CRJC Riverbend Subcommittee
Minutes
Thursday, August 15, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting at AHEAD Conference Room

Attendance

Lancaster	Rob Christie	P	Monroe	Steve Sherman	X	Guildhall		
Lancaster			Monroe	Justin Bradshaw	X	Guildhall		
Dalton			Bath	Rick Walling	P	Lunenburg		
Dalton	Gal Potashnick	X	Bath			Lunenburg		
Littleton	Sean Doll	X	Haverhill	Pauline Corzilius	X	Concord	Deborah Noble	V
Littleton			Haverhill	Howard Hatch	X	Concord		
Waterford	William (Bill) Piper	X	Haverhill	Gale Lewis	X			
Waterford			Barnet	Bill (William) Graves	P	Ryegate	Sally Wilson	X
Newbury			Barnet	John Fairchild	X	Ryegate		
Newbury								

Note: P = present in person; V = present over remote virtual platform; X = not present

Partners Present: Sam Mayne (Lancaster Conservation Commission); Olivia Uyizeye (CRJC Staff; Virtually).

Minutes

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

Walling calls the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

2. **Approve Meeting Minutes from May 2024**

Graves motions to approve the May minutes without changes. Christie seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

3. **Permit Reviews and Communications**

a. **Special Permit, Herbicide Application**

These two permits would allow for herbicide application for invasive species control as part of the Lancaster Elementary School Wetland Restoration Plan.

Sam Maybe (Lancaster Conservation Commission) introduces the permit to treat knotweed and honeysuckle. The intent is to knock back the invasives so not to negatively impact the restoration area. The applicant is a certified herbicide applicator for the chosen chemical.

How many years? Expect 3-4 treatment rounds, and expect the first to happen this year. Sensitive area because this is on the property of the elementary school. Expect to run in September.

Graves states his support of the project as a very important step in the control of invasives for the Connecticut River and its tributaries.

Christie motions to use best management practices and support the application. Graves seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

b. **Fifteen Mile Falls Substation, AoT permit (#20240725-140, Comments due Sept 3)**

Disturbance of 472,000 square feet. New England Power Company (NEP) is proposing to construct a new substation and associated equipment.

Andrew Cole (National Grid), Chris Cyr (National Grid), Thomas D'Aguiar (VHB), and Logan Nunziato (National Grid) present on the permit. New England Power Company (NEP) is proposing to construct a new substation and associated equipment as part of asset condition separation associated with the existing dam and switchyard

facilities at the Moore Dam. The substation is approximately 7 acres in area and requires about 5 acres of tree clearing in and around the existing utility rights-of-way in the corridor. The project will also construct an improved access road to the substation, replacing the older gravel access path. The access road will include a closed drainage network, that collects and treats received stormwater at a proposed infiltration basin. Additionally, the substation will drain runoff to another proposed infiltration basin, providing peak rate and volume of runoff mitigation, as well as providing treatment for suspended solids and nutrients. The project is proposing approximately 25,388 SF of wetland impacts to construct the substation and provide an adequate access route on the new paved driveway, and the applicant will be coordinating with the NHDES Wetlands Bureau on these impacts and submitting a wetlands permit for them. Existing substation falls on the dam property. Intent to separate assets. Will be removing equipment out of the dam, but there will be some there. In basic terms, this will be taking over.

Healthy amount of natural resources in this area to minimize impacts while providing upgrades to critical infrastructure. Not clearing a pristine piece of land. A pretty large wetlands crossing to have a crossing, already has a gravel crossing. New access road is straightened out a bit. One registered vernal pool within the site, two near the edge. No disturbance impact within that area. This site was partially selected because of its location along existing transmission infrastructure. Impact to the smaller wetland being coordinated with NHDES to minimize according to what NHDES is recommending. Permitting for those wetlands impacts has been approved.

What will happen to the previous curvy gravel road that will be straightened? There is not restoration of that road proposed. Under current conditions it does function to provide water overflow.

