

## Draft Minutes

### River Study Committee

March 19, 2015

#### **1. Convene the Meeting**

Chairman Lionel Ingram called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were Rod Bourdon, Peter Richardson, Frank Ferraro, Roger Wakeman, Virginia Raub, and Richard Huber.

#### **2. Minutes of the January Meeting**

A Motion was made by Mr. Huber and seconded by Mr. Bourdon to accept the minutes of the January 22, 2015 meeting as amended. Motion carried – all in favor, with Ferraro abstaining.

#### **3. Report on the Status of Dam Removal (Paul Vlasich)**

Paul Vlasich, Town Engineer, said they have the second set of review plans. He has some issues that center around hydraulics of the river and the pump station. He talked about grants, saying the Coastal Zone Management Grant has been approved for \$75,000 and there are two other grants that need the paperwork finished. He also mentioned the NOAA Grant is coming up and would like to see if some funding is available from that.

He said that talks with The Mill have been going good regarding water intakes.

In regards to schedules, he said they are starting to run slightly behind, but are aiming to meet a possible dam removal date in September. They are still working out the 106 process. Mr. Wakeman wondered if the September date slips, will they aim for October or will it be a seasonal delay. Mr. Vlasich said it is looking like it will be a year delay. They would have to wait until July 2016 because of the fish passage.

Mr. Ferraro asked what the potential values of the grants they are considering would be. Mr. Vlasich said the two that are in works as far as paperwork would total around \$115,000. They are also requesting \$50,000 from the NH Fish and Game grant.

Jake St. Antonio, from Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (VHB), said they are working through the hydraulics of the river and the water intake structure. He said they are also aiming to get permitting done. Mr. Wakeman asked if the water intake is going to take a major provision to lower. Mr. St. Antonio said it is a matter of having to lower the gravity intake line, which is about two feet, so it is not a major change.

#### **4. Update on the Section 106 Process (Dick Huber)**

Mr. Huber talked about the Great Dam Remembrance Committee. They met on February 24 and talked about the Section 106 process. There was also a slide presentation that is available on the town website. There were lots of speakers at the meeting. They compared their process to other dam memorialization. They considered keeping some physical components of the dam, but decided that would have to be explored. There were some proposals that would require fundraising. The dam dates back to 1914, and the memorial should include the total history including earlier dams. They talked about possible walking tours of the dam. The next meeting will be March 24 at 6:30pm at the Historic Society. Mr. Huber said there will be articles in the Exeter Newsletter to make the public aware of the meeting. Overall, he said things are moving ahead.

Mr. Wakeman asked if there are any potential issues impacting the dam removal process. He also wondered how the processes are being integrated with VHB. Mr. Huber said they are doing well with the Section 106 requirements, which are in place.

Mr. Bourdon asked if possibly retaining portions of the dam would make any difference in flooding. Mr. Huber and Mr. Vlasich said they are currently looking into that.

Mr. Ferraro talked about bringing pieces of the dam onshore and putting it on a concrete slab. Mr. Vlasich said right now they are not looking into that. He said he would like to have more info on the hydraulics of the river by the next meeting so they could look into this further.

The Committee had discussions on drop dead dates. They said they need the Memo of Agreement by the end of May. They said there are some things that are being considered that might hold up time. They are working to get more information for the next meeting.

Selectman Don Clement said DHR needs to meet with the Historical Society, Historic District Commission, and others of the like, which has not been done yet. Selectman Clement also reminded that the Great Dam Remembrance Committee is to celebrate the dam, not the river. He said the context of Section 106 is to try to remember what existed there in terms of dams. He said while river walks and such are nice, they look at the river more than the actual dam. Arthur Belageron, Exeter resident, agreed with Selectman Clement.

Mr. Huber said that [americanrivers.org](http://americanrivers.org) has a document where the Great Dam has spurred much discussion, and he urged all to read it.

#### **5. Review of CAPE Analysis and Findings (Paul Kirshen)**

Mr. Kirshen wasn't present, but will be at the next meeting and does have some information to share.

## **6. Other Business**

Mr. Wakeman talked about the dam removal process impacting FEMA's flood map. Mr. Vlasich said as next year's budget gets formed, he would want some money put aside for a review on this. Selectman Clement said with the dam out, it might change the FEMA maps upstream, and they need to review this for the town.

## **7. Public Comment**

None.

## **8. Adjourn the Meeting**

The next River Study Committee will be on Thursday April 30, 2015. Mr. Vlasich said the Memo of Understanding is something important to look at for the next meeting.

Chair Ingram adjourned the meeting at 9:48am.

Respectively submitted,

Nicole Piper,  
Recording Secretary