



UPPER VALLEY RIVER SUBCOMMITTEE Minutes -February 2, 2010

PRESENT: Lynn Bohi and Linda Wilson, Hartford; Marc White, Orford; Caryl Collier and Jim Kennedy, Hanover; Linda Matteson and Cy Severance, Thetford; Steve Stocking and Mary Daly, Fairlee; David Kotz, Lyme; Joan Monroe, Lebanon; Adair Mulligan, CRJC

ABSENT: Norwich, Piermont, Bradford

1. Housekeeping: Welcomed new Hanover representative, Jim Kennedy, who has long experience with river issues, including the Grafton County erosion inventory. Caryl Collier participated by remote connection facilitated by David Kotz. Minutes of the meeting of November 23 were approved on a motion by Marc, seconded by Caryl. David Minsk has stepped down as chair and will participate when he can as an alternate Hanover representative. Marc White was unanimously elected chair, after nomination by Caryl seconded by Mary. Steve Stocking was unanimously elected vice-chair after nomination by Mary, seconded by Linda Matteson. Expressed thanks to David Minsk and Lynn Bohi for their service. Staff changes at CRJC include new office manager Theresa Darling and resignation of Communications Director Rebecca Brown. CRJC has applied to VT Conservation License Plate Program for Watershed Grant to print the subcommittees' recreation plans, create portable exhibits on riparian buffers, purchase a laptop to free another for use by members and commissioners to give presentations, and print more copies of the water resources plan.
2. CT River Water Resources Management Plan - Adair encouraged members to give presentations to town boards and citizens in their own communities using the CDs that have been provided. Each member should to identify recommendations in the plan that are appropriate for their town to consider, and follow through.
3. Permit issues:
 - a. Rowing facility development at Fullington Farm, Hanover: Town and Friends group will be co-applicants to DES. Compensatory mitigation proposal needs to be finalized. Subcommittee unanimously rejected idea of conserving the wetland at the end of the peninsula off the dock area. Town has asked DES to consider conserving the nearby Steele property, buffer to Camp Brook, an inholding surrounded by conservation land with trail corridor possibilities. UVLT has suggested a black ash swamp on college property nearby. River width has been estimated at 617 feet by UVLSRPC. Will call special meeting if necessary to discuss permit application when it is submitted to DES.
 - b. Riverbank collapse and restoration at Dartmouth's Rivercrest property in Hanover - major sudden failure of steep slope as a result of placing stormwater retention pond on top of varves, years ago. College has DES emergency permit for restoration, and will plant in spring. Cost to college approx. \$200,000.
 - c. Replacement septic system for Lyme cabin - being discussed by Lyme Planning Board and ZBA. Concern about injecting water into soil with varves possibly present. Members thought it might jeopardize house.
 - d. Route 4 bridge between W. Lebanon and Hartford - proposed alternative is new bridge with better alignment. NH Div. of Historic Resources has not yet commented but is concerned about fate of stone abutments and piers. Could suggest that they be used to create public river access or be used in immediate vicinity for landscaping. Joan said the Lebanon Planning Board is not involved in the bridge decision, but has heard from area residents that they really want river access. Bicycle access across the river is also needed as people are using the RR bridge, which is illegal. She is concerned about the nearby historical marker. Will follow to see if further subcommittee comment is appropriate.
 - e. Washout in Bradford: Steve noted that a washout has occurred that is visible from the Piermont bridge.
4. Connecticut River Byway
 - a. Adair updated the group on the purpose of the byway (economic development through heritage tourism) and recent projects, including new exhibit, map/guide, inventory of byway "assets" and new posting of National Register nomination information on the CRJC web site. Thetford Center Historic District description has just been posted. Towns and historical societies can use these to build local tours.
 - b. CRJC has a scenic byway grant to create 12 new history-related itineraries, 8 for auto touring and 4 for bicycle touring. She asked for ideas. Mary advised that bicycle tours should avoid Route 5 and other areas with no shoulder, and recommended linking with the CT River Birding Trail. Linda suggested linking with farmers' markets and coordinating with Valley Food & Farm. Upper Valley Trails Alliance participates on Byway Council and will help. Jim said Hanover has done self-guided walking tours of downtown, and cautioned about having the project perceived as a way to increase regulation. David suggested checking

with Bike Vermont for their favorite routes. Tour of Thetford's various historic districts should be done by car due to lack of shoulder and hills. Adair will bring draft itineraries to the subcommittee.

- c. Paddlers' Trail of canoe campsites- Vermont River Conservancy is spearheading effort to better organize this trail and called planning session of various groups, including CRJC and UVLT. All organizations are now conferring on how they could participate.
 - d. Viewed short slide show on recent winter hiking/skiing trip to Connecticut Lakes, an example of how the byway can deliver income to the region.
5. Mascoma River nomination - Joan reported that the nomination will be sent to the state by June 1 and will include the river in Lebanon, Enfield, and Canaan as far as its downtown area. Will not include river above this, as there was no response from those living above, and most of the river corridor is owned and protected by three large landowners. Will hold walks in February to acquaint people with the river. Have used CRJC permit comment letters as example of constructive nature of river designation.
6. Announcements:
- a. Adair reported that 18 bald eagles were counted along the river in the mid-winter survey. Steve said that two adults and two immatures have been hanging around his farm.
 - b. Mary reported that the house is now under construction in the floodplain in Thetford and is not a small seasonal structure. Members expressed strong concern about the safety of this site and its vulnerability for flooding.
 - c. Lynn reported that the buffer bill proposed in Vermont died last week but a softer version is being rewritten as a committee bill. Adair had testified on the bill by phone.
 - d. Jim reported that the NH legislature is considering bills to certify dock designers and installers, create a shoreland advisory council, and put surface water rules into statute.