

CRJC Riverbend Subcommittee
Thursday, October 18, 2012
Littleton Community Center
120 Main Street
Minutes

Present:

Philip Blanchard, Monroe
Mike Crosby, Dalton
Jim Doig, Newbury
Jan Edick, Littleton
Bill Graves, Barnet
Don Hallee, Lunenburg
Lloyd Saltmarsh, Dalton
Rick Walling, Bath
Michael Monaghan, Monroe
Ken Hunter, Monroe
Bob Ball, CRJC
Tara Bamford, North Country Council, staff
Ron Rhodes, CRWC, guest speaker

Chairman Rick Walling called the meeting to order at 7:05 and everyone introduced themselves. Philip (PJ) Blanchard reported that he will be resigning and introduced Monroe's new members.

1. Ron Rhodes, North Country River Steward for Connecticut River Watershed Council, provided an update on his work. Ron covers the stretch from the Upper Valley to Pittsburg. CRWC has a staff of ten including a development director. CRWC's main focus in NH/VT besides Vermont Yankee is working with landowners, towns and conservation commissions on restoration and land management, "keeping cows out of the brook." Match money for other grants is sometimes available through CRWC for these projects. Some of the funding is through a Mitigation & Enhancement Fund grant; the Fund has \$7-\$10 million left. CRWC is also working on projects on some tributaries. Ron encouraged members to get in touch with him if they know of projects that will benefit the watershed. If CRWC doesn't have the money, staff can sometimes help find the money. Ron explained that CRWC staff also spends some time responding to "watch dog" calls from residents with concerns about, e.g., speeding or wetland encroachments.

Ron reported that the Connecticut River has been designated as the first "Blueway" in the nation, a designation which means federal agencies are committed to working together.

Ron also filled the group in on the FERC process for the upcoming relicensing of Wilder Dam. He said it will likely be a 5 year process. he encouraged the group to get involved as the permit will be good for 30-50 years. Mike Crosby reported that there are erosion

concerns under existing conditions and asked if they draw more down during the day now. He observed that erosion seems to be getting worse and cited River Road in Lyme as an example. Fish passage was another issue discussed, including culvert replacements for fish passage. It was noted that the White River Hatchery was blown out in Hurricane Irene and US Fish and Wildlife is not stocking salmon now. Ron noted that salmon numbers had still been quite low but that shad numbers are good in NH/VT. He noted that Atlantic Salmon numbers are down in Canada too where dams aren't an issue. Ron reported that several NGOs have started meeting to prepare for the FERC relicensing so they can respond collectively.

Ron also mentioned that he is available to help the group with permit reviews if desired.

2. Housekeeping

The minutes of July 26th were approved as corrected by motion of Graves/Edick.

Inactive members and vacancies were discussed. Tara reported that CRJC will be meeting with towns with no active members. It was agreed that having speakers and a project to work on such as a plan chapter helps attendance.

3. Permit Reviews

There were no permit reviews between meetings.

A wetlands application from NHDOT was reviewed for work on NH 10 in Haverhill. The Haverhill Conservation Commission didn't comment but Town Manager Glenn English provided comments by email and noted that the wetland impact is slight, no impacts to the Connecticut or flow or turbidity are expected, and the project is very important to the town and state. NHDOT will be paying into the wetland mitigation fund. By motion of Crosby/Doig it was voted to have Rick write a letter expressing regret for any loss of wetland but accepting this is the best remedy to the problem. Glenn's responsiveness will also be noted.

4. Updates

Bob Ball reported on CRJC's member development, and the Executive Committee's discussion on the proposed use of the pipeline now bringing light crude from Portland to Montreal to instead bring tar sands oil in the reverse direction. The tar sands oil will be piped from western Canada to Montreal and then to the US. The pipeline crosses the Connecticut River at Guildhall and also crosses the Israel River. No NHDES permit would be required because it is an existing pipeline. The original permit was issued during WWII. The change will increase pressure in the pipeline. Exxon owns the pipeline company. In Kalamazoo Michigan a similar pipe burst when this was done. It was agreed that Bob would send Tara information to distribute to the group. There will be an informational meeting on November 14th hosted by the Randolph Conservation Commission.

Rick reported that the Ammonoosuc River Corridor Management Plan draft will be available this winter, and that another season of VRAP water quality sampling has been

completed. Mike Crosby noted that the Dalton Conservation Commission used to do sampling; he will check to see what the status of their equipment is. Bob Ball reported that the 8th year of sampling on the Israel has been completed and data loggers are being used to monitor temperature for trout management.

5. Other Business

Mike Crosby noted that there has been a dramatic increase in kayakers and fishing this year. This may be in part due to the Gilman launch being fixed and cleaned up.

The annual Haverhill-Bradford Paddle the Border was reported on. It is sponsored by the Newbury and Cohase Chambers.

By motion of Doig/Graves the meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted by Tara Bamford.