

River Advisory Committee

June 15, 2017

1. Convene the Meeting

Chairman Lionel Ingram called the meeting to order at 9:05 am in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office building. Other members present: Richard Huber, Atty. Terrie Harman, Virginia Raub, Rod Bourdon, Natural Resource Planner Kristen Murphy and DPW representative Paul Vlasich.

2. Approval of Minutes of April meeting

Mr. Huber asked Mr. Vlasich for clarification of what was an *aqua marker*? It is listed in the minutes as a task to be completed under the Section 106 requirements. He explained it was outside historical/commemorative signage noting the presence of Great Dam; similar to the State signage outside the Town Hall.

Mr. Huber moved the minutes of the April 19, 2017 meeting be accepted with noted changes; seconded by Mr. Bourdon. Motion carried.

3. Update on Various River Related Items

Mr. Vlasich stated he had several items he wished to update the Committee.

Referencing statements made at the April meeting on river-related tasks remaining to be done, they are now a part of an amended contract for these post construction activities. A negotiated contract was reached with VHB consultants and approved by the Board of Selectmen to complete the items.

Item 1:

Because of the dam removal, there will be changes in flood elevations in certain parts of town. There are funds in budget to allow VHB, acting as the Town's agent, to do the analysis and work with FEMA to allow those flood elevations to change and be represented in a Letter of Map Revision.

Item 2:

In the amended contract VHB will now be working on the three major tasks of historical significance to fulfil the Section 106 agreement; archiving of data, outdoor informational signage and the design and installation of display panels inside the library.

Later in meeting, the Chair asked and received affirmation that the Town Heritage Commission will be overseeing the submitted designs to deem appropriate in satisfying the 106 requirements. Mr. Huber acknowledging the present budget monies for the 106 items to be undertaken, but asked when would it be known if the Heritage Commission might have funds to acquire additional material for inclusion. Mr. Vlasich suggested the end of the year as all the funds are committed and were stretched because of higher than anticipated bids for other items needed to be included in the dam removal/stabilization process.

Item 3:

As discussed at April meeting, a draft breach analysis for the Pickpocket Dam is complete but it was determined some elevations downstream needed to be verified. VHB is now proceeding with this survey work.

Lastly, included in this amended contract is the preparation of the annual report outlining the monitoring and documenting of the river bottom for stability. The Wetland Permit received requires an annual report prepared for three (3) years post construction. And, as a condition in other grants received there is another two years monitoring for a total of 5 years of monitoring.

Again at the April meeting Mr. Vlasich spoke of a watershed assistance grant through DES and awarded to Waterstone Engineering and Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) to look at the Lincoln Street watershed; the Town's largest watershed. The study was to provide information on nutrient control and what could be done in that area. At the May meeting of the Conservation Commission they presented an overview and the methodology being pursued in the study. As a requirement of the grant they were to present to the same group twice, so they returned to the June Conservation Commission meeting with conclusions of the findings and how the town may want to provide nutrient controls to improve water quality and storm water runoff in that area.

There is another round of this type analysis set to begin. Again, Waterstone Engineers and RPC, will take the results and incorporate into actions to reduce the nitrogen in the stormwater that enters into the Squamscott via the outfall by the PEA boathouse. The Lincoln Street/Clifford Street area is set for some major infrastructure work in spring 2018 and many of the suggested methods/designs to reduce the nitrogen-nutrients will be put in place during that construction phase. There is also an outreach component to this grant.

With the construction of the new wastewater treatment facility, that will become a major component in treating the Town's nitrogen discharge into the Squamscott. And with the Town's Acceptance of Consent (AOC) to meet the target level of N discharge, the Town will be working with the consultants Wright Pierce engineers to formulate a town wide nitrogen control plan to meet the EPA criteria. They will also be working with the residents on education and how to move forward with nitrogen control in the future.

For clarification, Mr. Vlasich explained the Lincoln St watershed project includes more than just Lincoln Street but extends above the railroad tracks, down Main Street, including the PEA/ Tan Lane area and extends into the Swasey Parkway area before entering into Squamscott River via the outfall by the PEA boat house. He noted there are multiple projects scheduled for this area.

