



CRJC Mount Ascutney Local River Subcommittee

Tuesday, February 16th, 2021

7 PM

Conference Call

Attendees

Plainfield	Elise Angelillo		Windsor	Michael Metivier	
Plainfield	David Taylor	✓	Windsor		
Cornish	Bill Gallagher		Weathersfield	Howard Beach	✓
Cornish	Colleen O'Neill	✓	Weathersfield		
Claremont	Matt Maki		Springfield	Bill Manner	✓
Claremont			Springfield	Kelly Stettner	✓
Hartland	Cordelia Merritt	✓	Rockingham	Thomas Hernon	
Hartland	Judy Howland	✓	Rockingham	Margaret Perry	
Charlestown	Janice Lambert				
Charlestown	John Streeter				

Olivia Uyizeye (staff, UVLSRPC)

Minutes

1. Welcome & Recap of Public Meeting Guidelines

Chair David Taylor called the meeting, conducted via conference call, to order at 7:07 PM under the emergency provisions of RSA 91-A, New Hampshire's Right-to-Know law, as allowed by Emergency Order 11 under Executive Order 2020-04 in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Taylor welcomed all present. Attendees and visitors introduced themselves.

2. December Meeting Minutes

Taylor opens up meeting minutes for review. Merritt makes a motion to approve the minutes with minor edits as provided. Beach seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote.

3. Permit Review

a. Ashley Ferry Boat Landing Permit Extension

Beach comments that the permit appears to be routine maintenance and a de minimis activity. Merritt makes a motion to support the extension as presented. Manner seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimous by roll call vote.

b. FERC – Great River Hydro

Uyizeye shares that there are no significant updates on the FERC permitting process at this time. The CRJC has reconvened the FERC working group who is finalizing a letter highlighted concerns on the draft applications to be addressed before the application is accepted. Uyizeye will share this letter for members' reference once it is complete.

4. MARC Natural Resource Chapter Review

Taylor opens up conversation on the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission's draft Natural Resources chapter, which the subcommittee has been invited to comment on. Conversation follows:

- Beach – An area south of the Black River is noted as impaired due to e-coli.
- Manner – This should no longer be the case as it was largely due to the combined sewer overflow in Springfield Vermont that was upgrade a couple of years ago. Residents swim in this section of river without a problem.
- Stettner – What is the timeframe for getting this impairment listing removed?
- Stettner – Near the end of the chapter there is buffer widths to accommodate a walking path. By how much? Who decides? Is this replaced somewhere? Stettner describes that she wants to see the recreation path, but has concerns about the impacts to the river with trail installation. This seems contradictory to the first half of the chapter that discussed the value of these buffers and needs to make improvements to them.
- Merritt – Agrees this buffer recommendation is a real concern and a balancing act.
- Beach – It can be difficult to expand the width of a buffer to allow for a trail due to sections on private land.
- Stettner – If trails are build in the buffer, Stettner would like to see alternative methods to solid paved surface trails constructed, such as a raised boardwalk or other alternatives that reduce impact.

Stettner makes a motion to send a letter as reflected by the conversation. Merritt seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote.

5. Updates & Other Business

a. Commissioners Update

b. Water Quality Grant

Uyizeye shares that the CRJC has received a \$5,000 grant to support water quality monitoring of the Connecticut River for 2021. The grant is awarded by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Environmental Opportunity Grant. Uyizeye explains that the work plan includes monitoring support for 2 LRS (Riverbend and Wantastiquet) who have been actively planning, additional lab testing for e-coli and nutrient analysis, and staff support for volunteer recruitment for all 5 LRS to support 2021 and 2022 activities.

Uyizeye asks for members input on which of 2 sites they think is a higher priority for the additional lab testing. The funding is only enough to do one site per region. Based on discussions, Uyizeye suggests sampling on the Connecticut River just south of the confluence with either the Black River or Sugar River. Stettner and Manner agree that sampling close to the Black River will be beneficial given the sampling that will be done on along the Black River itself. Stettner, who is coordinating the testing on the Black River, suggests sending in lab samples jointly for ease in logistics. Uyizeye agrees this would be better than a volunteer needing to drop off the monthly sample at the courier site for Endyne Labs. It is unclear if this approach will work though. Stettner and Uyizeye will follow up to work out the testing details.

c. Outreach and Speaker Series.

Uyizeye thanks members for their support in the outreach campaign and speaker series and invited members to reach out with questions any time.

The speaker series will include 4 events, each last 1.5 hours and open to the public. The event will start with a brief introduction to CRJC and quick updates from attending subcommittees. The remainder of the event will include presentations from speakers and time for questions. Video recordings of each event will be made available online for 1-2 weeks after each event. Uyizeye hopes that a member will offer to act as the ring leader for each event – inviting guests and introducing speakers. If interested in a specific event, you can reach out to Uyizeye. Uyizeye will be on all the calls to help with managing the event from a technical side.

The first event will be about happening end of March, details below. The full list can be found on the www.crjc.org/lrs website.

River Paths for Wildlife
MARCH 23, 6-730PM

Dr. Dave Patrick with the Nature Conservancy will discuss how the Connecticut River offers a natural migration route for plants and animals; a capacity shown historically and with rising importance in response to climate change. Riparian areas — areas of habitat along the banks of rivers and streams — are known to be used by both and small mammals. These regions also benefit insects, birds and other species looking for cooler, moister terrain as conditions become less habitable.

Dr. Pam Hunt with NH Audubon will dive in deeper to how birds, especially waterfowl, benefit from the Connecticut River's landscape. Migration is a challenging journey for birds, made possible by healthy stop-over sites to rest and refuel along the way. Learn about some of our common birds' migration habitats, why they do it and how they arrive here year after year.

d. Other Business

Howland shares that she has not received subcommittee emails for some time. Uyizeye will follow up and others will check to make sure Judy is aware of meetings. Taylor comments on wanting to include more members and also check in on members who have been unable to attend. Manner talks about following up with long standing members from Rockingham who have been inactive the past year or so.

6. Adjourn

O'Neill makes a motion to adjourn. Stettner seconds the motion. By roll call, the motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.