

CRJC Riverbend Subcommittee

Thursday, July 27, 2017

Littleton Community Center

Approved Minutes

Present:

Jim Sherrard, Littleton

Ken Hunter, Monroe

Rick Walling, Bath

Pauline Corzilius, Haverhill

Dale Lewis, Haverhill

Tara Bamford, staff, CRJC

Ron Rhodes, CRC

Justin Rojack, guest

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:08 by Vice Chair Rick Walling and introductions made.

2. Ron Rhodes, River Steward for the Connecticut River Conservancy, gave an update on restoration projects. These included several buffer planting projects, assistance to farmers in cooperation with NRCS, grant writing, and dam removals. He explained that willow stakes have to be cut and planted when they are dormant, in early spring or fall. For old dam removals, Ron finds the grants, takes care of the permits, and is clerk of the works. The owner just has to give permission. He has 12 active projects. Owners are motivated by NH assigning them responsibility for safety. On Clark Brook in Haverhill he has 2 dams 2 miles apart. There are brook trout above and below. The concrete from the dams is offered to the towns to be crushed and reused. Engineers have to do the hydraulic modelling re changing flood levels. Last year they took out 2 culverts on Haverhill's Page Brook and replaced them with a bridge. Ron reported that it handled the July 1 flooding while a nearby culvert did not. He said the state handles all of these projects as restoration. The engineering generally takes a year or two and construction one year. The dam might be removed in the fall and then restoration of the site where the equipment was in the spring.

Ron also talked about the annual Source to Sea Clean-up Sept. 22 & 23. He said to let him know about trashy spots. They provide gloves, bags and t-shirts. Groups work out disposal with the towns. Casella sometimes provides dumpsters. He said they are still trying to deal with the trailer on the bank in Stratford. It seems to be on the state land from before state ownership. The clean-up is the whole watershed, not just the mainstem.

Ron also said he some funding that can be used for culverts. The RCPP is for those on private land only, but there is another. The dam removals are part of the “Connect the Connecticut” federal initiative.

There was discussion of the huge improvements made in the watershed water quality since the 60’s. Ron reported that it was the largest shad run in 20 years.

3. The minutes of May 25, 2017 were approved as presented by motion of Corzilius/Sherrard.

4. Permit Reviews-

Dalton, steps on riverbank – Robert Deangelis – suggestions were made that they consider grates instead of wooden steps so no impervious surface would be added, and that well marked stakes that are left in rather than pulled in and out each year would avoid tearing up the bank. It was agreed that the fact that it was on state property was not an issue for this group. Tara will send the comments to DES.

Lancaster, excavation materials handling area – AB Excavating – It was noted that this is a potential dwarf wedge mussel site. It was forested wetland but now logging made it shrub wetland. 2.9 acres of wetland will be impacted. The 3 – 8 % slopes seem to drain right to the water. This is also on the eroding side of the river, making stormwater impacts on the bank of more concern. The question was asked, what will keep piled chips from washing into the river. The maps did not show clearly a before and after site plan. Data was not provided to demonstrate that the ponds are sized right. It will be a large impervious area. It wasn’t clear if the topo was surveyed or just from USGS. There seemed to be 25% slopes near the river. It was not clear how the mitigation area will function as mitigation, i.e., will there be an easement. Will there be a payment to the ARM fund? How will the slope be stabilized? What are the stormwater controls? The stormwater appears to be draining to the wetland proposed for mitigation. What characteristics make it valuable for mitigation? Some culverts don’t seem to be channeled into the sediment ponds. This area receives stormwater from the whole hillside and this project will reduce the ability of the wetlands to retain stormwater. In addition, the forest has been cut so that retention was lost. Overall, this project will mean decreased stormwater handling capacity and increased runoff.

The question was also asked, why is there no shoreland application when it is about 175 ft from the shoreline?

6. Other Business

-Opportunity to cohost invasives program with Haverhill Conservation Commission on August 29 – members confirmed their interest in doing this.

-Rick reported from the LAC gathering that the issue of LAC liability was raised, can the LAC be sued. The answer was that the state would represent the LAC.

7. Next Meeting – October 26

The meeting adjourned at 9:20.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tara Bamford.