add one more person as chairman not part of any of the four groups.

Mr. Clement said there is a Selectman's meeting on 9/22 where they can discuss the new historical mitigation committee.

5. Review of CAPE analysis and findings: Paul Kirshen could not attend the meeting.

6. Other Business: Mr. Huber said he is on the New Hampshire Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission and they are on a deadline to show how to improve infrastructure. They are waiting on results from the CAPE (Climate Adaptation Plan Exeter), to make those recommendations.

Mr. Clement said Paul Kirshen the lead investigator from UNH was tasked to build, create and refine the climate models. He had been in discussion with Sylvia von Aulock (Town Planner), about coastal mitigation. Mr. Kirshen was also waiting on peer review about refining his models.

Dr. Becker said that the CAPE group needed to get the results out soon because of people like the citizen advisory group waiting to take action. They need the feedback for enabling legislation from the State to start adaptation planning.

Mr. Wakeman said the modeling should be done right rather than quickly.

Dr. Becker said the current FEMA maps are out of date and asked how conservative the Town wants to be with safety issues.

Mr. Clement said he would comment on FEMA maps along with dam removal.

7. Public Comment: None

Next Meeting: October 23, 2014

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah McGraw