Mr. Vlasich added there will be an upcoming public informational meeting on the entire Lincoln St. project that includes improvements to sewer, storm drainage, sidewalks and roads. Mr. Huber verified the date from an online posting as June 27, 6 pm at the Town Hall.

4. Water Quality Control monitoring program- VRAP (Volunteer River Assessment Program)

Ms. Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner for the Town, spoke on the water quality monitoring program (VRAP) that Exeter has participated in for a number of years. The State program tracks the health and quality of local rivers state-wide. In Exeter, there are designated sites on the Exeter and Little River where water samples are collected. Various tests are performed on the sample, readings recorded on a data sheet which is then submitted to NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES).

The Town's testing period runs from middle of June to end of August with Ms. Murphy and the volunteers leaving at 8:30 am on Wednesdays from the rear Town Office parking area and returning about 11:00 am. One week the Exeter River sites are sampled, the following week sites along the Little River are tested. She is looking for volunteers to participate in the program. She stressed there is no need to enter the water and the equipment and training is provided. Presently, a sign-up sheet is posted on Town

website (under Latest News) allowing individuals to sign up to go out once or as often as they wish and not limited to Town residents. For more information she may be contacted at kmurphy@exeternh.gov.

When asked if seeing any difference in water quality with the dam out, Ms. Murphy felt the sampling process is not precise enough to make any definite determination; this testing is looking more at long term trends. But did acknowledge as soon as the impoundment was released last year there was a recorded increase in the dissolved oxygen level at the Gilman Park site.

5. Exeter River Video, Morning Star Aerial LLC

Mr. Joseph Stagnone of Morning Star Aerial, LLC introduced himself as an Exeter resident and the owner of the three year old enterprise that does use drones in their aerial projects and is often in combination with ground level photography. Over the years he has acquired footage, both aerial and ground level of the dam area, pre and post dam. Also, during April, May and June of this year they have been monitoring/documenting the river flow.

He stated they have prepared a four minute video on the dam removal process using both still and aerial footage but because of copyright limitations they are unable to air publicly (via the airways) at this time. But he did express an interest in making the video available to the Town for what he feels is an attractive fee. He now understands the Heritage Commission is the group to determine what is/may be included in archival data. He will pursue the offering with that committee. Mr. Ingram noted a documentary film/video is able to show activity over time and although still photographs are used and have been used in the past, because the River is a moving, changing force having something like this seems feasible to be included in archives. Presently, the remaining budget funds are committed for other 106 items and uncertain on when and how future monies will become available but will pursue.

Bob Glowacky of Exeter's TVChannel 98 staff was also present. He presented a trailer of a longer documentary on the River that he is currently working on but his production is from the view of the residents and their perspective on the dam removal process and that going forward. The video includes some of Mr. Stagnone's aerial shots and includes under water footage of the returning alewives clustered around the site of former dam. Mr. Glowacky hopes to release the documentary on the first year anniversary of dam out. He would like to partnership with an organization or committee to perhaps host a screening as a public event.

Mr. Huber praised the work of both gentlemen and Mr. Ingram felt this method of recording and documentation is something to be included into the archives. Mr. Ingram also suggested Mr. Glowacky contact Barbara Rimkunas at the Exeter Historical Society as there may be an interest in participating in such an event.

Mr. Glowacky is a wildlife filmmaker and has produced a number of short videos on scenes around Exeter that may be viewed on EXTV-98 and YouTube sites. His short video, **Exeter Outdoors-Getting out on the River** explores the sights of the Exeter Rive while traveling downriver by canoe. It may be viewed at [Youtube.com/user/accessTV98](https://www.youtube.com/user/accessTV98). (Or Goggle EXTV98 and follow the links)

6. Next Meeting

Mr. Vlasich felt he would not have any updates on River items that would call for a July meeting. It was decided that the next meeting date would be **Wednesday, August 16, 2017**

With no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:55 am.

Minutes approved with changes at August 16, 2017 meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Raub, Recorder