Is there a replacement or mitigation proposed? The mitigation is paying into the ARM fund. The features will be around 18,564 sq ft to pay into the ARM fund for the permanent impacts. With the assets that are present and permanent impacts, doing restoration was not in the plans for mitigation.

Question asked about stormwater design and model storms. Overall this does a pretty good job of managing stormwater. The project only used significant rain events of 50-100 years, as well as consideration for the last two years' storm events which have been quite bad. Most modern designs would not accommodate the size of these designs. Berm is probably 6-7 ft above existing grade, clay core for structural rigidity. Substations because they have such a large crushed stone base, 2 ft crushed stone over 5 acres have a significant storage volume. Hopefully that helps make the site more resilient.

Christie- what's happening with these 200, 500 year standards. Is there an effort to update them? The infrastructure is to be underdesigned, such a critical piece of infrastructure. Taking into account extreme rainfall events. Assumptions about higher groundwater levels. There is some adjustment on the rain events as the historical data used comes from the NE Regional climate center, which updates data every 5 years. The project team has been coordinating with NHDES wetlands to make sure there is not a washout condition on that road. Make sure we are not under sizing culverts from a hydraulics standpoint. Walling notes that it is encouraging that the engineering is not going to the absolute minimum.

What is the expected lifespan? Replacement within the footprint. Best are typically about 50 years. Largely unchanged for the next 50-75 years.

Remediation sites in the area, couple down by the dam. No concerns of impacting contamination plumes. Transformers with a mineral oil and spill prevention system. These systems do pretty well, especially the more modern ones.

Graves notes the good use of a site that is not readily available or apparent. Efforts to save one vernal pool. Christie acknowledges that maintenance and upgrade is important, and thank you for throwing up the light switch.

Say in next few years, what are the options for upgrading if proven to be inadequate from a stormwater perspective. Do long-term, biannual inspections, consulting firm come through and do inspections of stormwater infrastructure to make sure it has not been inundated or failing in some way. If need going to do some additional work or restoration. National Grid here for the long haul, want the assets to sustain over the long haul. If needed, National Grid would ask what the options are (e.g., redirect flows to other areas, smaller ponds, subsurface chambers [keeps it hidden], infiltration is not the answer everywhere but detention is what we go for).

Proposed construction schedule? 2.5 year effort. On track to start in July 2026, conclusion end of 2028 potentially into 2029.

Walling – extra amount of hydro force coming from the dam. Any advances in the equipment that would change that hydraulic energy to get more out of it. Not aware of anything at this facility but is considering technology changes like any facility. The more gadgets, the more electricity.

Christie motions to support the application. Graves seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

c. **Special Permit, NHDOT Herbicide Application (Sites in Lancaster, Littleton, Bath)**

Walling notes that this special permit has been reviewed before in previous years – on bridges to treat invasives and poison ivy with registered applicators. Stand at the water's edge and spray it up and away from the water.

Christie motions to use best management practices and support the application. Graves seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

d. **Update. Dalton Landfill.**

https://www.des.nh.gov/land/landfills/granite-state-landfill-llc-state-permitting

Permits coming back as incomplete. Issue that Walling keeps bringing up in LAC, want to fill in the wetlands so they meet the requirements of a solid waste site.

4. Officer Elections

It is discussed that Chair Walling is stepping down as chair and a new officer(s) will need to be elected. In general, members agree on the recruitment need to bring in younger folks.

Graves makes the motion in support of Doll and Christie as co-chairs. Noble seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

5. Updates & Other Business

a. **St J to Whitefield NH "rail trail"**

Noble explains that there is a section of the railroad owned by CSX. Noble has tried to get in touch with CSX because of serious maintenance issues.

Christie asks Noble to draft a letter the LRS could consider supporting and then share with responsible agencies.

b. **Member and Local Updates**

Noble reflects on the changes in Concord due to recent storm events. There is a need to work on cleaning out Town and privately owned culverts. This is furthering damage to the roads. Noble would like to facilitate communication about how to keep culverts clear.

6. Adjourn

Graves motions to adjourn. Christie seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting concludes at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.