

River Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 18, 2021
3 PM
Town Offices, Nowak Room
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Rod Bourdon; Warren Biggins, PEA Rep; Lionel Ingram; Richard Huber, Chair; Niko Papakonstantis, Select Board Rep; Terrie Harman; Dan Jones

Members Absent: Carl Wikstrom; Andrew Koff and Trevor Mattera of the Conservation Commission; and Paul Vlasich, the Town Engineer.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Huber at 3 PM. He said that now everyone must wear a mask in meetings.

1. Approval of Minutes

a. September 16, 2021

MOTION: Mr. Ingram moved to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

2. Update on River Issues

Mr. Huber gave the river update on behalf of Mr. Vlasich, who was not present. We are looking at a Coastal Resilience Grant of \$40,000 plus \$20,000 of town match, a \$60,000 total. The focus would be on a topographic survey that would explore flood possibilities, a bathymetric survey, sediment sampling, and a climate change analysis. We're also looking at borrowing \$350,000 from the State Revolving Fund, with \$75,000 principal forgiveness, which may turn into a \$100,000 grant. Mr. Huber said that Mr. Vlasich didn't think a December meeting was necessary, since these projects likely won't show progress until January.

3. Other Business

a. PEA High Street Faculty Housing Project at 35 High Street

Corey Bellman of Altus Engineering and Mark Leighton, Facilities Director of PEA, were present to discuss the proposed project at the intersection of Portsmouth Avenue and High Street (8 Gilman Lane and 35 High Street). Mr. Bellman said the site currently has 8 units of residential faculty housing, but some of the buildings are old and decrepit. The Academy is looking to demolish one building and part of another, and renovate the site to have 3 duplexes, a triplex, and a single-family residence, for a total of 13 units on site. The site has municipal water and sewer. We're not looking to touch any of the area between Gilman Lane and the river. We will put in a stormwater management facility. The project will require an NH DES alteration of terrain permit and shoreland permit. It will meet all local and State stormwater regulations. We won't increase the impervious area within the 150 foot buffer. We're meeting with HDC tonight

regarding the demolition, and going to the Zoning Board in December for setback relief. We went to NHB, and they don't have concerns about the project as long as there are no impacts to the riverbed or riverbanks, which there will not be.

Mr. Huber asked if the purpose of the project is to create 13 units for faculty. Mr. Leighton said yes, there's a shortage of housing for faculty and this would be a net gain of units. Mr. Huber asked about geothermal. Mr. Leighton said we looked at that, but it was cost prohibitive. For sustainability efforts, we are looking at air-source heat pumps, and the building's envelope will be above code which will reduce the heating and cooling load.

Mr. Ingram asked about river impacts during construction. Mr. Leighton said there will be controls in place. Mr. Ingram asked if they will watch out for archaeological issues. Mr. Bellman said we're required to do a historic review of the site with SHIPO (the State Historical Preservation Office). Mr. Ingram said we didn't find anything digging with the dam. Mr. Leighton said the project went through the Heritage Commission for the demolition, and we heard that a Native American skeleton was discovered at 8 Gilman Lane, but that may be a legend. The Commission gave 5-1 approval with the condition that we tear it apart slowly to note the historical features. Mr. Ingram asked if they felt that 13 units was unlucky, and Mr. Leighton said he hadn't considered it.

Mr. Huber said this project sounds like a nice improvement to the area.

4. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

5. Review Committee Calendar

MOTION: Mr. Ingram moved to have the next meeting on January 20th, 2022. Ms. Harman seconded. All were in favor.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Huber adjourned the meeting at 3:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary