

Upper Valley Subcommittee
of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions
Monday – August 20th, 2018
Lyme Town Office, Lyme, NH
Draft Minutes

Present:

Lynn Bohi (Hartford)

Tara Bamford (Thetford)

Jim Kennedy (chair, Hanover)

Alice Creagh (Hanover)

Eric Agterberg (Lebanon)

Sue Mackenzie (Lyme)

John Mudge (Lyme)

Christine Bunten (Orford)

Bartlett Leber (Norwich)

Ben Dana (Fairlee)

Bruce Garland (Lebanon)

Melissa Horwitz (Norwich)

Carl Schmidt (Orford)

Ruth Bleyler (Lebanon)

Olivia Uyizeye, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, staff

1. Chairman Kennedy opened the meeting at 7:04 and introductions were made.
2. The minutes from June 18th, 2018 were approved by motion of Mackenzie/Mudge with the following corrections. In Item 3, the parking out about Ledyard Boathouse should be identified as the “Channing Cox parking lot”. In Item 4, it should be clarified that “An electrofishing survey revealed a surprising number of brook trout adults, brook trout fingerlings, ...”. Also, in Item 4, Ron Rhodes will reflect the accurate spelling.
3. Permit reviews.

Jim Kennedy reviewed the 30 Occom Ridge Shoreland Application. A new home, garage and pool are being proposed for the site. There is a bit of construction planned in the 250 foot buffer, particularly around the pool area. The buffer area is identified as one with a steep slope. A site visit took place with attendance from Jim Kennedy, Bruce Garland, the town administrator, and the Hanover Conservation Commission. The architects of the site illustrate no real drainage that flows down to the river. The water is largely collected in cisterns and allowed to infiltrate into the soil. The site visit team made comments to the architects related to the direction of the pool and switching locations of the large and small garage sites. The architects responded with four alternative proposals, including the expected impacts of each. It was decided to move the swimming pool further from the

buffer area with a retaining wall that will be revegetated. Jim opens the topic to discussion. No additional concerns are raised.

Jim Kennedy reviewed the Tuck Drive, Alteration of Terrain Permit for Dartmouth College. The road is currently only used for bikes and pedestrians. The college would like to open it for one way vehicular traffic. A site visit was conducted by Jim Kennedy, Bruce Garland and Lynn Bohi. The team discovered that the drainage from a parking lot goes through an old clay pipe under Tuck Drive and then the direction of the water drainage is unclear. A comment letter was written to investigate the lost pipe and recommend a comprehensive storm-drainage system for the multiple sites under construction in the area. It is relayed that the Town of Hanover is also interested in supporting a comprehensive system. Jim Kennedy opens the topic to discussion. No additional concerns are raised.

Jim Kennedy and John Mudge note that a permit review for Plainfield was mistakenly sent to the Upper Valley Subcommittee and should instead be forwarded along to the Mt Ascutney Subcommittee. John Mudge says he will mail the application to the appropriate person and Olivia will connect him to the chair, Nancy Heatley.

Jim recuses himself from the discussion of the River Road repair for the Town of Lyme as he has been involved in the project. John and Sue lead the discussion on the plans for this site. The bank of the river is being eroded and the road deteriorating. The section is currently closed. The utility poles have dropped 2 feet since being installed. It has been proposed to move the road further from the bank. There are no houses in the vicinity of the area that would be under construction. The current contractor can perform this repair without blasting. The contractor looks to use a well drilling apparatus into the ledge about 6 ft. and filling it with cement in order to help in the stabilization. In addition, a special fabric will be used in the area to disperse water more evenly across the slope and minimize erosive power. The old road would be removed and seeded with grass. There would be rip rap drainage ditches, a settlement basin and a culvert at both the north and south ends of the section of road. DES has said that the trees on the slope need to stay; however, John raises concerns about the trees dying and then falling into the river, carrying a lot of soil. John and Sue plan to take a boat out to the area to look at the undercutting of the bank. It is thought that there is much undercutting occurring and there might be caverns under the slope extending multiple feet back. Alternatively, a bypass road has been proposed to go along the edge of agricultural fields up to East Thetford Road. A Phase I historical preservation study has been required for the site due to charcoal found. The topic is opened for discussion. The topic of trees along the bank is brought up. Tara expresses concern that this group does not have the expertise to make a clear recommendation one way or another on the topic. Instead, it is suggested to encourage a detailed study of the bank and impact of the trees. The size of the culverts is also discussed and members identify that it, with climate change in mind, warrants further analysis to determine the appropriate size for the expected flow to minimize erosion. A comment letter is approved by motion of Tara Bamford/Alice Creagh related to concerns about the trees on the bank slope and culvert sizes.

4. FERC update. Jim Kennedy reports that the Great River Hydro is preparing progress reports in VT on stream flow and aquatic species. Tara Bamford raises questions related to the trade offs between

erosion and aquatic species. FERC has identified that no more erosion studies are needed and that they have enough information on the topic. The dam operators are looking at various modeling of operations and flow and that there are limits placed on their original permit; however, if organizations such as the Army Corps of Engineers require a broader drawdown than the operator must respond, even if outside of permitted limits. These requests are normally made when there are expectations for the higher flow of storm water. Also, John Mudge explains that a “large bubble” has been identified inside Murphy Dam, which holds Lake Francis, using surface radar. It is currently unknown what is causing this inconsistency and the max elevation for this section has been reduced in response. Members identify an interest to better understand the conditions that must occur for the dams to operate outside of their permitted functioning.

5. Other Updates.

Jim Kennedy gives an update on Jacob’s Brook in Orford. The ARM fund application for restoration of the site has been identified as not strong enough. Therefore an application is looking to be submitted to the Mitigation and Enhancement Fund run by the NH Charitable Foundation for the Upper Connecticut. The projects leaders have been encouraged to focus on restoration of the bank rather than in stream due to the healthy fish populations found.

The Town of Hanover is requesting signs for Wilson’s Landing. The Department of Safety has the signs, and Jim Kennedy is working with them to get them out.

Tara Bamford identifies that the commissioners have approved the distribution of the Homeowners Guide and Buffer Sheet. Each subcommittee will receive a collection to share with towns, libraries, real estate companies, etc. Olivia Uyizeye will be able to collect these papers and bring them to the next meeting for the subcommittee to identify a distribution plan.

Jim Kennedy asks for any town specific updates. None are mentioned.

6. Meeting adjourned by motion of Eric Agterberg/Ruth Bleyler at 8:35 PM. The next meeting is October 15th.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.