

# **Minutes of Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee**

**Milford Police Station, Milford, NH**

**March 17, 2022**

In attendance were members Cory Ritz (New Ipswich), Celeste Barr (Milford), Cam Lockwood (Temple), Rob Clemens (Amherst), Rich Hart (Amherst) Marshall Buttrick (Greenville), Bill Mahar (Wilton), Peter Howd (Wilton) George May (Merrimack), Nelson Disco (Merrimack) and Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich), Guest Lincoln Daley from Milford Dog Park Group.

**Approval of Minutes** -February minutes approved.

## **New Business**

**Milford Dog Park**-The Brookstone Manor may donate the six acre "open space" to the Town of Milford. According to Lincoln Daley though, this open space offset the higher density development of the Brookstone Manor apartment buildings. Of the 6 acres, 1 acre will be devoted to a dog park. Trails will connect it to Town recreation land and parking will be on Town property. The dog park area is in a relatively flat area. It is in a floodplain. The dog park area is approximately 120 Ft from River. There will be some land cleared but they do not need an AoT permit. The location within the floodplain is of concern to us as is the management of fecal matter. They will need some sort of E.coli permit from EPA. Rob suggested additional water testing near and downstream from site.

Celeste pointed out current testing sites. Cory suggested we ask to use the site to establish a willow nursery. Rich thought additional testing should be done in spring and fall. Milford DPW will be doing most of the work and Bill thought having them do all the “grunt work” was a great idea.

On the maps we viewed while discussing this project there were sewer lines indicated along the river’s edge. We were not clear on where these came from or where they went.

The Dog Park organizers are acquiring an easement or outright ownership of property and will then donate it to the town. Brookstone Manor will need a variance to be approved by Board of Adjustment.

We wanted to know if there would be an operational plan for cleaning. Lincoln said they were depending on individual owners to clean up after their animals and the Town would be the enforcer. There was some skepticism voiced but Lincoln pointed out that there is currently a bigger problem with dogs unleashed and their waste and this is being proposed as a way to try and contain the problem. George asked for a list of other properties that had been considered for the project.

There are no existing maintained town trails on property but there are open areas along the sewer easement area and it would be minimum impact to connect to town property trails. They hope to eventually replicate bridge that connects Boys and Girls’ club and eventually to multipurpose path. Dog park and trails would be dirt.

They are 2 months until they present to Selectmen. We decided we needed to check out this site for ourselves and agreed to meet early next meeting to do so, 6:30 at 135 Elm St. We will ask Lincoln to join us.

Celeste mentioned that someone on the Conservation Commission had mentioned the possibility of a future lighting system powered by methane produced by the waste collected. Presently, there will not be waste disposal containers provided on site.

**Division of Pesticide Control Special Permit Application #22-086 Ted Arcidi property-**We are not particularly happy with the approval of the Herbicide Plan. Celeste questioned if there was anyone else at the State that we could contact to verify the Plan. Rich questioned the goal as we all felt the current plan would kill everything. The current plan allows application of herbicide right to the river edge. With the agricultural designation, the owner is allowed to maintain only a 50' riparian barrier between his farmland and the river. Celeste is going to get some educational information from NRPC to pass along. It was expressed that with the plan currently being approved that shade will be removed and the river water's temperature will be raised. The length of shoreline affected is approximately one mile. Ron expressed concern over the timing window

**Fletcher Fish Tissue Report**-Results from lab test indicate that the signs regarding fishing should be able to come down but an official report needs to come out. Current testing indicates that levels of PCBs in the test samples exceed the criteria required. George says we need to publicize this as it is good news that the public needs to see that the cleanup has been successful.

**Informational Meeting with NRCS scheduled for April 21-**  
We are postponing this meeting for the time being. This was to be a presentation on Best Management Practices for landowners that live along the river in regard to cutting and clearing timber and riparian borders. NRPC would have to attend via Zoom due to Covid restrictions. Kerry Rickroad the Conservation District contact also noted that it is school vacation week.

### **Watershed Management Plan**

Cory's Stakeholder registry on Google Sheets is growing with over 100 entries. Cory would like to have it completed by April's meeting.

SoRLAC Stakeholder Registry:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YYE2-ra2NZnDQ\\_k7D8KuF\\_f51sbBJzGV3h7b-wFkUEs/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YYE2-ra2NZnDQ_k7D8KuF_f51sbBJzGV3h7b-wFkUEs/edit?usp=sharing)

Survey Draft- Survey Monkey couldn't publish Cory's initial foray into creating survey questionnaires. It would of required some premium features which would of required a

subscription and payment. Someone questioned if NRPC would already have a subscription to Survey Monkey and be willing to host the survey for us.

Cory presented sample questions in attachments to March's agenda and we suggested some changes. One addition was to incorporate some question as to whether our survey takers had every heard of SoRLAC. Another suggestion was to change the ranking system to make the survey easier to compile answers when it comes back to us, Peter Howd is on the board of NRPC and will reach out to find out what they have to offer and as far as questions.

There was some discussion of contacting some recreational groups that use the river to include them in the survey. Merrimack Paddlers and a Fishing group was mentioned.

### **Local Updates-**

**Souhegan Watershed Association-** Nothing to report

**New Ipswich-** Nothing to report

**Greenville-** Nothing to report

**Temple-**nothing to report

**Wilton-**Peter reported on River's Edge and its status before the Planning Board.

**Milford-**See above for Dog Park information. Celeste was happy to report that there are plans moving forward to improve the River Trail behind the Boys and Girls' Club. The Souhegan Valley Boys & Girls Club has received a \$10,000 grant to make improvements to the Souhegan River Trail on their property (the trail runs around the edge of their property on an easement given to the Town Of Milford.) Celeste and other volunteers (Master Gardeners and Natural Resource Stewards) as well as students at the club will create a plan to make educational improvements along this segment of trail. Improvements may include tree and shrub identification signs, slab benches, an information kiosk, "clean up after your dog " signs, and the planting of native trees and shrubs. Field work will begin the week of 3/21/22.

**Amherst-**Town is updating a flooding and erosion disaster plan in order to get disaster assistance if need be.

For the next 3 Sundays at 1:00 there will be apple pruning workshops

**Merrimack-**Still waiting for someone from the State to issue trail permits. George pinpointed wells that have been tested positive for PFOAs.

Submitted by Kleta Dudley, Sec. March 20, 2022

Next Meeting April 21, 2022. Hopefully it will be at the police Station, We will be meeting first at 135 Elm Street, the proposed Dog Park site at 6:30.