

Souhegan Local Advisory Committee
Milford Police Department
February 15, 2024

In attendance were Cory Ritz (New Ipswich,) Cam Lockwood (Temple,) Marion Kastner (Amherst,) Marshall Buttrick (Greenville,) Peter Howd (Wilton,) Rich Hart (Amherst,) Nelson Disco (Merrimack,) George May (Merrimack,) Celeste Barr (Milford,) Nelson Disco (Merrimac,) Eric Doberstein (Merrimack,) and Kleta Dudley (New Ipswich.)

Guest was Emma Rearick, NRPC via Zoom and Joe Woodworth, President of Pratt Pond Association in New Ipswich

January Minutes Approved need to be posted to Google Drive
Old Business

Fairway Properties-Nothing new to report except it appears vehicles have been moved to a more obscure location.

Dog Park- No reply to letter we sent regarding our concerns. Recent flooding of the park in December may have given pause to plans.

New Business

Pratt Pond Association, New Ipswich- Pratt Pond is a 35 Acre spring fed pond that feeds the West Branch of the Souhegan River. It is before the Souhegan is designated as protected river. Joe presented a problem concerning a dam on the pond which has illegally been annexed by the abutter for a second driveway. The abutter is trying to get title to the piece of land the dam is situated upon. The driveway has caused erosion, and it is unclear what other damage might be under the snow. The abutter is also demanding no trespassing, which would make yearly maintenance on the dam difficult. So far the Association has spent 26K on legal expenses. There were questions at a hearing at Superior Court in Nashua on who has dam expertise. The NH Bureau of Dams have not been helpful and has a “hands off” attitude. The Association has appealed to DES, but information seems to flow only one way. The town has issued a Stop Work order which apparently wasn’t communicated very clearly. The Association does have a 2013 survey. The abutter has asked for an injunction against the Association and the Association is asking for an injunction against the abutter. There will be a hearing in 6-8 months .

Fait’s Property Management, Shoreland Permit, Island Street, Wilton NH-This is a .2 acre plot of land. The

Wilton Zoning board turned down the owner's request for a building on an existing footprint and the owner has come back with another plan with a smaller footprint. No trees will be cut. The building is 1100 sq. ft. and the drive is 543 sq. ft. We have questions about the runoff as they are increasing the impervious surface. There is town and water sewer there. This plan has not yet shown up before the Planning Board in Wilton.

Hitchiner Manufacturing Co., Inc- These plans showed up this day (being Feb. 15th) on Cory's porch. DES got an application on the 13th. Hitchier is looking to put up a very large building (57,000 sq.ft.) within the ¼ mile boundary of the Souhegan on Old Wilton Rd. in Milford. The plans we have address runoff claiming to decrease current runoff with collection basins around the perimeter. We are not ready to comment yet. Cory will request that the engineer come to March's meeting. Nelson noted that the engineering firm has a good reputation in regards to being good to work with.

Watershed Corridor Management Plan-Emma Rearick from NRPC joined us via Zoom. She had sent us all a Watershed Management Survey which we are to individually by town to fill out and return within 8-10 weeks. There is no expectations that all questions will be applicable to all towns. Peter, Cory and Rob are on a

subcommittee with Emma. They meet with her approximately every other week to further work on this plan. It was suggested that we should look over the questions, then arrange contact with someone in our town on the Planning Board to further answer questions. After that there are some questions that probably would best be answered by someone in the towns' DPW. The value for our corridor plan is to capture what towns are doing or could be doing to protect the waterway and share the knowledge. The survey is in PDF fillable form, or it can be printed and filled out. Return to Peter.

There was discussion at this point and Rich noted that a lot of towns are upgrading size of Culverts to handle predicted increases in rainfall. This will also increase the rate of flow of water into the river which might not have the effect intended. More water will be entering into the river quickly. Wetlands would be an important consideration to soak up the increased flow and a lot of communities have slowly been filling in wetland illegally over the past years.

Kleta will be responsible for getting New Ipswich's survey filled out, Marshall for Greenville's, Cam for Temple, Peter for Wilton, Rich will do Amherst and check with Rob as well. Celeste will do Milford. Merrimack gets a

hall pass as Emma noted that NRPC has just finished up the Lower Merrimack's' Corridor Management Plan and they used pretty much the same survey. Reach out to Cory, Peter or Rob with questions. Again, surveys get returned to Peter.

In 2015 a geomorphic analysis/survey was done on the Souhegan River by Shane the man in charge of Geological surveys for the State. Everything imaginable was measured and recorded. A huge picture library was also produced. The question is, what to do with the data? We need to understand and try and study erosion in some areas. How will the river respond to projects. We need to note areas of concern. We will need to do Ground Truthing.

How will erosion contribute to and affect pollution and nutrient levels? Micro plastics are a problem. Water testing needs to continue. DES has an Aquatic Restoration Mapper worth looking at.

We need a clear understanding of infrastructure impacts. The photo librarty can be useful for this.

We need to understand Flood Plains and Flood Plain control. What works and where is it needed. Need to emphasize using natural resources (like wetlands) to help control high water incidents.

We need to understand cause and effect. Especially in the upper reaches of the river this is important.

Mitigation can help but we need to stress the importance of wetlands and be aware of ongoing operations near the river such as gravel mining

Peter noted we are required to have a section on Risk management. Rich spoke of efforts that some landowners have tried to reclaim property at river's edge or preventing oxbows. George cautioned that erosion was a natural phenomenon and protecting a river means allowing it. Eric added that access to the river was necessary. He stressed the importance of recreational considerations.

Cory suggested contacting Shane and seeing if he would join us for a meeting and perhaps do a training session. State Climatologist predicted in 2022 that annual rainfall might not change but the pattern would with more extreme events. There would be less snowfall, warmer summer temperatures. Perhaps less snow will mean less flooding in the spring. Cory will talk with Michelle Trembly who is doing a Geomorph for the Upper Merrimack. Peter would like to see some Geomorphic analysis on tributaries. Cory will send link to Mapper. Short discussion followed on using data that take into consideration climate change issues

Local Updates

SWA-Eric is working water testing. Determining how many volunteers he needs and rounding up labs to do testing . Merrimack will help with labs this year. There was discussion about the canoe and kayak paddling program.

New Ipswich-Nothing to report

Greenville-Been almost a year on the Drug Rehab application and still no progress, and nothing from EPA on Pilgrim Food's violation.

Temple-Cam will be attending next month's Conservation Commission meeting

Wilton-Nothing new on Fairway.

Milford-Nothing to report

Amherst-Rich mentioned that property development was eating away at buffers. There will be a free apple tree pruning workshop on 1st weekend in April **Where?** Cleanup Day will be April 20 and 21. Mostly cleanup on Saturday. Sunday there will be activities at Buckmeadow, the old golf course. Probably a speaker on invasive species and recycling plastics. We inquired

about setting up our booth. Marion invited us to do so. Celeste will locate it and bring it to next meeting

Merrimack-Nelson reported that work was ongoing on the new trail. There were a few obstacles encountered that will increase the cost of the project but the trail is still on.**RMAC**-The group is half way through Rockingham County accessing the State's owned lands. Nelson noted that there is a small sliver of land along Everett Turnpike that the state had taken to use for gravel and other material storage during the work on the Turnpike. He would like to see that the Town of Merrimack gets possession of the property.

Submitted Feb 16, 2024 by Kleta Dudley, sec.
Next meeting at Milford Police Facility, 7:00 p.m
Mar. 21. 2024